Kenneth J. Larsen

Essays on Shakespeare’s Sonnets

In memory of another "M^{R}. W. H.," my "onlie begetter."

Introduction

Shake-speares Sonnets was entered in the Stationers' Register on Saturday 20 May 1609; the record reads,

> 20 Maij Thomas Thorpe. Entred for his copie vnder thandes of master Wilson and master Lownes Warden a Booke called Shakespeares sonnettes vjd.

The cost of sixpence would have been normal. The volume's frontispiece bears the date, 1609, and the place, London, and declares forthrightly, "*Neuer before Imprinted*." It was printed by George Eld for "T. T.," evidently the publisher Thomas Thorpe. The volume appeared with two-title pages, one with the imprint of the book-seller, John Wright, and one with that of another, William Aspley. The subsequent dedicatory page is signed, "T. T.," again Thomas Thorpe. The dedication is solecistic, a trait of Thorpe's writing, and is addressed to "M^{R}. W. H.," whose identity has been the subject of debate and acrimony from Ben Jonson onwards.

The publication of Shakespeare's sonnet sequence came late in the piece: by 1609 the vogue of sequences which had flourished in the 1590s and early 1600s in the wake of Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* sequence had passed. Yet some of Shakespeare's sonnets were written before 1599, because Francis Meres, when pairing a range of accomplished English writers with Latin precursors in 1598, coupled Shakespeare with Ovid and alluded to "his sugred Sonnets among his priuate friends:"

> As the soule of *Euphorbus* was thought to liue in *Pythagoras*: so the sweete wittie soule of *Ouid* liues in mellifluous & hony-tongued *Shakespeare*, witnes his *Venus* and *Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugred Sonnets among his priuate friends, &c. [1]

As well, versions of Sonnets 138 and 144 had appeared in a rather tawdry, unauthorized volume published by William Jaggard in 1599 and entitled *The Passionate Pilgrime. By W. Shakespeare*. (The majority of the volume's poems are not by Shakespeare.)

The sequence is divided between those generally directed to a youth (Sonnets 1-126) and those generally addressed to a ‘Dark Lady’ (Sonnets 127-152); there are two further sonnets, Sonnets 153-54, which are anacreontic sonnets. The sonnets as printed do not necessarily reflect the order of the composition as recent stylometric work advanced by Kent Hieatt and others and refined by MacD. Jackson has demonstrated. [2] By comparing early and late ‘rare’ words in sonnets and plays Hieatt and Jackson have concluded that statistical analysis and comparative ratios indicate that the final section of sonnets, those to the Dark Lady are of early composition, probably in the period 1595-96. The inclusion among them of Sonnets 138 and 144 and of the anomalous Sonnet 145, which, if Andrew Gurr is correct, was written early to Anne Hathaway, supports the conclusion. [3] The remainder of the sonnets were composed during the latter half of the 1590s, with the exception of Sonnets 104-26, which were written in the early years of the 17th century. Sonnet 107 and Sonnets 123-25 allude to events that occurred around 1603 and 1604, so must have been written after those events. Sonnet 107 refers to the death of Elizabeth and the “balmie time,” brought about by the accession of James I in 1603; Sonnet 125 alludes to the coronation of James in 1603, Sonnet 123 to the royal procession in 1604 (15 March 1603 o.d.), that celebrated the coronation, and Sonnet 124 to the “Bye” and “Main” plots, conspiracies against James that occurred in 1603, which culminated in trials and executions (staged and otherwise) in December 1603. The sonnets, then, were written over a span of years and there is no reason not to accept that Shakespeare followed the practice of his fellow sonneteers, who continually revised their sonnets and sequences: Samuel Daniel, the author of the sequence, *Delia*, was an habitual fiddler and Michael Drayton’s sequence, *Ideas Mirrour*. *Amours in Quatorzains*, underwent constant revision as new editions were issued, only 20 of the original 51 sonnets found in the 1594 edition surviving in the 1637 edition. In Shakespeare’s case earlier sonnets such as Sonnets 138 and 144 were reworked afterwards, while later sonnets themselves would have been revised, perhaps with printing in mind.

Structure

The shape of the volume as a whole, a sequence of 154 sonnets and a long sustained poem, *A Louers complaint*, reflects contemporary practice. As sonnet sequences developed during the 1590s some features became common: Samuel Daniel’s *Delia, Contayning certayne Sonnets*: *with the complaint of Rosamond* has a bipartite structure with a sonnet sequence and the longer complaint; Richard Linche’s 1596 sequence to *Diella* is combined with the extended, “*amorous Poeme of Dom Diego and Gineura*.” Other sequences formed part of a tripartite structure: Richard Barnfield’s volume of 1598, for example, has “Cynthia,” “Certaine Sonnets” and the “Legend of Cassandra.” But the structure of *Shake-speares Sonnets* and *A Louers complaint* is closest to that of Edmund Spenser’s *Amoretti and Epithalamion* of 1595. Spenser’s volume has a tripartite structure with a sonnet sequence of 89 sonnets, a small series of anacreontic verses and a longer epithalamium, which Shakespeare has imitated with his sequence of 152 sonnets, two anacreontic sonnets and a long complaint. [4] He has further imitated Spenser’s placement of a mirror sonnet at the mid-point of his sequence, *Amoretti* 45 of 89 (“Leaue lady in your glasse of christall clene, / Your goodly selfe for euermore to vew”). [5] Shakespeare has a like sonnet at Sonnet 77, the middle sonnet of 154 (“Thy glasse will shew thee how thy beauties were”), and has positioned at the end of the sequence’s first half Sonnet 76, a sonnet that takes stock of the past and looks forward to a new beginning. [6]

The placement of other sonnets provides tantalizing glimpses of possible structures which are, however, never sufficiently cogent to allow for conclusions to be drawn. Sonnet 12, beginning, “When I doe count the clock that tels the time,” suggests the hours on a clock face or sundial. Sonnet 60 hints at the number of minutes in the hour in, “So do our minuites hasten to their end.” Sonnet 52 celebrates “feasts so solemne . . in the long yeare set;” the first rank of Solemn Feasts in the *Book of Common Prayer*’s calendar are “All Sundayes in the yeare,” normally numbering 52. Sonnet 8, a musical sonnet, is appropriately placed, because an “eight” is a “true concord.” Sonnet 19 brings to a conclusion the cycle of sonnets which exhort the youth to procreate while still in his prime. The number 19 was the cycle of years beyond which the Prime could not extend in the metonic calendar (see Sonnet 19). The sequence's first 152 sonnets could thus be seen as comprising 8 courses of 19 sonnets. The placement of the epicedial Sonnets 71 and 72 after Sonnet 70, when the poet has completed his climacteric three-score-and-ten, seems more than a coincidence and invites some observations about climacterics.

It has often been noticed that Sonnet 63, which begins "Against my loue shall be as I am now" and which acknowledges that "Ages cruell knife" will "cut from memory . . my louers life," celebrates the grand climacteric, the number 63, a year in one's life fraught with danger and often marked by death. Sonnet 63 is also the half-way sonnet of 126, the number of sonnets directed to the youth, the span of which might be construed as a double climacteric. But climacterics were not confined to 63, the most pertinent and discussed in Shakespeare's time being 70, the year of her life, in which Elizabeth I died and which prompted Thomas Wright's *A Succinct Philosophicall declaration of the nature of Clymactericall yeeres, occasioned by the death of Queene Elizabeth* of 1604. (Thomas Thorpe was the publisher.) The occasion for his treatise, Wright claims, was "the death of *Queene* Elizabeth, who died in the 70. yeere of her age, which was the Clymactericall period of her life." He argues that it is "good to examine and search out the cause of these notable alterations and daungers of death in the Clymactericall yeeres, for those humors which alter the bodie, and dispose it to sicknesse, and death," because "God hath appointed these Septuarie, and Nonarie yeeres as best seeming his wisdome and prouidence." He explains that "the first Clymactericall yeeres" are multiples of nine and the "seconds" multiples of seven, concluding with the climacteric of "seauenty," of which age "spake *Dauid* when hee sayde . . The dayes of our yeeres are seauentie yeeres, and if in Potentates they be eightie, the labour and griefe is greater." Wright then lists the most notorious climacterics:

> The most daungerous of all these passages or steps, are the forty nine, compounded vpon seuen time seauen: and sixty three standing vppon nine times seauen, and next to these is seauenty, which containeth tenne times seauen; they number them also by nine, and so make eighty one, the most perillous as comprehending nine times nine. [7]

Sonnet 49 shares a like beginning with Sonnet 63, "Against that time," and develops the conceit of reckoning up and being summoned to a final accounting ("vtmost summe" and "audite") as does Sonnet 126, which concludes with Nature making "Her *Audite*." Sonnet 81, which coincides with the "most perillous" of climacterics, is the final epitaphial sonnet, beginning "Or I shall liue your Epitaph to make, / Or you suruiue when I in earth am rotten." Yet, although it is tempting to read more into the placement of these sonnets, no further structure is readily discernible.

Printing and Distribution

The original *quarto* edition of *Shake-speares Sonnets* is comprised of 40 leaves without numbering. Signature A (of two leaves) contains the variant title pages and dedication. Sig. B1^r starts the sequence of sonnets ending with Sonnet 154 on sig. K1^r. Sig. K1^v begins "A Louers Complaint By William Shake-speare," which concludes on sig. L2 ^{v}. Thirteen copies of the edition are extant: Bodleian Library, Oxford (Wright and Aspley); Fondation Bodmer, Geneva (Wright); British Library, London (Wright and Aspley); Elizabethan Club, Yale (Wright); Huntingdon Library (Wright and Aspley); Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington (Wright and Aspley); John Rylands Library, Manchester (Wright); and two further copies at Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge, and Harvard University Library, which lack a title page.

If the initial sheets of Sig. A are put aside, each sheet in both the Wright and Aspley imprints bears either of two watermarks, Watermark A, which is an apex of circles on top of each other, a single circle, a single circle, a row of two circles, and rows of three circles and four circles, much like a bunch of grapes and Watermark B, a more complex watermark, being a replica of a coat-of-arms or the top of a vessel or chalice or the bottom of a chalice (most evident in Sig. E4). The possibility exists that each sheet bears a single watermark, the two watermarks being combined into a vessel with grapes separated by binding and cutting, but the possibility can only be confirmed by disassembling the volumes. (An exception is Sheet E which has a large discursive watermark after the manner of a babewyne in both imprints.)

The watermarks suggest two separate stocks of paper which have then been bound indiscriminately. The watermarks also confirm that the sheets were laid down on the printing frame or skeleton indiscriminately with the top and bottom of the sheet sometimes reversed: the Folger Wright imprint, for example, has B1 with Watermark B and B4 with Watermark A; the Folger Aspley imprint has B2 with Watermark A and B3 with Watermark B. As well, the sheets have sometimes not only been reversed top to bottom but sometimes the paper has been turned over before it was laid down: the Folger Wright imprint has C2 with Watermark A and C3 with Watermark B, while the Folger Aspley has C1 with Watermark A and C4 with Watermark B. The printer, then, has taken the sheets from the stack provided and has laid them on the skeleton variously: straight, reversed upside down, and reversed back to front. As well, all sheets other than Sheet A are laid paper with seven parallel horizontal ribs across a sheet, the marks of the wires from the paper-making, dividing the *quarto*’s sheets into eighths (occasionally an 8th rib can be seen on the top or bottom verge).

The printing can be examined by looking through a page at the various positions of the printing on either side of the page. A comparison between sheets in various imprints show a near exact positioning of the lines and words in relation to the front and back of the page. Sheets F and I, for example, in both the Folger Wright and Folger Aspley imprints are identical or nearly identical – the positioning of the watermarks on sheets F and I also coincide suggesting that they result from the same impression, from an identical laying down of the sheet on the frame, and from the same pulling off. Sheet H in the two Folger imprints is interesting: the same stack of sheets has been used, but the sides have been reversed as has the top and bottom. When the printing on each side of the sheet is correlated, it is seen as the most irregular of all the delineations found in the imprints – and contains the most mistakes, possibly indicating a different compositor. Both the Wright imprint and the Aspley imprint, therefore, draw on similar stacks of sheets bearing identical watermarks and with almost identical correlations between the printings on the recto and verso sides of the sheets.

The Title Page and Dedication page, A1 and A2, however, differ from the subsequent sheets. Firstly they are a little thicker and heavier. Secondly the printing is different at the bottom of the sheet because different spacing is required to accommodate the names, John Wright and William Aspley: the Aspley imprint required four lines and the Wright five. Thirdly the watermarks also vary, which is crucial: the sheets of both printings display not only the horizontal ribs from the paper-making evident in the remainder of the volume, but also a series of five vertical lines: presumably, because of the sheets heavier texture, both horizontal and vertical wires were required. In the Wright imprint's A1 and A2 the watermark is the same watermark found in the rest of the volume (Watermark B). This is not the case with the watermark found on the Aspley imprint which is, strikingly, a large parrot. Since Aspley sold under the "Sign of the Parrot," the probability is that the paper was provided by one source for both booksellers, but that for those copies sold by Aspley a single sheet for the introductory two pages was provided by him and bound into the volume. [8]

MacD. Jackson has established that the volume was set by two principal compositors, each with their own idiosyncracies and with one more prone to mistakes. [9] A comparison of the major, variant errors in printing reveals the following: the catchword at F3^r is an incorrect, "The," in all copies other than the Bodleian Aspley, which has the correct "Speake." Similarly at 39.7 the Bodleian Aspley has, "giue," while all others have an incorrect, "giue:". The Bodmer has an incorrect catchword at C3^r, "To", which should read "Thou". At Sonnet 89.11 the Folger Wright and Yale Wright have, "proface", all others have a correct, "prophane". All copies at Sonnet 47.10 have, "seife"; only the Bodmer has a corrected "selfe". All copies at Sonnet 116 have the number "119" (an inverted 6), except for the Bodleian Wright, which has been corrected to "116". (The question marks have either been omitted or not taken in the Folger Aspley copy at 76.2, 4, 8, but are present in all other copies.) No doubt the corrections were made as sheets were pulled, but earlier-pulled, uncorrected sheets were not discarded and stacks of sheets before binding contained both corrected and uncorrected sheets. Volumes were then bound using a mix of both corrected and uncorrected. All this suggests that they were not bound under close authorial supervision.

Whether the manuscript Eld, the printer, was given was authorial or not remains unclear, opinion being divided between an older view that it wasn't (and that the manuscript was therefore pirated) and more recent enquiry, which has argued that Shakespeare entrusted or even sold the manuscript to Thorpe. (The possibility that the manuscript was provided to Thomas Thorpe by a needy "M^{R}. W. H.," the dedicatee of the volume and the poems' possible receipient, seems seldom to have been explored.) Shakespeare's hand in the production will always remain shrouded, but some evidence can be gleaned from the probity and practices of the publisher, Thorpe, and the printer, Eld. Thorpe was an unusual figure in the early 17th century book trade: he was neither a printer nor a bookseller, but an entrepreneur who obtained manuscripts, had them printed, then moved the printed copies on to booksellers. Apart from two dubious ventures of a minor nature he seems to have been a respectable enough businessman.[10] Ben Jonson entrusted him with the publishing of *Sejanus his Fall* (1605), recent editors observing that Eld, the printer, "discharged his difficult task with a high degree of accuracy," and that "a watchful eye supervised the printing." [11] In 1607 Jonson gave him the rights to publish *Volpone*, which he also commissioned Eld to print. The volume again was so carefully produced that it has been thought that Jonson himself may have overseen its printing. [12] Thorpe often signed himself "T. T.," about which there was nothing unusual or underhand, and later changed his initials to "Th. Th.," possibly to differentiate himself from Thomas Taylor and Thomas Tuke, authors who also signed themselves, "T. T."

Thorpe's first publishing venture was Marlowe's translation of *Lucans First Book* of the *Pharsalia* of 1600; he introduced the work with a witty "Epistle Dedicatorie" to Edward Blunt who had granted him its rights. [13] In 1604 his publishing career began in earnest with two works by Thomas Wright, *A Succinct Philosophicall declaration of the nature of Clymactericall yeeres* (cited above) and *The Passions of the minde in generall*, both printed by Valentine Sims, whom he also used to print Ben Jonson's *Hymenaei* and

Chapman’s *The Gentleman Vsher* in 1606. His collaboration with George Eld began in 1605 with Chapman’s *Al Fooles* and Jonson’s *Seianus His Fall* and he used Eld almost exclusively from 1607 onwards with Jonson’s *Volpone* and Marston’s *What You Will* in 1607, Jonson’s *The Characters of Two royall Masques*, Chapman’s *The Conspiracie And Tragedie of Charles Duke of Byron* and Richard West’s *Wits A. B. C. Or A Centurie of Epigrams* in 1608, and *Shake-speares Sonnets* in 1609. Eld published the 1609 *quarto* of *Troilus and Cressida*, a production however of lesser quality. (The uneven quality of his work seems due either to inadequate typesetting or to faulty manuscripts produced faithfully.) He also produced the second *quarto* of Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* for John Wright in 1609, one of a number of collaborations with Wright, and printed for William Aspley in 1605 the contentious *Eastward Hoe*.

Thorpe was given to prolix dedications, which often lapsed into the ungrammatical, a fault evident in his dedication to *Shake-speares Sonnets*. In his dedication to John Florio in the 1610 edition of John Healey’s translation of Epictetus he presents Healey as a “poor friend” and just as Maecenas advanced Horace’s cause before Augustus asks that so Florio might promote Healey’s interests (”So this your poore friend though he haue found much of you, yet doth still follow you for as much more: that as his *Mecaenas* you would write to *Augustus*, *Bee as mindefull of* Horace, *as you would bee of my selfe*.) Florio is “both patterne and patron of translators,” a nicety common to Jacobean dedications, playing on the recent division of the two words; ‘pattern’ until the latter half of the 17th century was spelt ‘patron.’ [14] He also dedicated Healey’s 1610 translation of St. Augustine’s *The Citie of God* to the Earl of Pembroke, entitling him properly and fully, and effusively seeking his patronage, because “your sweete patronage in a matter of small moment, without distrust or disturbance in this worke of more worth, more weight, as he approoued his more abilitie, so would not but expect your Honours more acceptance.” He concludes, “Wherefore his legacie laide at your Honours feete, is rather here deliuered to your Honours humbly thrise-kissed hands by his poore delegate.” [15] In 1614 he wrote a dedication to Arthur Dent’s *The Hand-Maid of Repentance*, in which he writes “this so necessary and *Christianlike* a worke, penned by so singuler a Minister of the Gospell, and so much conducting to eternall blisse, hath by Gods goodnes come vnto my hands . . I held my selfe bound in Christian Charity, to communicate the same vnto my Brethren." [16] Later he directed his dedication in the 1616 edition of Epictetus (Healey now being dead) to the Earl of Pembroke once again, addressing him properly as "Right Honorable," apologizing for "this scribling age, wherein great persons are so pestered dayly with Dedications" and soliciting assistance of him with exaggerated self-abasement. [17]

The dedication page to *Shake-speares Sonnets* was intended by Thorpe to attract buyers. Masking the identity of his addressee by using initials was intended to add intrigue. (Normal advertising of books involved displaying title-leaves on walls and posts or having them paraded about, held aloft on cleft-sticks.) [18] His style, too, was intended to catch the eye: his opening phrase, "THE. ONLIE. BEGETTER." (Shakespeare never used the term 'begetter'), would have struck the informed buyer as outrageous: the principal (and nearly sole) use of "onlie begetter" before 1609 was as an appellation of God the Father found in theological disquisitions on the Nicene phrase, "Filium Dei unigenitum," rendered in the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Order of Holy Communion" as "the onely begotten sonne of God, begotten of his father." By transference the Father is the begetter of the only begotten. Commentaries such as that of Hugo of St. Victor were oft-quoted, "The father begetteth, the sonne is begotten, and because he that did beget, did beget from eternall, the father is eternall. And because, he that is begotten, is begotten from eternall, the sonne is coeternall with the father eternall . . he that is begotten, cannot be the same of whom he was begotten, neyther he that proceedeth from the begetter and the begotten can be, eyther the begetter or the begotten." Similarly Thomas Roger in 1581 translates Augustine's query, "*what is more acceptable, than to cal vpon the begetter in the name of his onlie begotten Son*," while Philip Stubbes, reporting his wife's final confession in 1592, affirms the Father to be, "the onely . . begetter," in the phrase, "I beleeue and confesse that God the father . .. . is . . the onely maker, creator and begetter of all things whatsoeuer," and William Cowper asks in 1609, "why should it be denyed that in the Creator, the begetter, and begotten are equall in eternitie?" [19] The god-like begetter of the sonnets, "M^{R}. W. H.," is thus the poet's muse, who is the cause of that conceived by the poet (and of that which enables the sonnets to be published). Given the properties of the godhead, eternity such as that claimed by the monumental lettering is appropriate. The "WELL-WISHING. ADVENTURER" involved in "SETTING. FORTH" or publishing the volume is Thorpe himself, who wishes upon the begetter of the sonnets that happiness and immortality ("ETERNITIE") promised by their ever-living poet. (Thorpe is perhaps imitating Thomas Newman's Dedicatory Epistle to Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, "I [was] moued to sette it forth.") [20] Finally as the "BEGETTER" of the sonnets, M^{R}. W. H.," is firmly identified with the youth, who is so often the poet's muse in the sequence.

In summary the manuscript of *Shake-speares Sonnets*, given to Thorpe and Eld, may have had authorial warrant. Whether it was in Shakespeare's or in a scribal hand with or without emendations cannot be determined. The setting of the type was done by two principal compositors, but the pulls were not likely overseen by Shakespeare, any emended sheets were mixed with the uncorrected, and the collation of sheets for binding drew indiscriminately on both kinds. If Shakespeare was absent from the printing and binding process (he may have been away from London because of the severity of the plague in 1609), [21] then the non-supervisory role would have repeated the practice that obtained for the publication of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* by Richard Field in 1593 and 1594 during outbreaks of the plague, which also seem not to have been authorially corrected during printing.

M^{R}. W. H.

The identity of the volume's dedicatee, "M^{R}. W. H.," has been the cause of much enquiry and speculation. Generally research has focussed on the two most likely candidates, Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton, and William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke. Earlier commentators advanced the cause of Southampton, even though his initials are reversed, basing their case principally on the fact that Shakespeare had in 1594 dedicated his two verse works, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* to him and on the assumption that the sonnets were written in the early-mid 1590s. More recent scholarship, however, has tended to discount Southampton's candidacy and to advance that of Pembroke. Hieatt and Jackson's refined stylometric work and statistical analysis have helped shape a consensus as to when the sonnets were composed later than the period of the early-mid 1590s. Katherine Duncan-Jones has determined that the balance of evidence points to the Earl of Pembroke:

> If some of the 'fair youth' sonnets, or versions of them, were written as early as 1592-5, these may indeed have been originally associated with Southampton, dedicatee of the narrative poems in 1593 and 1594. But as completed and published in 1609 the sequence strongly invites a reference to Pembroke. [22]

Duncan-Jones argues that Sonnets 107 and 123-125 contain allusions to events that occurred during the period 1603-04. She is, I think, right about the period but not about all the events. Sonnet 107 makes reference to the death of Elizabeth ("the mortal moon hath her eclipse endurred") and to the new imperial peace brought about by the accession of James, who united the three tribes of England, Scotland and Wales and who was anointed with balm at his Coronation on 25 July 1603. Sonnet 123 alludes to the pyramids erected during 1603-04 as part of the triumphal arches built to celebrate the royal procession celebrating James I's coronation, which was postponed because of the plague until the Ides of March, 15 March 1604. Sonnet 124's indictment of the "foles of time" alludes to events and plotters involved in the Catholic "Bye" and "Main" plots of June-December 1603, about which there was frequent rumour and report as the conspirators were moved about the country, finally to be tried (and some executed) in Winchester.

It is, however, Sonnet 125 that is pivotal in narrowing the field of potential candidates to two, Henry Wriothesley and William Herbert. Sonnet 125 contrasts two liturgical functions. Its opening question, "Wer't it ought to me I bore the canopy," ('Would it have meant anything to me, if I had borne the canopy?') dismisses the office as an outward one, unimportant to the poet, although possibly important to someone else who had borne a canopy. The poet contrasts this external role with his interior act of pure oblation that "knows no art, / But mutuall render, onely me for thee," which is identified in the sonnet with the central Eucharistic *commercium* (see Sonnet 125 for further commentary).

Canopies had been a regular feature of processions in pre-reformation liturgical services, particularly in processions of the Host (the word derived from *Canopeum quod suspenditur super altare*, a canopy suspended over an altar on which oblations were offered). After the Reformation the liturgical practice of using a canopy especially with the Eucharist, had been proscribed, although they were used in courtly rituals and processions. There was, however, a single occasion, when, through a combination of circumstances, a canopy was used in the oblatory setting of a Eucharistic Service and that was at the Coronation of a Monarch, because the Coronation Rite was not a rite in isolation but was always interpolated into a Eucharistic Service, a rubric laid down by the *Liber Regalis* of 1382. James I insisted on using the ancient rite. So also had Elizabeth I, who even retained the Latin; James for the occasion had it Englished. Controversy surrounded his choice and particularly his further insistence that the Rite of Enunction or Anointing be included, even moderate divines finding liturgical anointings doctrinally distasteful. (Anointing with oil had been eliminated from all the Reformed rites of the Church of England, including Baptism, Confirmation, Visiting the Sick, and the Ordering of Deacons and Priests and Consecration of Bishops.) Giovanni Scaramelli, the Venetian Secretary to England, reported on 4 June 1603:

> The question of the Coronation is coming up. The anointing has always been performed by a Catholic Bishop and with the Catholic rite, both in the case of Edward VI. and also of Elizabeth, although Protestants. . . As anointing is a function appointed by God to mark the pre-eminence of Kings it cannot well be omitted, and they cannot make up their minds what expedient they should adopt. The people loath the priestly benediction be it in oil or in water, nor do they admit the sign of the cross except in baptism. The King is an ardent upholder of these objections, and he says that neither he nor any other King can have power to heal scrofula, for the age of miracles is past, and God alone can work them. However he will have the full ceremony. [23]

Scaramelli explains that the King's requirement of a "full ceremony" including anointing was both because his protestant predecessors, Edward and Elizabeth, had used the ritual and because he did not want to jeopardize his claim to be King of France, the French monarch being constituted King through anointing ("so as not to loose this prerogative, which belongs to the Kings of England as Kings of France"). [24] Since oils were no longer consecrated in Maundy Thursday's Mass of Chrism, the oil was not immediately available and was sourced from an old stock; Scaramelli again explains: "The ointment was taken from a vase, enclosed in a goblet, and covered with a white cloth, standing on the altar along with other regalia. They say the oil was consecrated long ago, and is kept in the Tower of London. It served to anoint both Edward the Sixth and Elizabeth, both of them Protestants." [25]

At the Coronation on the Feast of St. James (the *Liber Regalis* laid down that the coronation should occur "some Sunday or Holy-Day"), [26] the King processed to Westminster Abbey, preceded by the Garter "king-at-arms . . acting as master of ceremonies." [27] The ceremony opened with the Communion Service, which continued until the Creed and included as its Epistle the words from 1 Pet. 2.16-17, "As free [men], and not hauyng the libertie for a cloke of maliciousnes . . Honor all men . . Honor the King." The first interpolated ritual was the Enunction, when the Archbishop anointed the King's hands with the invocation, "Let these hands by anoynted, as Kings and Prophets have been anoynted," and subsequently his breast, between his shoulders, both his shoulders, both his elbows and his head. [28] While being anointed he was hidden from view under a canopy held by four Knights of the Garter, who had been chosen and awarded by their companions the privilege of holding the canopy or golden pall over the sovereign's head. ("Four Knights of the Garter shall hold a rich pall of silk or canopy of gold"). [29] They had been chosen by vote at the Knights' Annual Chapter on the Eve of the Feast of St. George, Saturday 2 July 1603. James had earlier installed five new Knights, including Henry, Prince of Wales, two Scottish Knights, and two English Knights, the Earl of Southampton and the Earl of Pembroke. The Knights of the Garter never number more than 24 and in James' time included a number of non-Englishmen. (For their Chapter in 1603 the voting for Southampton and Pembroke was split 3-3, only six Knights voting.) It was from a reduced number, including Southampton and Pembroke, that four were chosen to bear the canopy. [30] Since the four Knights were elected from a total of ten available, either or both Southampton and Pembroke are the only possible candidates for "M^{R}. W. H.," who could have been elected to bear the canopy over the King during the Rite of Anointing.

After other rituals, including the Crowning and the Enthroning, the Coronation section concluded with the Homage, during which "the Earls, Council, and Barons, one by one, kissed the King's hand, kneeling before him on a red brocaded cushion, and touched the crown, some even kissing it." Scaramelli singles out one particular episode during the Homage featuring William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, whose actions stood out because they extended beyond the bounds of propriety:

> The Earl of Pembroke, a handsome youth, who is always with the King and always joking with him, actually kissed his Majesty's face, whereupon the King laughed and gave him a little cuff. (Et fra questi il Conte di Pembruch, giovane gratioso et che sta sempre col Rè et su i scherzi, basciò anco la faccia a Sua Maestà, che si pose a rider el [sic] gli diede un sciaffetto. [31]

Kissing the Monarch's cheek was rubrically reserved to the Monarch's spouse, who "shall touch the Crown upon his Majesty's head and kiss his Majesty's left cheek," and the celebrating Archbishop and the clergy who "kissed the Kings left cheek." [32]

The Communion Service then resumed with the oblation of the bread and wine but with the additional "Oblation of a Pall" by the King, which was laid on the altar and followed by the prayer, "we humbly beseech thee most mercifully to accept these oblations." At the Communion itself Scaramelli notes "the King approached the altar, and . . received the Lord's supper in bread and wine out of the chalice, which had been borne before him. The Queen did not receive the Sacrament." [33]

Sonnet 125, then, restricts the number of candidates, who might have borne a canopy in a Eucharistic setting to two, Henry Wriothesley and William Herbert. Of the two Henry Wriothesley would seem eliminated from contention, because the events to which Sonnet 107 and the final sonnets to the youth allude fall in the period 1603-04, when Wriothesley was already in his thirties (he was born in 1573) and scarcely young. As well, if he were "M^{R}. W. H.," the sequence's initial sonnets urging the youth to marry must have been written before 1595, when Southampton began his intrigue with Elizabeth Vernon, which ended in a rushed marriage in 1598, with which Elizabeth was so displeased she had the parties confined in Fleet prison. As Jackson succinctly concludes, "If I am correct in thinking that the 'marriage sonnets' are no earlier than the second half of the 1590s, they cannot have been commissioned to overcome any reluctance of Henry Wriothesley, earl of Southampton, to marry." [34]

The case for William Herbert, on the other hand, is compelling. Born in 1580 he was the older son of the second Earl of Pembroke and Mary, Countess of Pembroke, the sister of Sir Philip and Sir Robert Sidney. He succeeded to the title on 19 January 1601 on the death of his father, a well-known supporter of the theatre and for a short period from 1594 patron of "Pembroke's Men," a company of actors. Mary, Countess of Pembroke, was renowned for her own literary accomplishments (she completed a translation of the psalms that Philip Sidney had begun) and for her support of poets (Thomas Churchyard in 1593 acclaims her "wise Minervaes wit" and records that she "sets to schoole, our poets eu'ry where"). [35] William Herbert was first sent to New College, Oxford in 1593 and subsequently to court where he distinguished himself early as a fine courtier (Rowland Whyte, the agent in London of Sir Robert Sidney who was in Holland, reports to him on 12 September 1599 that "My Lord Harbert is a continuall Courtier," on 25 November that, "My Lord Harbert is exceedingly beloved at Court of all men," and on 29 November that, "Lord Harbert is highly favoured by the Queen"). [36]

Despite being an attractive prospect Pembroke for a variety of reasons would not commit to marriage, which fits well with the poet's urging the youth to marry in the first section of 19 sonnets. He declined in 1595, at an early age, to accept Elizabeth Carey, daughter of Sir George Carey on grounds of "not liking." In 1597 lengthy negotiations failed to conclude a nuptial contract with Bridget Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford and in 1599 a further proposal to match him with the niece of the Earl of Nottingham, was unsuccessful. [37] Rowland Whyte reports to his uncle Robert Sidney, "I do not find any disposition at all in this gallant young Lord to marry." [38] Pembroke clearly was preoccupied with other things, including tennis and tilting. (Whyte reports on 26 September 1600 that "My Lord Harbert resolves this yeare to shew hymself a man at armes, and prepares for yt," and on 30 October 1600, that "My Lord Harbert is practising at Greenwich . . He leapes, he daunces, he singes . . he makes his horse runne with more speede.") He was also preoccupied with affairs of court and other affairs of the heart.

(Clarendon later allowed that "he was immoderately given up to women.") [39] Late in 1600 Mary Fitton, daughter of Sir Edward Fitton, one of Sir Henry Sidney's presidents in Ireland, was "proued with chyld, and the Earl of Pembroke beinge examyned confesseth a fact but utterly renounced all marriage." [40] The child died at birth: Tobie Matthew recounts to Dudley Carelton on 25 March 1601, "The Earle of Pembrooke is committed to the fleet; his cause is deliuered of a boy, who is dead." [41] After a brief spell in prison on 12 August 1601 he was banished from court by Elizabeth to Wilton, one of the family residences. In September 1603 negotiations were under way to conclude a marriage with Mary Talbot, daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury: on 17 September Thomas Crewe writes to the the Countess of Shrewsbury that he had been asked by Sir Thomas Edmonds, "whether I had bene acquaynted with a motion of a match betwene my Lord of Pembroke and my Ladye Marye," while on 23 December he informs the Earl of Shrewsbury that he has "found a reall and determyned resolution in my Lord of Pembroke to pcede to the concludinge of matters between yor Lo. and him uppon the conditions pposed by yor L." [42] He married Mary Talbot on 4 November 1604. The marriage was childless.

It is highly unlikely that William Herbert and Shakespeare would not have been acquainted with one another, certainly around the turn of the century. Subsequent to his coronation, for example, James I, because of the plague in London, spent most of the remainder of the year holding court at Wilton, occasionally visiting the Sidney home where both the Countess and her family were in residence: on 29-30 August 1603 the "Royal Party were entertained at Wilton" and again in October. On 2 December 1603 Shakespeare's company, the "Kings men," newly named on 17 May 1603, were present at Wilton (presumably absent from London where the theatres were closed) and acted before the King for which they were paid £30, although it is not known what was performed. [43] It is reasonable, then, to assume that the two would have been known to each other.

Further evidence in support of William Herbert can be found among the procreation sonnets at Sonnet 3, which calls on the youth to look upon himself in a mirror, and, seeing his reflected beauty, be moved to beget another face, in which he will in future times see himself afresh.

> Looke in thy glasse and tell the face thou vewest,
> Now is the time that face should forme an other,
> Whose fresh repaire if now thou not renewest . .

The poet proceeds, in one of the most carefully crafted sonnets of the sequence, to cite as an exemplar the youth's mother, who now sees again in her son "the louely Aprill of her prime." So ought the youth be able to see again, despite his later wrinkles, his prime reflected in his child. Citing the youth's mother and not, as might be expected, his father suggests a deliberate departure from convention (it is the only reference to an actual mother in the sequence), since a continuance based on the father would have more firmly established the parallelism of the youth seeing his image in a child begotten by him (there is a cryptic allusion, couched in the past tense, to the youth's father in Sonnet 13, "You had a Father, let your Son say so"):

> Thou art thy mothers glasse and she in thee
> Calls back the louely Aprill of her prime,
> So thou through windowes of thine age shalt see,
> Dispight of wrinkles this thy goulden time.

The phrase 'the April of one's prime' or 'April of one's age' was of very recent literary lineage and was closely associated with the Countess of Pembroke through a passage in Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*, composed during the early 1580s, first published in 1590 and subsequently in 1593 by the Countess. The trope is found in an Arcadian episode, when Pamela is being urged to marry Amphialus by his mother Cecropia, who argues that, while beauty must either flourish or be devoured by time, her son's love would forgo looking on Pamela if it were to "breed" any offence:

> for Beauty goes awaye, deuoured by Time, but where remaines it euer flourishing, but in the hart of a true louer? And such a one (if euer there were any) is my son: whose loue is so subiected vnto you, that rather then breed any offence vnto you, it will not delight it selfe in beholding you. There is no effect of his loue (answered *Pamela*) better pleaseth me then that: but as I haue often answered you, so, resolutely I say vnto you, that he must get my parents consent, and then he shall know further of my minde.

Cecropia then addresses Pamela as, "O sweet youth," and instructs her to contrast the face she will later look upon in a mirror with her present face: her glass must teach her the lesson that she is now "in the april of your age:"

> so do you pleasantly enioy that, which else will bring an ouer-late repentance, when your glas shall accuse you to your face, what a change there is in you. Do you see how the spring-time is full of flowers, decking it selfe with them, and not aspiring to the fruits of *Autumn*? what lesson is that vnto you, but that in the april of your age, you should be like *April*?

Cecropia finally urges Pamela to seize this occasion to marry and not have recourse to the fruitless argument that she needs her parents' permission. Does Pamela want her beauty not to endure and be cut short by wrinkles,

> Your selfe know, how your father hath refused all offers made by the greatest Princes about you, & wil you suffer your beauty to be hidden in the wrinckles of his peuish thoughts? [44]

The trope was immediately used by Samuel Daniel in his sequence, *Delia*. Daniel was a regular at Wilton from 1590-91 onwards and acknowledges the Countess' assistance, when addressing his *A Defence of Rhyme* to William Herbert in 1603:

> Hauing bene first incourag'd & fram'd thereunto by your most worthy & honorable mother, and receiued the first notion for the formall ordering of those compositions at *Wilton*, which I must euer acknowledge to haue beene my best Schoole. [45]

The Delia of his sequence, it has been argued by Margaret Hannay, was the Countess of Pembroke herself. [46] A selection of Daniel's sonnets had been appended without warrant and with mistakes to the pirated edition of *Astrophil and Stella* in 1591. In the 1592 authorized edition of *Delia*, dedicated to the Countess, Daniel uses the trope to complain of Delia (or the Countess), "the starre in my mishap imposd this paine, / To spend the Aprill of my yeeres in wayling." [47] Daniel also for the first time attaches to the volume's frontispiece the motto, "Aetas prima canat veneres postrema tumultus" ('The prime of life sings of loves, later life of strifes'). The adage is from Sextus Propertius. [48] The phrase would become a favourite of poets and sonneteers: Michael Drayton in *Peirs Gaueston Earle of Cornwall* of 1594 has, "This *Edward* in the April of his age;" George Peele in *The Old Wiues Tale* (1595) calculates that the April of one's age extends only to 20 years ("I seeme, about some twenty yeares, the very Aprill of mine age");

Bartholomew Griffin in *Fidessa* (1596) remarks, "I Haue not spent the Aprill of my time, / The sweet of youth in plotting in the aire," while Robert Tofte in *Laura* (1597) writes, "Rich Damaske Roses in faire cheekes doo bide / Of my sweet Girle, like *Aprill* in his prime." [49]

The trope, then, was closely associated with the Herbert/Sidney circle and was used particularly and formally of William Herbert in 1607 by Richard Carew, an antiquary, poet, local historian and an intimate of the family. As a young scholar at Christ Church, Oxford, he had been summoned in 1570 to a *disputatio ex tempore* with Sir Philip Sidney, which he described as an "unequal encounter with Achilles" ("impar congressus Achilli"). He translated the first five cantos of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* [50] and was the author of *The Excellencie of the English Tongue*, written in 1605 but not published until 1614, at whose conclusion he argued for the preeminence of English verse by drawing parallels between a number of poets, ancient and modern, among whom he paired Shakespeare and Catullus:

> Will you reade Virgill? take the Earle of Surrey: *Catullus*? Shakespheare and Barlowes [sic] fragment: Ouid? Daniell, Lucan? Spencer, Martial? Sir Iohn Dauies and others. Will you haue all in all for Prose and verse? take the miracle of our age Sir Philip Sidney. [51]

He also translated Henri Estienne's *L'introduction au traité de la conformité des merveilles Anciennes avec les modernes* of 1566 under the title, *A World of Wonders: Or an Introduction to a Treatise touching the Conformitie of ancient and moderne wonders* published in 1607. [52] Just as John Heming and Henry Condell dedicated the 1623 folio edition of Shakespeare's works to "The Most Noble and Incomparable Paire of Brethren. William Earle of Pembroke, &c. Lord Chamberlaine to the *Kings most Excellent Maiesty*. And Philip Earle of Montgomery, &c. Gentleman of his Maiesties Bed-Chamber," so Carew dedicated his *A World of Wonders* to the same pair, "To the Right Honorable Lords, William Earle of Pembroke: Philip Earle of Montgomerie: *Patrons of learning*: *patterns of Honor*." (Carew's is a standard play on the patron/pattern pun; see also Thorpe's description of John Florio as "both patterne and patron.") [53] In his dedication he presents his translation as "his poore Orphane newly come into a strange country," and acknowledges that Estienne had hosted the Earls' uncle, Philip Sidney, in Heidelberg, Salzburg and Vienna and had dedicated his Greek New Testament of 1576 to him. He acclaims their mother as "your honourable Mother (the vertuous Ladie, and thrise renowned Countesse of Pembroke" and in words echoing the Arcadian passage above dedicates his work to her offspring, "whom the blossoms of many rare vertues putting forth so timely in this Aprill of your age, do promise more then ordinary fruite of great good in time to come." [54] Shakespeare's comparison of mother and son in Sonnet 3, in which the youth pointedly is instructed to imitate his mother and to see reflected in his child "the louely Aprill of [his] prime," shares a literary trope originating in *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*. The trope was deliberately applied to William Herbert in a conventional and formal dedication by Richard Carew in 1607. The literary and historical conjunctions strongly urge an identification of the youth of the sequence as William Herbert.

An objection to the candidacy of William Herbert (and indeed Henry Wriothesley) is the claim that Thorpe, who in his other dedications is given to craven propriety, would never have addressed an Earl as 'M^{R}.' [55] But addressing "M^{R}. W. H.," as "M^{R}.' obtains an anonymity that would pique buyers' interest and enable Thorpe, if necessary later, to disavow any identification. That it was a deliberately discreet or surreptitious mode of address is clear from the barbed censure of anonymous dedications by Ben Jonson. In the dedication to his *Epigrammes* in 1616 he resolves to address them explicitly to the Earl of Pembroke, now Lord Chamberlain. He addresses Pembroke correctly as "MY LORD" and avows that he "*dare not change your title*" and so under the name of "Lord" resolves to "*offer to your Lo: the ripest of my studies, my* Epigrammes." He will not imitate whomever it was that needed to mask the identity of his dedicatee by using a cypher, having nothing on his conscience that he need hide: "*For, when I made them, I had nothing in my conscience, to expressing of which I did need a cypher*." [56] A "cypher" was an abbreviation, [57] but was also the specific term used, when the initials of a name, rather than the name itself, were engraved on title-leaves or in dedications, often in polemical writings to hide the identity of the author. Robert Parsons, for example, takes exception in his *An Answer to a Certayne Vayne, and Arrogant Epistle of O. E.* to the author who "resolued to mask, and cypher his name vnder the letters of O.E." and attacks him for "masking himselfe with the vizard of two vowels O.E. (which may stand perhaps in his cypher for *Owles Eyes* to looke thorough and to see, and not be seene agayne)." [58] In the years before 1616 there is no instance of a dedication to any one in any volume under the cypher, "W. H.," which would have been the cypher for William Herbert, other than the occurrence of the initials in Thomas Thorpe's dedication to *Shake-speares Sonnets*. If Jonson's jibe is to be taken at face value, it must refer to an occasion when William Herbert's name was not fully used in a dedication, but a cypher employed instead, and the sole occasion when the cypher "W. H." was used was in Thorpe's dedication. Jonson claims that "conscience" played a part in masking the identity. Just why conscience should have caused Herbert's name to be cyphered remains unknown.

I have chosen to replicate the 1609 *quarto* edition of *Shake-speares Sonnets* and to transcribe the text with a minimal critical apparatus, so giving due weight to the printed copy without editorial impact. The univocal direction of modern spelling, which prioritizes one meaning over others, faces difficulty when confronted by fluid early modern spelling. The complexity, for example, of Sonnet 3’s “vn-eard wombe,” where “vn-eard” can and is intended to be heard as ‘uneared’ (unfecundated), ‘uneared’ (untilled), ‘unaired’ and ‘unheired’ is best carried by the *quarto*’s irregular spelling.

In later years continuing to work on Shakespeare’s sonnets would not have been possible without the database “Early English Books Online” (EEBO). The greater majority of early modern texts consulted here have been found at EEBO. I have not listed the database for every entry either in the Bibliography or in footnotes, but acknowledge my general debt to the site here and at the head of the Bibliography. It has been an essential tool and a modern marvel. Likewise I am indebted to the database, “The Latin Library,” for nearly all Latin quotations.

All translations from Latin, Greek and Italian sources, unless otherwise noted, are mine.

Footnotes:

1. Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia. Wits Treasury Being the Second part of Wits Commonwealth* (London: P[eter] Short, 1598) 281-82.

2. A.K. Hieatt, Charles W. Hieatt, and Anne Lake Prescott, "When did Shakespeare write Sonnets 1609?" *Studies in Philology* 88.1 (Winter 1991): 69-109; MacD. P. Jackson, "Vocabulary and Chronology: The Case of Shakespeare's sonnets," *Review of English Studies* 52 (February 2001): 59-75.

3. Andrew Gurr, "Shakespeare's first poem: Sonnet 145," *Essays in Criticism* 21 (1971): 221-26.

4. In Spenser's case separating out the fescennine from his epithalamium had been forced upon him. Classical convention laid down that the role of presenter of an epithalamium, who was never the bridegroom, should be bawdy one. But this was not allowed Spenser because he is both the bridegroom, who acts always considerately and with propriety, and the presenter. Hence he has extracted the bawdy elements from the epithalamium and included them as the second element of a tripartite structure. In this he was supported by the example of his model, Claudian's *Epithalamium de nuptiis Honorii Augusti*, which, wherever it is found in extant Latin manuscripts or in Renaissance editions, is preceded by four short fescennine verses.

5. The numerological perspectives in Spenser's *Epithalamion* are well known, but the *Amoretti* themselves are also highly structured around the liturgical year: 22 sonnets before Sonnet 23, which celebrates Ash Wednesday, 46 sonnets celebrating the 46 days of Lent before Sonnet 68, which celebrates Easter Sunday, then a further 22 sonnets concluding with Sonnet 89.

6. Duncan-Jones has pointed out that the 28 sonnets (127-54) directed to the Dark Lady mirror the lunar or menstrual cycle, even if Sonnets 153-54 are scarcely directed towards her (William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (London: Thomson Learning, 2004) 99).

7. Thomas Wright, *A Succinct Philosophicall declaration of the nature of Clymactericall yeeres, occasioned by the death of Queene Elizabeth* (London: Thomas Thorpe, 1604) 3-5 *passim*.

8. A conclusion by an early Folger cataloguer that the initial pages of their Aspley copy are a facsimile is erroneous.

9. MacD. P. Jackson, "Punctuation and the Compositors of Shakespeare's Sonnets (1609)," *The Library* 5th series, 30 (1975): 1-24. The *quarto* enigmatically mistakes "thy" for "their" (presumably because the manuscript contractions for 'thy' and 'their' confused the compositors) at 26.12, 27.10, 35.8, 37.7, 43.11, 45,12, 46.3, 8, 13, & 14,

69.5, 70.6, 128.14, where the mistakes cease. In Jackson's analysis Compositor B was more inclined to errors.

10. Thorpe together with Aspley applied on 23 June 1603 to have registered "A panegyric or congratulation for the concord of the kingdomes of great Britaine in the vnitie of religion vnder king JAMES." The application was declined, because the work was already entered in the name of 'Master Seaton.' His other blemish came in 1611, when he published *The Odcombian Banquet: Dished foorth by Thomas the Coriat*, which was printed by Eld and which Pollard and Redgrave catalogue as "Largely a pirated reprint of the prelims. of Coryate, Thomas. Corayts crudities."

11. Ben Jonson, *Ben Jonson*, ed. C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-52) 4.330.

12. Ben Jonson, *Sejanus*, ed. Jonas A. Barish (New Haven: Yale University Press) 205: "The exactness of the marginal annotations, the closeness with which the typography conveyed Jonson's metrical intentions, and the corrections made in proof all suggest that Jonson oversaw the printing himself."

13. The "T. T.," who published Thomas Nashe's *A Myrror for Martinists* in 1590 was probably too early to be Thomas Thorpe, although he would later publish Nashe's *Christs Teares Over Ierusalem* in 1613 using George Eld as printer. Similarly the "T. T.," who in 1595 commended Richard Barnfield's *Cynthia. With Certaine Sonnets, and the Legend of Cassandra* is unlikely to be Thorpe, even if he had obtained his right to publish in 1594.

14. See Epictetus, *Epictetus his Manuall. And Cebes his Table. Out of the Greeke Originall, by Io*: *Healey* (London: G[eorge] Eld for Th[omas] Thorpe, 1610) A3^{r} & A4$^{r\text{-}v}$. Compare Richard Carew's entitling the Earl or Pembroke and his brother, Philip, Earle of Montgomery as "*Patrons of learning*: *patterns of Honor*" (Henri Estienne, *A World of Wonders*: *Or an Introduction to a Treatise touching the Conformitie of ancient and moderne wonders*: *Or a Preparatiue Treatise to the Apologie for Herodotvs. The Argument whereof is taken from the Apologie for Herodotvs written in Latine by Henrie Stephen, and continued here by the Author himselfe. Translated [by* R[ichard] C[arew]] *out of the best corrected copie* (London: John Norton, 1607) ¶4^{v}. Shakespeare also plays with the dual meaning in Sonnets 19 and 98. The Geneva Version New Testament of 1557 has at Heb. 8.5, "the patrone and shadowe of heauenly thynges;" the 1560 Geneva Version Bible has "the paterne & shadowe of heauenlie things."

15. See Augustine, *St. Augustine, of the Citie of God*: *with the Learned Comments of Io. Lod. Vives. Englished by J[ohn] H[ealey]* (London: George Eld, 1610) A3$^{r\text{-}v}$.

16. Arthur Dent, *The Hand-Maid of Repentance. Or, A Short Treatise of Restitution* (London: Thomas Thorpe, 1614) A4^{v}-A5^{r}.

17. Epictetus, *Epictetus Manuall. Cebes Table. Theophrastus Characters. By Io. Healey* (London: George Purslowe, 1616) A2^{r}.

18. See Ben Jonson's caution to his bookseller, "Nor haue my title-lease on posts, or walls, / Or in cleft-sticks, aduanced" ("Epigram to his Book-seller" in *Epigrammes* (London: William Stansby, 1616) 770. Jonson's usage predates the *OED*'s first citation of 1745.

19. Hugo of St. Victor, *An Exposition of certayne words of S. Paule, to the Romaynes, entiteled by an old wryter Hugo . . By Richarde Coorteese* (London: H. Jackson, 1577) K1^{v}-2^{r}; Augustine, *A right Christian Treatise, entituled S. Augustines Praiers*: *Published in more ample sort than yet it hath bin in the English tong . . by Thomas Rogers* (London: Henry Denham, 1581) a5^{r}; Philip Stubbes, *A Christal Glas for christian women* (London: T[homas] Orwin, 1592) B1^{v}; William Cowper, *Three Heauenly Treatises vpon the Eight Chapter to the Romanes* (London: Thomas Snodham, 1609) 68.

20. Philip Sidney, *Sir P. S. His Astrophel and Stella. Wherein the excellence of sweete Poesie is concluded* (London: Thomas Newman, 1591) A2^{v}.

21. Duncan-Jones, *Sonnets* 12-13.

22. Duncan-Jones, *Sonnets* 69.

23. Horatio F. Brown, ed., *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy*, vol. 10, 1603-1607 (Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus-Thomson Reprint, 1970) 43-44.

24. Brown 44.

25. Brown 76.

26. Church of England, *The Ceremonies, Form of Prayer, and Services used in Westminster-Abby at the Coronation of King James the First and Queen Ann his Consort . . Never before Published* (London: Randal Taylor, 1685) 3.

27. Brown 75.

28. Church of England, *Coronation of King James* 7.

29. Church of England, *The Coronation Service*.

30. Since April 23, the normal date of the Feast of St. George, coincided in 1603 with Holy Saturday, the day before Easter, the Feast was adjourned to 2 July. The new Knights were installed on the Eve of the Feast, Friday 1 July (see Nichols 194, "and adjorned the solemnytie of the Feast of St. George untill the 2d of July then next following, beinge Saturday, on which day, it beinge made the Eve of St. George's Feast, it was kept at

Windsore," and 198, "This day the King does hold St. George's Feast, which began yesterday with the Installation of the new Knights").

31. Brown 77.

32. Church of England, *The Coronation Service*; Church of England, *Coronation of King James* 10.

33. Brown 77.

34. MacD. P. Jackson, "Vocabulary and Chronology: The Case of Shakespeare's sonnets," *Review of English Studies* 52 (February 2001): 74; Jackson's case is a strong one.

35. Thomas Churchyard, *A Pleasant conceite penned in verse* (London: Roger Warde, 1593) B1^{v}.

36. John Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, His Royal Consort, Family and Court*, vol. 1 (London: J. B. Nichols, 1828) 254.

37. Margaret P. Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix. Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) 265.135.

38. Duncan-Jones, *Sonnets* 55.

39. Nichols 255; Edward, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England Begun in the Year 1641*, ed. W. Dunn McRay, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888) 4.72.

40. Sir Robert Cecil to Sir George Carew, 5 February 1601 in *Letters from Robert Cecil to George Carew*, ed. John Maclean (London: Camden Society, 1864) 88, 65.

41. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1601-03 with Addenda 1547-1565*, vol. CCLXXIX, 36.

42. Nichols 267 & 301.

43. Nichols 254.

44. Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: William Ponsonby, 1593) 137$^{r\text{-}v}$.

45. Samuel Daniel, *A Defence of Ryme. Against a Pamphlet entituled: Obseruations in the Art of English Poesie* (London: Edward Blount, 1603) E8^{v}. Whether Daniel was young William Herbert's tutor, as claimed by the *Dictionary of National Biography*,

remains a moot point. Hannay points out that both of the Countess' sons left for Oxford in March 1593, although Daniel might have tutored her daughter Anne, if he was at Wilton from 1592-94 (see Hannay 247.37.) If Daniel was at Wilton during 1590-91, he would have been assisting Hugh Stanford, who was Pembroke's tutor from 1586 and collaborated with the Countess while preparing the interfoliated text of the expanded 1593 *Arcadia*.

46. Hannay 117-19.

47. Samuel Daniel, *Delia, Contayning certayne Sonnets*: *with the complaint of Rosamond* (London: Simon Waterson, 1592) 27.1-2; see Philip Sidney, *Syr P.S. His Astrophel and Stella. Wherein the excellence of sweete poesie is concluded. To the end of which are added, sundry other rare sonnets of diuers noble men and gentlemen* (London: Thomas Newman, 1591) 74. The unauthorized version runs, "The Starre of my mishap imposd my paining / To spend the Aprill of my yeares in crying."

48. Sextus Propertius, *Elegies* 2.10.7.

49. Michael Drayton, *Peirs Gaueston Earle of Cornwall. His life, death, and fortune* (London: I[ames] R[oberts], 1594) 211; George Peele, *The Old Wiues Tale. A pleasant conceited Comedie, played by the Queenes Maiesties players. Written by G.P.* (London: John Danter, 1595) E1^{v}; Bartholomew Griffin, *Fidessa, more chaste then kinde* (London: Widow Orwin, 1596) 35.1-2; Robert Tofte, *Laura. The Toyes of a Traueller. Or The Feast of Fancie. Diuided into three Parts* (London: Valentine Sims, 1597) 2.38.1-2.

50. Torquato Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or The Recouerie of Hiervsalem. An Heroicall poeme written in Italian by Seig. Torquato Tasso, and translated into English by R[ichard] C[arew] Esquire* (London: John Windet, 1594).

51. Richard Carew, *The Excellencie of the English tongue by R.C. of Anthony Esquire to W. C.* in William Camden, *Remaines, concerning Britaine: But especially England, and the Inhabitants thereof* (London: John Legatt, 1614) 44.

52. Chapter 17 contains the story of *Measure for Measure*.

53. Carew, *World* ¶3^{r}. Carew also laments in his dedication the growing practice of unlicensed publishing and literary piracy: "Therfore considering there are so many theeues lying in the way, and so many pirats in this our paper-sea (as wel sea-dogs as land critickes) it cannot be that any mans writings should safely trauaile into any country without safe conduct, nor ariue at any coast without a conuoy."

54. Carew, *World* ¶4^{v}.

55. See Hannay's curt dismissal: "The outdated theory that "Master W. H." of Shakespeare's sonnets is William Herbert should have been immediately disproved by the terms of address: before he inherited his earldom, young William was Lord Herbert or

perhaps even Sir William, but never simply "Master" (Hannay 251). The use of "Mr.," a contraction of 'Maister,' in Elizabethan and Jacobean protocol was complex. It had traditionally been prefixed to the name of a knight or bishop (the *OED* cites Foxe's *Acta et Monumenta*, "Maister Latymer encouraged Maister Ridley when both were at the stake") and subsequent to the Reformation was used of those awarded the degree of Master of Arts, often as an accumulative title. The Earl of Pembroke, for example, writes of "Mr. Doctor Dunn" (Duncan-Jones, *Sonnets* 67). Pembroke himself was incorporated as a "Maister of Art" on the occasion of the King's visit to Oxford on Friday 30 August 1605. (See Anthony Nixon, *Oxfords Triumph: In the Royall Entertainement of his moste Excellent Maiestie, the Queene, and the Prince: the 27 August last, 1605* (London: Ed[ward] Allde, 1605) E3^{v}.) The title was also prefixed to those peers of the realm who occupied specific courtly positions: the Master of his Majesty's Horse in 1605 was the Earl of Worcester, the Master of the Ordinance of England, the Earl of Devon; the Master of the Kings Household and the Master of the Rolls could be similarly addressed. William Herbert was made Custos Rotolorum or Master of the Rolls for Glamorgan in July 1603 and as such could be addressed as Master.

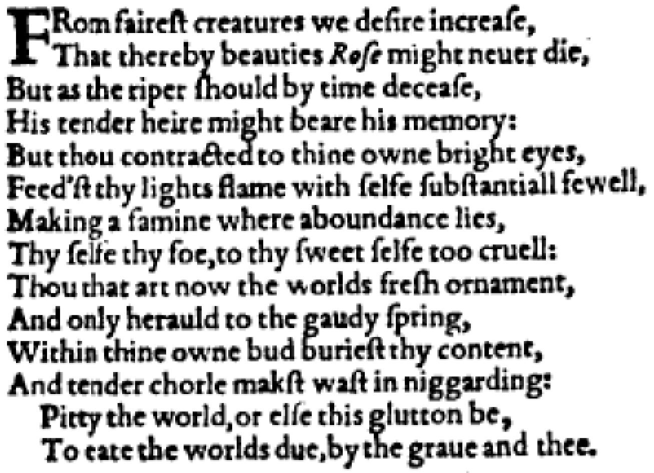
56. Jonson, *Epigrammes* 767.

57. Thomas Cooper, *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae Britannicae* (London: Henry Bynneman, 1584) nota, "A cipher, note, or abbreuiation."

58. Robert Parsons, *An Answer to a Certayne Vayne, and Arrogant Epistle of O. E. minister, vnto N. D. author of the Ward-word* in *The Warn-Word to Sir Francis Hastinges Wast-Word . . Whereunto is adioyned a breif* [sic] *reiection of an insolent, and vaunting minister masked with the letters O.E.* (Antwerp: A. Conincx, 1602) A1^{r} & 97. Parsons himself customarily published under a cypher, in this case "N.D.," and his habit was censured in turn by Thomas Morton, who cites Cardinal Bellarmine against him: "the same Cardinall elswhere noteth that *Author sine nomine est sine authoritate*, that is, *An Author without a name is without authority*: by which reason I am licenced to dismisse this railing and scolding libeller, as a man (if yet he be a man and not a woman) of no credit. Neuerthelesse, seeing that this Cypher will stand for a digit and be thought to be some-body I will answer something to him" (Thomas Morton, *The Encounter Against M. Parsons, By A Review of his Last Sober Reckoning* (London: William Stansby, 1610) 2.76).

Commentary

Sonnet 1


FRom faireſt creatures we deſire increaſe,
That thereby beauties *Roſe* might neuer die,
But as the riper ſhould by time deceaſe,
His tender heire might beare his memory:
But thou contracted to thine owne bright eyes,
Feed’ſt thy lights flame with ſelfe ſubſtantiall fewell,
Making a famine where aboundance lies,
Thy ſelfe thy foe,to thy ſweet ſelfe too cruell:
Thou that art now the worlds freſh ornament,
And only herauld to the gaudy ſpring,
Within thine owne bud burieſt thy content,
And tender chorle makſt waſt in niggarding:
  Pitty the world,or elſe this glutton be,
  To eate the worlds due,by the graue and thee.

1
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That thereby beauties *Roſe* might neuer die,
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  Pitty the world, or elſe this glutton be,
  To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.

Sonnet 1 is the first of a series of nineteen sonnets urging the young man to generate children and indicting his narcissism. It is not a customary dedicatory sonnet, although its first line, “From fairest creatures we desire increase,’ echoes Genesis, the *locus biblicus* of openings. The expectation recalls God’s command, “bring ye forth fruite & multiplie: grow plentifully in the earth, and increase therein” (9.10; *GV*). The injunction is to “euery liuing creature” and “vnto perpetuall generations” (9.12; *GV*). The line is made axiomatic through the generalizing “we:” “increase” is desired but particularly of the “fairest creatures," so that, accordingly ("thereby"), "beauties *Rose* might neuer die," an echo of a more focussed biblical instruction, "Hearken vnto me ye holy vertuous children, bring foorth fruite as the rose that is planted by the brookes of the fielde" (Ecclus. 39.13; *BB*). (The occurrence of italics in the sequence is inconsistent and without guiding principle.) The epithet, "beauties *Rose*," is the 'perfection of beauty' as well as 'the rose that is beauty's' and was standard (compare Barnes, *Parthenophil and Parthenoph*e 45.1, "Sweet bewties rose in whose fayre purple leaues"). In addition, because 'my rose' ("mea rosa") was a term of endearment from classical times (see Sonnet 109.14, "thou my Rose"), the rose of beauty is also 'the darling of which beauty is enamoured.' [1] Since, the poet claims, anything that reaches maturity ("riper") will be reduced by time to nothing ("decease"), any issue will enable the "tender heire" of "beauties Rose" ("his" meaning 'its') to carry forward ("beare" with suggestions of child-bearing) the memory of what perfect beauty once was. (Shakespeare's choice of "riper," a word he uses only once elsewhere, was probably made with an eye to the Latin, *mollior*, from *mollis*, = riper.) [2] A "tender heire" is one of early years. But Shakespeare may be playing also with the false etymology of '*mulier'* or 'wife' from *mollis* = tender + *aer* = air. (Henri Estienne describes this "notation of *Mulier*, *quasi mollis aër*," as a "subtil and curious Etymologizing.") [3] The wordgame was available as early as Caxton [4] and Shakespeare uses it as a crux at the end of *Cymbeline*:

> The peece of tender Ayre, thy vertuous Daughter,
> Which we call *Mollis Aer*, and *Mollis Aer*
> We terme it *Mulier*; which *Mulier* I diuine
> Is this most constant Wife. (5.5.444-47)

If the widely known pun was heard, and if "his" is read as 'his,' two further meanings occur: 'the youth's new offspring will perpetuate his memory' and 'the youth's *mulier* will bear a child to continue his memory.'

The use of "tender" introduces the sonnet's narcissistic motif and demonstrates what is everywhere apparent in the sequence, that Shakespeare's use of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which contains the myth, is often closer to its original source than to any 16th century translation such as that of Arthur Golding. His indebtedness to Ovid is generally meticulously crafted. "Tender" was a trait of the 16 year old Narcissus and Ovid introduces him as 'one in whose tender form ("in tenera forma") was such durable pride that none of the many youths and maidens, who desired him, affected or touched him.' [5] Golding doesn't translate "in tenera forma," but glosses it as "in that grace of Natures gift." [6] Both "tener" and "mollis" (and both when rendered as "tender") were used interchangeably of effeminate men. Cooper's *Thesaurus* under "mollis" gives, "Homo mollis. A delicate, nice, or effeminate person," and cites, "Plini. Vetant dari senibus & pueris, item mollibus ac foeminei corporis. To them that be of tender complexion and softe like women," as well as Cicero, "Effoeminatum aut molle." [7] Juvenal identifies those who are effeminate ('teneris") with those who are like Maecenas, an identification developed in Sonnet 55. [8]

The youth is "contracted to thine own bright eyes," 'betrothed or drawn to his own eyes,' or like Narcissus, 'sees encapsulated ("contracted") in his own eyes his reflected image:' Ovid has 'contracted (or seized) by the image of the form he sees' ("visae correptus [= contracted or seized] imagine formae"), while "bright eyes" is a rendering of his "sua lumina." [9] The youth, "Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fewel:" 'he nourishes his flame of life by burning up the substance of himself as fuel.' In Ovid Narcissus 'enflames and burns up at the same time' and 'burns, fueled by what he sees' ("quod videt, uritur illo"). [10]

The motto most associated with Narcissus was his cry, "inopem me copia fecit," rendered by Golding and Spenser as "my plentie makes me poore." [11] Ovid's "copia" (from *co* + *ops* = abundance, as opposed to *in* + *ops* = poor) is procreatively significant, because a few lines earlier Narcissus, having called to Echo, 'let us come together' (even sexually) ("coeamus" from *co* + *eo* = come together; the noun is 'coitus'), rebuffs her physical approaches by shouting, 'I will die before my abundance ("copia") is yours.' [12] Shakespeare renders the motto as, "Making ("fecit") a famine ("inopem") where aboundance ("copia") lies," and thus accuses the youth of refusing to engender fruitfulness or beauty ("increase"), an absorption of self that leads, as in the case of Narcissus, only to "decease." The youth is at war with himself (his image) and cruel to himself ("Thy selfe thy foe, to thy sweet selfe too cruell"). He is like Narcissus who inquires, 'has any loved more cruelly ("crudelius") than I?' and later exclaims, 'Stay, cruel one ("crudele"), do not forsake me who loves you,' yet who must bid farewell to his image, his "sweet selfe" ("dilecte puer," in Golding's words, "Alas sweete boy belovde in vaine, farewell.") [13] The echo will recur in the last sonnet to the youth, Sonnet 126, where he is addressed as "louely Boy."

The friend is for "now" the youngest or greenest piece ("fresh ornament") decorating the world. He is the most conspicuous ("only") herald of the "gaudy spring," either the 'richly-displayed' spring or the 'green' spring. Yet within his burgeoning life ("bud") he shuts up as in a grave ("buriest") his "content," 'that which is contained within' or 'that which gives happiness.' He is a "tender chorle," who makes "waste in niggarding." The epithet parallels the earlier "tender heire," while a "chorle" is a miser or one who is niggardly. The youth, not spending himself ("niggarding"), wastes himself. The accusation recalls the words of Isaiah, speaking of a time to come, when "A nigard shall no more be called liberall, nor the churle riche" (32.5; *GV*). He is like Narcissus who in Ovid was 'made meagre ("attenuatus" = without ornament), wasted ("liquitur") and slowly devoured ("carpitur") by an enclosed desire.' [14]

The couplet instructs the youth to be generous and to forgive unlike a miser ("Pitty the world"), otherwise he will be the kind of glutton who devours what the world is owed ("due") by devouring himself or by having the grave devour him without an heir, a mirrored consumption. The glutton and the grave were traditionally linked through the archetypical glutton of Luke 16, "the rich glutton . . lockt in his graue as fast as poore Lazarus," in the words of the popular 16th century preacher, Henry Smith. [15] He sought pity, because "I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16.24; *GV*).

1.1. See Plautus, *Asinaria* 3.3.664, "mea rosa."

1.2. See *AYL* 3.5.120.

1.3. Carew, *World* 292.

1.4. See Jacobus de Cessolis, *the game and playe of the chesse*, trans. William Caxton (Bruges: William Caxton & Colard Mansion, 1474) n.p., "For the women ben likened vnto softe waxe or softe ayer and therfor she is callid mulier whyche Is as moche to saye in Latyn as mollys aer. And in english soyfte ayer."

1.5. Ovid, *Met*. 3.353-55, "multi illum iuvenes, multae cupiere puellae; / sed fuit in tenera tam dura superbia forma, / nulli illum iuvenes, nullae tetigere puellae."

1.6. Ovid, *The xv. Bookes of P. Ouidius Naso*: *entituled, Metamorphosis. A worke verie pleasand and delectable. Translated out of Latin into English meeter, by Arthur Golding Gentleman* (London: John Danter: 1593) 3.439-42, "The hearts of divers trim yong men his beautie gan to move, / And many a Ladie fresh and faire was taken in his love. / But in that grace of Natures gift such passing pride did raigne, / That to be toucht of man or Mayde he wholy did disdaine."

1.7. See Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 25.25.6, who links those of a 'tender ("mollis") and effeminate body and disposition and those that are meagre or tender ("teneris"): "Vetant dari senibus, pueris, item mollis ac feminei corporis animive, exilibus aut teneris, et feminis minus quam viris." Cicero, *De Officiis* 1.129, "Quibus in rebus duo maxime sunt fugienda, ne quid effeminatum aut molle et ne quid durum aut rusticum sit."

1.8. Juvenal, *Satire* 12.39, "vestem purpuream teneris quoque Maecenatibus aptam" ('purple attire befitting effeminates and also Maecenases').

1.9. Ovid, *Met*. 3.416 & 3.420, "spectat . . geminum, sua lumina, sidus" ('he looks at his bright eyes, his pair of stars'); compare Golding 3.526, "his ardent eyes which like two starres full bright and shyning bee."

1.10. Ovid, *Met*. 3.426, "pariterque accendit et ardet;" compare Golding, 3.536, "He is the flame that settes on fire, and thing that burneth tooe;" Ovid, *Met*. 3.430.

1.11. Ovid, *Met*. 3.466; Golding 3.587; Spenser, *Amoretti* 35.8, "so plenty makes me poore," and the gloss to the September emblem in *The Shepheardes Calendar*:

This is the saying of Narcissus in Ouid. For when the foolishe boye by beholding hys face in the brooke, fell in loue with his owne likenesse: and not hable to content himselfe with much looking thereon, he cryed out, that plentye made him poore, meaning that much gazing had bereft him of sence.

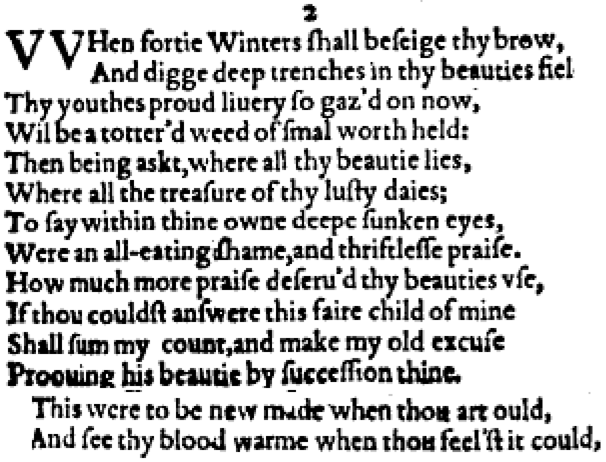
1.12. Ovid, *Met*. 3.391, "'ante' ait 'emoriar, quam sit tibi copia nostri;'" Golding 3.487, "I first will die ere thou shalt take of me thy pleasure."

1.13. Ovid, *Met*. 3.442, "'ecquis . . crudelius' inquit 'amavit;'" Golding 3.555-56, "was thee ever any That loovde so cruelly as I?;" Ovid, *Met*. 3.477-78, "remane nec me, crudelis, amantem desere;" Golding 3.601, "Forsake me not so cruelly that loveth thee so deere;" Ovid, *Met*. 3.500; Golding 3.627.

1.14. Ovid, *Met*. 3.89-90, “attenuatus amore / liquitur et tecto paulatim carpitur igni; Golding 3.615-16, “spent and wasted through desire, / Did he consume and melt away with Cupids secret fire.”

1.15. See Henry Smith, *The Sermons of Henrie Smith gathered into one volume* (London: Richard Field, 1593) 553.

Sonnet 2



2
VVHen fortie Winters ſhall beſeige thy brow,
And digge deep trenches in thy beauties fiel
Thy youthes proud liuery ſo gaz'd on now,
Wil be a totter'd weed of ſmal worth held:
Then being askt,where all thy beautie lies,
Where all the treaſure of thy luſty daies;
To ſay within thine owne deepe ſunken eyes,
Were an all-eating ſhame,and thriftleſſe praiſe.
How much more praiſe deſeru'd thy beauties vſe,
If thou couldſt anſwere this faire child of mine
Shall ſum my count,and make my old excuſe
Proouing his beautie by ſucceſſion thine.
This were to be new made when thou art ould,
And ſee thy blood warme when thou feel'ſt it could,

2
WHen fortie Winters ſhall beſeige thy brow,
And digge deep trenches in thy beauties field,
Thy youthes proud liuery ſo gaz’d on now,
Wil be a totter’d weed of ſmal worth held:
Then being askt, where all thy beautie lies,
Where all the treaſure of thy luſty daies;
To ſay within thine owne deepe ſunken eyes,
Were an all-eating ſhame, and thriftleſſe praiſe.
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If thou couldſt anſwere this faire child of mine
Shall ſum my count, and make my old excuſe
Proouing his beautie by ſucceſſion thine.
  This were to be new made when thou art ould,
  And ſee thy blood warme when thou feel’ſt it could,

Sonnet 2 is a working of the sonneteers’ standard ‘siege’ conceit, turned to unconventional purpose. It opens by envisaging a time when “fortie Winters” will have laid siege to the youth’s brow. Forty was an indeterminate, large number with strong biblical precedents (it was associated with Noah, Moses, Elijah and Christ’s sojourn in the desert) and with the period of forty days’ service a knight enjoined of his tenant (or servant in livery), while “fortie winters” was the number required for a marriage of long-standing: see Puttenham’s example of the figure “*Noema* . . or close conceit:” “I thanke God in fortie winters that we haue liued together, neuer any of our neighbours set vs at one.” [1]

The projected forty winters will "digge deep trenches;" trenches were dug during sieges, they are formed when a field is ploughed, and metaphorically are wrinkles etched in a brow. [2] The image was traditional from classical times, from Vergil ('he ploughs the brow with furrows') and Ovid ('furrows which may plough your body will come already') to Shakespeare's contemporary, Drayton, "The time-plow'd furrowes in thy fairest field." [3] The primary meaning of "field" is a battlefield where a siege might occur, but it retains its agricultural or husbandry sense, taken up later in "weed," and is also an heraldic term for the surface of an escutcheon or shield, on which a "charge" is imposed. The colours of a servant's "liuery" were those of an armorial shield's field and principal charge, so the royal livery is scarlet trimmed with gold.

The youth's "proud liuery" is the costume in which he is dressed or that which identifies him as youth. Liveries were distinctive clothing worn by retainers or soldiers and were generally uniforms that were not owned, implying that the youth's beauty is not his own; "proud" is splendid, but Narcissus' 'stubborn pride' ("dura superbia"), which precluded young men and women from embracing him, is also relevant, because the youth's form, "so gaz'd on now," by others but pertinently by himself, is akin to Narcissus'. [4] His livery will be a "totter'd weed," a base plant that is past its prime and drooping, or a costume ("weed") that is ragged or tattered. (Sonnet 26.11, "puts apparrell on my tottered louing," draws on Horace's depiction of Cupid as not dressed in 'tattered weeds' ("sine sordibus"). Whether 'tottered' or 'tattered,' the livery will be reckoned of little value.

At such a time the youth might be asked where all his "beautie" or all the treasure of his "lusty daies," all that he has hoarded in himself and not put to use, might lie. If, self-absorbed in his gaze and refusing to be touched by others, he were to reply that his "treasure" could only be found in his "deepe sunken eyes," eyes sunken with age and not resting under a straight brow, then it would be an "all-eating shame;" "deepe sunken" hints at a treasure deeply buried or lost in the deep. Like Sonnet 1 where the youth buries his "content" and eats or deprives the world of its due, his reply here would be a shame that consumes all things. It would be a "thriftlesse praise," a praise without return and improvident.

The sestet proposes a better response ("How much more praise deseru'd thy beauties vse"), where "use" intends use of beauty, sexual use of beauty, or even usury or profit gained from beauty used thriftily. The reply is expressed as direct speech from the youth's mouth: "this faire child of mine / Shall sum my count." A child begotten by him would be the total of all his accounts, would 'top off' his account, or would sign off his account as a final audit. A child would justify the youth's active lustiness in his old age ("make my old excuse") by "proouing his beautie by succession thine." The action of "proouing" is both a mathematical and legal confirming, while "succession" is both a physical and legal action. Begetting an heir ("This"), the youth in old age would be renewed ("be new made when thou art ould"). Then his "blood," which is thinner and less warming in old age, would be made warm by gazing on his off-spring, or he would gaze on his issue (his "blood") and see it warm (alive or "lusty"), even as he feels his blood cold.

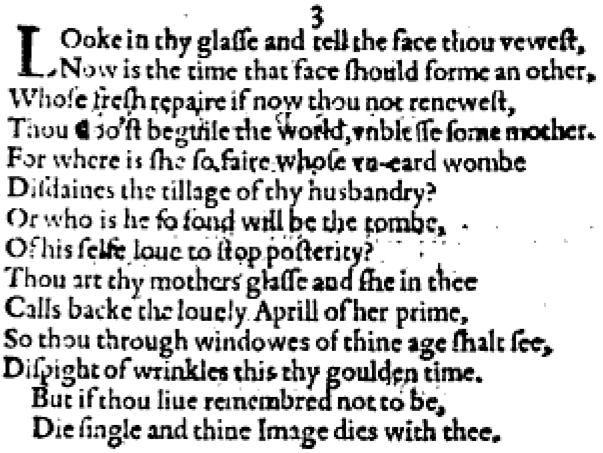
2.1. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (London: Richard Field, 1589) 193.

2.2. Compare *Tit*. 5.2.23, "Witnesse these Trenches made by griefe and care."

2.3. Vergil, *Aeneid* 7. 417, "frontem rugis arat;" Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 2.118, "jam venient rugae, quae tibi corpus arent;" Michael Drayton, *The Shepheardes Garland, Fashioned in nine Eglogs*. *Rowlands Sacrifice to the nine Muses* (London: Thomas Woodcocke, 1593) 9.46; compare Fulke Greville, *Caelica* 27 bis.7, "In beauties field" (*Certaine Learned and Elegant Workes of the Right Honorable Fulke Lord Brooke* (London: E[lizabeth] P[urslowe], 1633) 178.

2.4. Ovid, *Met*. 3.354; Golding 3.441-2.

Sonnet 3



3
LOoke in thy glaſſe and tell the face thou veweſt,
Now is the time that face ſhould forme an other,
Whoſe freſh repaire if now thou not reneweſt,
Thou doo’ſt beguile the world, vnbleſſe ſome mother.
For where is ſhe ſo faire whoſe vn-eard wombe
Diſdaines the tillage of thy huſbandry?
Or who is he ſo fond will be the tombe,
Of his ſelfe loue to ſtop poſterity?
Thou art thy mothers glaſſe and ſhe in thee
Calls backe the louely Aprill of her prime,
So thou through windowes of thine age ſhalt ſee,
Diſpight of wrinkles this thy goulden time.
  But if thou liue remembred not to be,
  Die ſingle and thine Image dies with thee.

Sonnet 3 is one of the most intricate of the sequence, as if particular care has been taken with it. It makes explicit the beloved’s gaze, requiring him to look upon himself in the mirror (“Looke in thy glasse”) and instruct the face he sees to “forme an other,” (The repeated “now,” picked up from Sonnet 2, emphasizes the urgency of his instruction.) To ‘form again its shape’ is Shakespeare’s rendering of metamorphosis (compare Rom. 12.2, “be ye chaunged in your shape” [*BB*; koinè, “μεταμορφοῦσθε”]; his choice of “forme” reflects Ovid’s “forma” used often of Narcissus). [1] In shaping another the youth would resist the example of Narcissus, who looking at his face is absorbed in “selfe loue,” of which he was the archtype. “Amor sui” or “Philautia” was a common topic of emblem books identified with Narcissus through Ovid’s phrase, “uror amore mei.” [2] Whitney has an emblem entitled “*Amor sui*” with an impresa featuring Narcissus at the brook, verses condemning "selfe loue," and a sidenote citing, "Ouid. Metam. lib. 3." [3] (In Sonnet 62 it will be the poet who is possessed by the "Sinne of selfe-loue.") The youth must not stifle the mutuality required for the begetting and perpetuating of beauty; he must not be like Narcissus, who, although engendering love in others, refused the physical touch required for generation. [4] The "fresh repaire" or unaged condition of his face must be created again in a child ("repaire," suggestive of re + père, anticipates the homophones of the next three lines). If his condition is not replicated, then the world will be cheated ("beguiled') and some (prospective) mother will be deprived of the blessing of a child ("vnblesse some mother").

The poet next poses a complex rhetorical question, "For where is she so faire whose vn-eard wombe / Disdaines the tillage of thy husbandry?" 'Husbandry' is both the art of being a husband and skill in agriculture, particularly tilling. To 'ear' or 'are' is firstly to 'plough' or 'till' (from Old English *erian* = to plough); "vn-eard" intends 'unploughed.' An unploughed womb is one still physically intact (compare *Ant*. 2.2.232, "He ploughed her, and she cropt"). Being vn-eard," the potential mother would remain untilled and unharvested of children. Secondly a womb that is "vn-eard" is a womb that has yet to be fecundated – the ear being that part of a stalk of wheat or corn, which has been pollinated and grown to fruitfulness. The poet asks where is the woman, who would refuse to have her 'uneared' womb made fruitful through "the tillage of thy husbandry?" Picturing the womb as wheat was traditional iconography deriving from the Song of Solomon's blason, where the spouse's "wombe is like a heape of wheate" [7.2; *BB*]. Her womb, "a garden inclosed" or *hortus conclusus* (4.12; *GV*), was subsequently identified with the Blessed Virgin, whose womb, it was popularly thought, was made fruitful through the ear at the Annunciation. (The *hortus conclusus* trope will be developed in Sonnet 16.) Thirdly, homophonically, a womb that is "vn-eard" is an 'unaired' womb, a womb or vessel that is not yet open to the air, a vessel that, like a glass bottle, is 'stopped' (see line 8, "stop"). The conceit of the womb as vial is taken up in, "pent in walls of glasse" (Sonnet 5.10), and, "Make sweet some viall" (Sonnet 6.3), where the womb is closed to a distillation or spirit. Where, then, is the woman, whose womb would remain unopened to the air, disdaining the youth's "tillage," the purpose of tilling being to air the soil? Finally, a womb that is “vn-eard” is an ‘unheired’ womb, one that has not borne an heir. Where, asks the poet, is the woman, who would disdain the youth’s tilling and husbandry and not bear an heir? (Shakespeare uses the same pun, “heyre” [heir] and “eare” [to till], in dedicating *Venus and Adonis* to the Earl of Southampton: “*But if the first heyre of my inuention proue deformed, I shall be sory it had so noble a god-father*: *and neuer after eare so barren a land, for feare it yeeld me still so bad a haruest*.”) [5] Alternatively the youth is addressed: “who is he so fond,” a rendering of Ovid’s ascription of Narcissus as “credule” or foolish. [6] What man would, like Narcissus, foolishly become a “tombe,” generated by (“of”) his “selfe loue,” in which future progeny will be stopped or closed off?

The poet now has recourse to the youth’s mother as an *exemplum* and *speculum* (“Thou art thy mothers glasse”). In her offspring she sees and is reminded of (“Calls backe”) her youth, “the Aprill of her prime.” April is a spring month; “prime” is both spring and the height of perfection. Ovid uses it of Narcissus, “primo in aevo” (‘in prime of age’), which Golding renders “floure of youth.” [7] Like his mother, if the youth were to beget a child, he could look back through the windows of his later age and recall his “goulden time;” *tempus aureum* or *aetas aurea* was an Ovidian hallmark. [8] He could look back “dispight of wrinkles,” those across the brow as well as those stretching from the corners of his eyes from the squinting caused by age.

The couplet is cautionary: “if thou liue remembred not to be” intends ‘if the youth lives with the intention of not being remembered’ or ‘if he live, only to be forgotten.’ (The common pun on ‘remember,’ to put the members back together’ or ‘regenerate,’ is also present.) The poet’s recriminatory risposte, “Die single,” is the fate also of Narcissus, called by Ovid, “puer unice,” a vocative indicating “single boy.” He finally warns that, in dying unmarried, not only the youth but his “Image,” that borne in the “glasse” and that to-be-born[e] in his child, will also die (or not come to be). [9]

3.1. Ovid, *Met*. 3.416, 439, 455, 503.

3.2. Ovid, *Met*. 3.464.

3.3. Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes* (Leyden: Christopher Plantyn, 1586) 149.

3.4. See Sonnet 1 and Ovid, *Met*. 3.353-5; Golding 3.439-42.

3.5. William Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis* (London: Richard Field, 1593) A2^r; for further evidence of such homophones see Helge Kökeritz, *Shakespeare’s Pronunciation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1953) 90, 103, 111, 448 & 449.

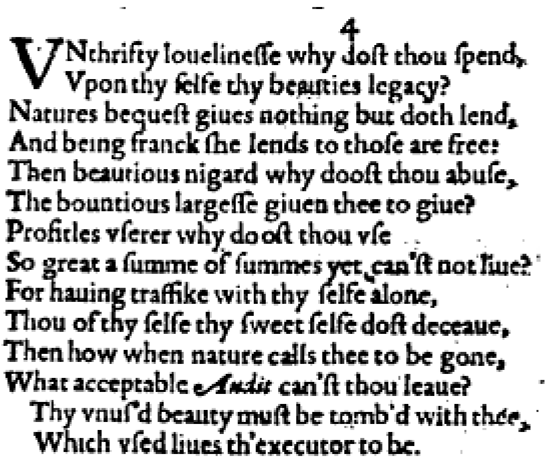
3.6. Ovid, *Met*. 3.432.

3.7. Ovid, *Met*. 3.470.

3.8. Ovid, *Met*. 1.89.

3.9. “Image” carries the double idea of ‘air’ (likeness) and ‘heir’ in *WT* 5.1.123-4, “Your Fathers Image is so hit in you, / (His very ayre).” It is also Golding’s normal rendering of the Ovidian “imago.”

Sonnet 4


4
VNthrifty louelineſſe why doſt thou ſpend,
Vpon thy ſelfe thy beauties legacy?
Natures bequeſt giues nothing but doth lend,
And being franck ſhe lends to thoſe are free:
Then beautious nigard why dooſt thou abuſe,
The bountious largeſſe giuen thee to giue?
Profitles vſerer why dooſt thou vſe
So great a ſumme of ſummes yet can'ſt not liue?
For hauing traffike with thy ſelfe alone,
Thou of thy ſelfe thy ſweet ſelfe doſt deceaue,
Then how when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable *Audit* can'ſt thou leaue?
Thy vnuſ'd beauty muſt be tomb'd with thee,
Which vſed liues th'executor to be.

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VNthrifty louelineſſe why doſt thou ſpend,
Vpon thy ſelfe thy beauties legacy?
Natures bequeſt giues nothing but doth lend,
And being franck ſhe lends to thoſe are free:
Then beautious nigard why dooſt thou abuſe,
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Then how when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable *Audit* can’ſt thou leaue?
Thy vnuſ’d beauty muſt be tomb’d with thee,
Which vſed liues th’executor to be.

Sonnet 4 makes explicit the accounting motif of the prior sonnets. The youth’s willingness to spend prodigally upon himself and not at all on someone else is the cause of nature’s ultimately unsatisfied “*Audit*”. Its opening epithet defines him as, “Vnthrifty louelinesse.” “Vnthrifty” means ‘wasteful’ or ‘not used providently;’ “louelinesse” is both his ‘beauty’ and his ‘capacity to love.’ He is asked why he spends upon himself his “beauties legacy,” the beauty he has received as a bequest and which he should bequeath to his issue but squanders on himself (“spend / Vpon thy selfe;” in Sonnet 129 it is an “expence of Spirit” that is wasted). The quadruple repetition of “thy selfe” emphasizes his absorption in self. The beauty bequeathed him by nature is not a gift but a loan, which an executor might hold in trust. Nature, being free with her wares, lends to her own, to those who are equally free: “And being franck she lends to those are free.” The line plays on the alliterative pairing, ‘frank (from *francus* = free) and free.’

The second epithet, “beauteous niggard,” recalls Sonnet 1’s “chorle,” who “makst wast in niggarding;” “beauteous” is a poetical form of beautiful; “niggard” is one who hoards for or in himself. The youth is asked, “why doost thou abuse, / The bountious largesse giuen thee to giue?” To abuse oneself was a social colloquialism intending not to do oneself justice, but was used also of the sin of incontinency either with a woman or by the self. Thomas Howell in his moral “Fable,” attached to his translation of Ovid’s Narcissus section, identifies Narcissus as one incapable of using his gifts (“lackes the skyl, so godlye gyftes to vse”) and casts him as a figure of self abuse, because “he consumeth, himself that doth abuse.” [1] Sins of self abuse were subject to biblical condemnation: Paul cautions, “Be not deceaued: neither fornicatours, nor idolatours, nor adulterers, nor weaklinges, nor abusers of them selues with mankinde . . shall inherite the kingdome of God” (1 Cor. 6.9; *BB*). The youth, unwilling to pass on his “bountious largesse”,” like Narcissus abuses it. He is a “Profitles vserer,” one who refuses to lend out money, so that no gain accrues. He is asked why he is prepared to “vse / So great a summe of summes yet can’st not liue?” A “summe of summes” (“summa summarum”) was firstly an accounting term, being in medieval ledgers the final totals in each column that required balancing. The volume or tome itself came to be called a *summa summarum*, in which all details were laid out. [2] The youth is thus asked why he should spend the totality of himself upon himself: “vse” means not so much ‘use for profit’ (as a userer) which he won’t do, but ‘use up’ in or for himself. The result is that he cannot live or give life. Secondly the original Latin phrase, “summa summarum,” while intending the totality of something, was used bawdily: Plautus, for example, writes of “Venus in whose hands arises the height of heights (“summa summarum”) of lovers.” [3] The youth thus uses his “great . . summe of summes,” but to no creative purpose. He is accused of “hauing traffike with thy selfe alone.” To “traffike” was to deal commercially, often shadily. The result of trafficking only with the self is no profit or return. But a “traffic” was a whore or strumpet [4] and to 'traffic' was to have sexual intercourse. [5] To traffic with oneself alone was considered a sin of self-abuse, because it was not procreative.

Since the youth cheats himself by himself or for his own sake ("of thy selfe thy sweet selfe dost deceaue"), he has ignored the Pauline warning above, "Be not deceaued." The poet's last question addresses, as does Sonnet 126, his final day of reckoning, after nature has called him "to be gone." What "acceptable *Audit*" will he leave? An audit was an official examination of accounts, often conducted orally after Luke 16.2, "Howe is it, that I heare this of thee" ('audit' is from *audire* = to hear), and was used of the final judgment after death (see Sonnet 126). If he die without begetting his beauty in another, what kind of statement of accounts would nature find acceptable? His beauty, not having yielded a return ("vnus'd"), must be buried with him ("tombed;" but suggestive of 'tomed' or recorded in a *summa summarum*). If, however, beauty were to be used and an heir produced, then the child could act as beauty's guardian and trustee ("executor to be").

4.1. Thomas Howell, *The fable of Ouid treting of Narcissus, translated out of Latin into Englysh Mytre, With a moral therunto, uery pleasante to rede* (London: Thomas Hackett, 1560) D1^{r}; Shakespeare may also have in mind Horace's words on spending (in Thomas Drant's translation), "Away with wealth, if that a man / haue not a tyme to vse it: / The niggarde to straite to him selfe, / what doth he but abuse it? / Who sekinge howe to benefite his heire in al he can" (Horace, *Horace his arte of poetrie, pistles, and satyrs Englished*, trans. Thomas Drant (London: Thomas Marshe, 1567) C7^{v}.

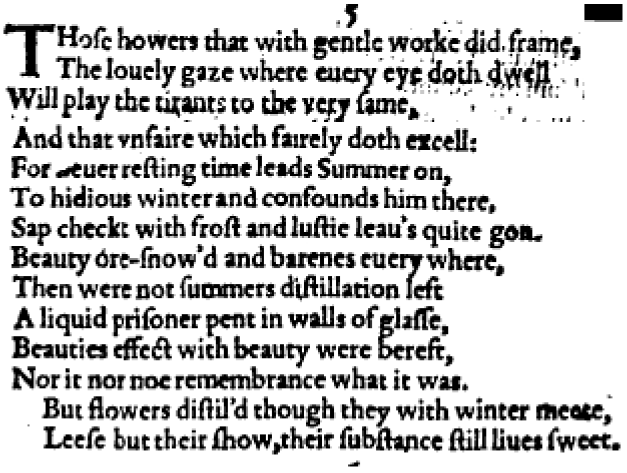
4.2. The first "Summa Summarum" was William Poul of Pagula's *Speculum iuris canonici ac reportorium et vocatur Summa Summarum*, a 14th century compendium of Canon Law.

4.3. Plautus, *Truculentus*, 1.1.24-25, "Venus, / quam penes amantum summa summarum redit."

4.4. Compare Robert Greene, *A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher, whether a Theefe or a Whoore, is most hurtfull in Cousonage, to the Common-wealth. Discovering the Secret Villanies of alluring Strumpets. With the Conuersion of an English Courtizen, reformed this present yeare, 1592* (London: A[bel] I[effes], 1592) A4^{v}, "a trafficque, or as base knaues tearme vs strumpets.

4.5. See Thomas Lodge, *The Life and Death of william Long beard* (London: Richard Yardley, 1593) B3^{v}, "with this faire damosell William Long beard traffiqued his fancies."

Sonnet 5



5

THoſe howers that with gentle worke did frame,
The louely gaze where euery eye doth dwell
Will play the tirants to the very ſame,
And that vnfaire which fairely doth excell:
For neuer reſting time leads Summer on,
To hidious winter and confounds him there,
Sap checkt with froſt and luſtie leau's quite gon,
Beauty ore-ſnow'd and barenes euery where,
Then were not ſummers diſtillation left
A liquid priſoner pent in walls of glaſſe,
Beauties effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it nor noe remembrance what it was.
  But flowers diſtil'd though they with winter meete,
  Leeſe but their ſhow,their ſubſtance ſtill liues ſweet.

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The louely gaze where euery eye doth dwell
Will play the tirants to the very ſame,
And that vnfaire which fairely doth excell:
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  But flowers diſtil’d though they with winter meete,
  Leeſe but their ſhow, their ſubſtance ſtill liues ſweet.

The “howers,” with which Sonnet 5, the first of a pair of sonnets, opens are the classical ‘Hours,’ the *Horae* or Ὥραι, daughters of Zeus and Themis, who presided over the seasons - *hora* can also mean ‘season’ - and their products and were thought to engender ripeness in nature and the prime of human life. The sonnet continues the imagery of childbirth and the natural of the preceding sonnets: “gentle” work is noble and natural work (from *gens* or *geno*/*gigno* = beget); “frame” intends ‘shape’ or ‘fashion,’ and was used specifically of a child in the womb. [1] The “howers” have fashioned the youth’s “louely gaze,” his way of looking lovingly and beautifully; on him all eyes are fastened (“where euery eye doth dwell”). But the hours, which created his look, will in time act as destructive tyrants and make “vnfaire” that which in its fairness excels.

The *Horae* govern the seasons: "neuer resting time" is a time that is inexorable and without stop (Ovid's *tempus inexcusabile* = time that won't be refused). [2] It "leads on," either 'drives' or 'beguiles' or 'guides' summer into winter; "hidious winter" is 'rough' or 'horrifying' winter, another Latinism and a rendering of *hiems atrox* = hideous winter; [3] "confounds" intends 'utterly defeats.' "Sap checkt with frost" is the first of a series of floating participles or Latinate ablative absolutes: "checkt" means 'stopped,' so that summer's life-force is 'halted' or 'bottled up.' But "checkt" keeps the sense of 'variegated' or 'chequered,' so the life force is 'mottled' with white frost. The vigorous ("lustie") leaves of summer depart, beauty is covered over with snow ("ore-snow'd"), and only bareness or barrenness is present ("barenes euerywhere").

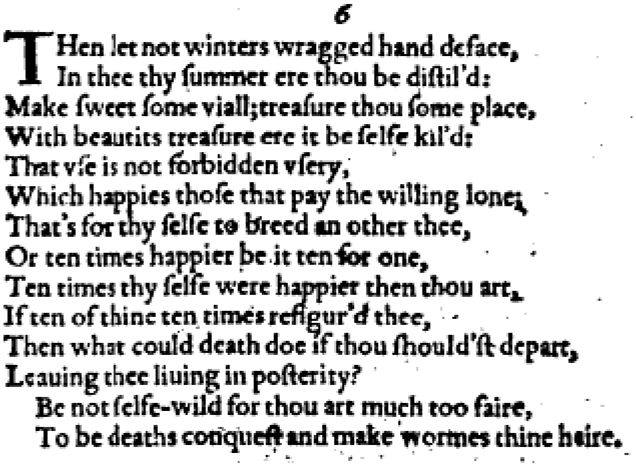
The sestet develops the distillatory trope, hinted at in Sonnet 3.8-9 and recurring in Sonnets 54, 74 and 119. If, the poet argues, the essence of summer were not preserved as a distilled liquid shut up in a limbeck ("a liquid prisoner pent in walls of glasse"), then that which beauty produces ("beauties effect") would be stripped ("bereft") of beauty ("pent" intends 'confined' but hints at 'wishing to burst forth'). Neither beauty nor any "remembrance" of it would remain to continue life (the sentence is without a verb). But, the couplet argues, if flowers are distilled and encounter winter's barrenness, they lose ("leese," a customary old spelling) only their display ("but their show"), and not their quintessence ("substance") which, as sweetness, will remain alive. ("Leese" is probably so spelt to suggest 'lees,' the dregs or sediment left after distilling.) The argument is taken up in the opening to Sonnet 6, "Then let . ."

5.1. See Peter de la Primaudaye on foetal development, "*Of the fashion of a childe in the wombe and how the members are framed*" (*The Second Part of the French Academie* (London: G[eorge] B[ishop] *et al.*, 1594) 393) or Edmund Spenser, *Amoretti* 8.9, "You frame my thoughts and fashion me within."

5.2. Ovid, *Met.* 7.511.

5.3. See Pliny, *Hist.* 18.35.80.353.

Sonnet 6



6
THen let not winters wragged hand deface,
In thee thy ſummer ere thou be diſtil'd:
Make ſweet ſome viall;treaſure thou ſome place,
With beautits treaſure ere it be ſelfe kil'd:
That vſe is not forbidden vſery,
Which happies thoſe that pay the willing lone;
That's for thy ſelfe to breed an other thee,
Or ten times happier be it ten for one,
Ten times thy ſelfe were happier then thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee,
Then what could death doe if thou ſhould'ſt depart,
Leauing thee liuing in poſterity?
Be not ſelfe-wild for thou art much too faire,
To be deaths conqueſt and make wormes thine heire.

6
THen let not winters wragged hand deface,
In thee thy ſummer ere thou be diſtil'd:
Make ſweet ſome viall; treaſure thou ſome place,
With beautits treaſure ere it be ſelfe kil'd: beauties
That vſe is not forbidden vſery,
Which happies thoſe that pay the willing lone;
That's for thy ſelfe to breed an other thee,
Or ten times happier be it ten for one,
Ten times thy ſelfe were happier then thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee,
Then what could death doe if thou ſhould'ſt depart,
Leauing thee liuing in poſterity?
  Be not ſelfe-wild for thou art much too faire,
  To be deaths conqueſt and make wormes thine heire.

Sonnet 6's opening picks up Sonnet 5's distillatory motif; its first line, "Then let not winters wragged hand deface," parallels Sonnet 64's opening, "When I haue seene by times fell hand defaced." A "wragged hand" is one that is 'rough' or 'without feeling,' or one wrapped only in rags, or finally a hand that breaks things down to the minutest parts.[1] Winter's hand must not "deface" the youth's summer. To "deface" was to 'disfigure' (later the children the youth might beget will 'refigure' him), or to take away the face, the distinguishing marks, and so make anonymous or unremembered.

Distillation involves heating a substance until it vaporizes, then, through cold, condensing the vapour, so that drops of pure 'spirit' or 'essence' are obtained. Before his flowering ("summer") is effaced by age or death ("winter"), either a 'purified spirit' of the youth's self must be obtained ("distil'd") or his spirit must be 'discharged' ("distil'd" also meant 'let fall in drops'), so that the "viall," the womb of some woman, might be made sweet by infusion of his essence. A "viall" was the glass limbeck, which in distilling received the spirit (Florio identifies under "Boccia," "*a viall of glasse . . a pot to distill in . . a kinde of limbecke*"), and was traditionally used of the womb: the *OED* cites Lydgate's invocation to the Blessed Virgin, "O glorious viole, O vitre inviolate." The youth must "treasure some place / With beauties treasure," either 'hold precious' some place or deposit his "treasure" in some "place," some 'sexual place,' which will give birth to his beauty ("treasure" could mean both 'semen' and 'off-spring;' compare *Cor*. 3.3.116, "treasure of my Loynes"). This must be done before "it be selfe kil'd," before his spirit dies in itself or is self-wasted - a hint of self-abuse is present. In Sonnet 20 the use of the youth's love will be the "treasure" of women.

The sonnet moves from distilling to the usurious through the play on "vse," both 'sexual use' and, as a synonym common in the early 17th century, 'usury.' Usury had a long history from the Roman *centesima usura* (a hundredth part of interest paid monthly, thus 12%) onwards. It was the subject of frequent biblical injunctions and was denounced in medieval and reformed theology. In Shakespeare's time its meaning and legitimacy were much debated. His own father had been accused in 1570 of usury, of charging 20% and 25% interest. Elizabethan divines preached uncompromisingly against usury in principle but often tolerated it in practice: the Act against Usury of 1571, while providing punishments for usury above and below 10%, unwittingly legitimized a standard interest rate of 10%. Henry Smith's divided thinking is typical:

> I would haue you know, that our Law doth not allow ten in the hundreth, nor fiue in the hundreth, nor one in the hundreth, nor any vsurie at all: but there is a restraint in our Law that no vsurer take aboue tenne in the hundreth, it doth not allow ten in the hundreth, but punisheth that tyrant which exacteth aboue ten in the hundreth.[2]

It is the acceptable 10% interest rate that becomes the basis of Shakespeare's play on tens and tens x tens = hundreds, although his assertion that, if someone is "willing" and happy to pay interest on a loan, the usury ceases to be forbidden is questionable and partly poetic licence: "That vse is not forbidden vsery, / Which happies those that pay the willing lone."

Any "use" or usury ("willing" is sexually suggestive) is given to the young man, so that he might beget another self ("for thy self"). If in begetting he were to yield a tenfold return ("ten for one"), he would, in the standard Petrarchan epithet, be "ten times happier." [3] If he were to be "refigur'd," either 'multiplied' or 'his self figured anew,' ten times in his children or ten by ten (a hundred) times in his children's children, then he would be correspondingly ten times or a hundred times happier. Then death would be rendered impotent, even if the youth should die ("depart;" until 1661 the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Rite of Marriage" contained the phrase, "till death vs depart"), because he would 'leave' as his inheritance his own self living successively in his children and their children ("posterity").

The command, "Be not selfe-wild," makes explicit the earlier "selfe kil'd:" either 'be not obstinate,' or 'do not bequeath yourself (as in a will) only to yourself,' or 'do not spent the spirit in your will (penis) only on yourself.' He is "too faire" to be the spoil of death; "conquest" is the spoils of battle that death will claim, but the legal sense of 'conquest,' those goods gained other than through inheritance ("heire"), is also present. If the youth is committed to the grave with no heir, then the worms bred from his body will be his only inheritance ("make wormes thine heire"). [4]

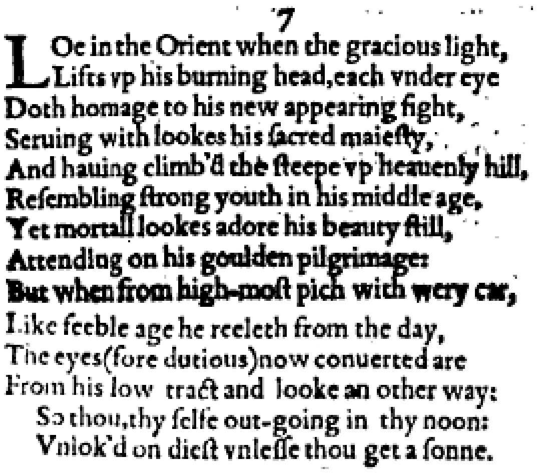
6.1. Compare John Donne, "The Sunne Rising," 10 in John Donne, *Poems, By J.D. with Elegies on the Authors Death* (London: M.F. for John Marriot, 1633) 199 (wrongly 169), "houres, dayes, moneths, which are the rags of time," and "Sermon II. Preached at Pauls, upon Christmas Day, in the Evening. 1624" in *LXXX Sermons Preached by That Learned and Reverend Divine, Iohn Donne, Dr in Divinity, Late Deane of the Cathedrall Church of S. Pauls London* (London: Richard Royston, 1640) 12, "first and last are but ragges of time." A 'ragged hand' or rhyme was used also of 'uneven' or 'rough' verses, see Edmund Spenser, *The Sheepheardes Calender* (London: Hugh Singleton, 1579), Epistle, "rymes more ragged and rustical."

6.2. Henry Smith, *The Examination of Vsurie, in two Sermons* (London: Robert Field, 1591), 29.

6.3. Compare, Thomas Watson, *The ῾ΕΚΑΤΟΜΠΑΘΙΑ Or Passionate Centurie of Loue* (London: John Wolfe, 1582) 35.7, “o ten times happie;” E.C., *Emaricdulfe, Sonnets Written by E.C. Esquier* (London: Matthew Law, 1595) 14.1, “ô ten times happie.”

6.4. The line of thought from vials to worms had biblical precedent: see Isaiah 14.11, “Thy pompe is brought downe to ye graue, *and* the sounde of thy violes: the worme is spred vnder thee, and the wormes couer thee” (*GV*).

Sonnet 7



7
LOe in the Orient when the gracious light,
Lifts vp his burning head,each vnder eye
Doth homage to his new appearing ſight,
Seruing with lookes his ſacred maieſty,
And hauing climb'd the ſteepe vp heauenly hill,
Reſembling ſtrong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortall lookes adore his beauty ſtill,
Attending on his goulden pilgrimage:
But when from high-moſt pich with wery car,
Like feeble age he reeleth from the day,
The eyes(fore dutious)now conuerted are
From his low tract and looke an other way:
  So thou,thy ſelfe out-going in thy noon:
  Vnlok'd on dieſt vnleſſe thou get a ſonne.

7
LOe in the Orient when the gracious light,
Lifts vp his burning head, each vnder eye
Doth homage to his new appearing ſight,
Seruing with lookes his ſacred maieſty,
And hauing climb'd the ſteepe vp heauenly hill,
Reſembling ſtrong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortall lookes adore his beauty ſtill,
Attending on his goulden pilgrimage:
But when from high-moſt pich with wery car,
Like feeble age he reeleth from the day,
The eyes (fore dutious) now conuerted are
From his low tract and looke an other way:
  So thou, thy ſelfe out-going in thy noon:
  Vnlok'd on dieſt vnleſſe thou get a ſonne.

Sonnet 7 comprises an extended metaphor of appropriately 12 lines tracing the hours of the sun's rising and falling, which is used in the couplet to argue that the youth should beget a child. Associating the sun's course with a life span or the begetting of children was a trope of long-standing; its *locus biblicus* was Ps. 113, where homage must be paid to the Lord, "from the rising vp of the sunne, vnto the goyng downe of the same," because, finally, "He maketh the barren woman . . to be a ioyful mother of children" (*BB*).

The sonnet pictures the east ("Orient," from *oriens* = rising), in which the sun is identified as "the gracious light," as either 'a beautiful light,' or 'a regal light,' or 'a light full of grace,' the east being thought the source of grace. Anyone below the sun's eye, is an “vnder eye,” evocative of an ‘underling,’ who in service at court pays homage or publicly affirms allegiance to a king. Each “vnder eye” by looking upward at the sun serves “with lookes his sacred maiesty.” The sun is presented as climbing sharply (“steepe vp heauenly hill”) contrasting with its later tumbling down (“reeleth”).

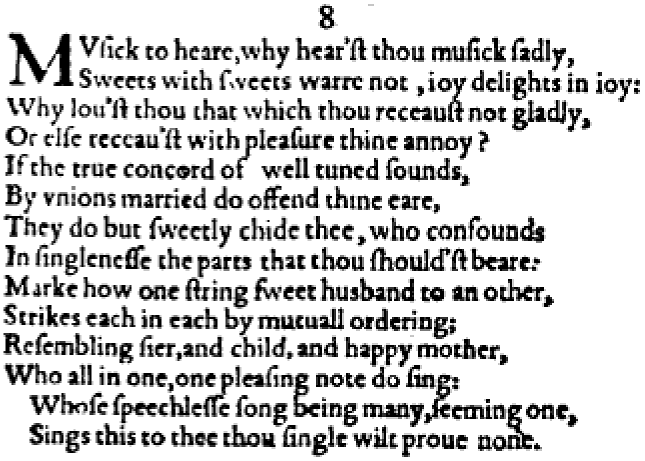
At midday the sun is at its strongest, resembling the prime of youth, yet “mortall lookes,” the visages or eyes of mortals, which are in attendance on the sun’s passage (“goulden pilgrimage”), continue to “adore” its beauty. “Attending” suggests both ‘watching with attention’ and ‘servants attendant’ on a royal progress (“pilgrimage” is from *per* + *ager* = through the countryside). After reaching its apex, its “high-most pich,” the sun “with wery car” and enfeebled with age (“Like feeble age”) “reeleth” or staggers downward. Phaeton’s chariot (“car”) was used classically of the sun (compare *R3*. 5.3.20-1, “The weary Sunne, hath made a Golden set, / And by the bright Tract of his fiery Carre”). The sun’s lack of control causes eyes, that were earlier dutifully drawn to it (“fore dutious”), to be turned away in embarrassment (“conuerted;” ‘to change the direction of the eyes’ (*convertere oculos*) was a Latinism). [1] They look elsewhere (“an other way”), because the sun’s “high-most pich” has become a “low tract,” the ‘course’ which the sun runs having fallen away.

The couplet applies the metaphor to the youth: “So thou, thy selfe out-going in thy noon.” Being at his height and about to decline, he will attract no eyes to himself and become forgotten (“Vnlok’d on diest”), unless he were to beget a son to carry his image. If “diest” is read sexually, then “Vnlok’d on diest” suggests a solitary and barren expending of seed (“thyselfe out-going”). The climactic “out-going in thy noon” recalls the departing phrase of the impotent Fool in *King Lear*, “Ile go to bed at noone,” with its allusion to the flower that closes upon itself at noon and droops afterwards, in Gerard’s *Herbal*, “Go to bed at noone” or salsify. [2]

7.1. Cf. Cicero, *Orationes in Catalinam* 4.1.1.

7.2. *Lr*. 3.6.85; John Gerard, *The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes* (London: John Norton, 1597) 594-96.

Sonnet 8



8
MVſick to heare,why hear'ſt thou muſick ſadly,
Sweets with ſweets warre not ,ioy delights in ioy:
Why lou'ſt thou that which thou receauſt not gladly,
Or elſe receau'ſt with pleaſure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned ſounds,
By vnions married do offend thine eare,
They do but ſweetly chide thee, who confounds
In ſingleneſſe the parts that thou ſhould'ſt beare:
Marke how one ſtring ſweet husband to an other,
Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering;
Reſembling ſier,and child,and happy mother,
Who all in one,one pleaſing note do ſing:
Whoſe ſpeechleſſe ſong being many,ſeeming one,
Sings this to thee thou ſingle wilt proue none.

8
MVſick to heare, why hear’ſt thou muſick ſadly,
Sweets with ſweets warre not, ioy delights in ioy:
Why lou’ſt thou that which thou receauſt not gladly,
Or elſe receau’ſt with pleaſure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned ſounds,
By vnions married do offend thine eare,
They do but ſweetly chide thee, who confounds
In ſingleneſſe the parts that thou ſhould’ſt beare:
Marke how one ſtring ſweet husband to an other,
Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering;
Reſembling ſier, and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleaſing note do ſing:
  Whoſe ſpeechleſſe ſong being many, ſeeming one,
  Sings this to thee thou ſingle wilt proue none.

Sonnet 8, a sonnet of musical descant, is suitably placed as the 8th sonnet, since an “eight” is a “true concord.” The later years of the 16th century saw a growth in musical primers, including William Barley’s *A Pathway to Musicke* (1596) and Thomas Morley’s popular *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597). [1] Their structures are similar: a first section devoted to explaining notation and a second providing instruction on how to sing descant or divison above or below the pricksong line. The first rule according to Morley is that “in descanting you must . . seeke true cordes” (both Morley and Barley use ‘concord’ and its shortened ‘cord’ interchangeably). A “Consonant,” a sounding together, is defined by Barley as “a concord of vnlike voyces within themselues, tackt together, sweetly sounding vnto the eare.” [2] In response to the question, “Which distances make a Concord or consonant Harmony, Morley replies, “A third, a Fift, a Sixt, and an eight." They are divided into perfect concords ("a vnison, a fift, an eight, a twelfth . . be perfect cordes"") and imperfect concords ("A third, a sixt, and their eightes"). A second, a fourth, and a seventh are discords and are "commonlie excluded from musicke." [3] When singing descant or counterpoint, the singer "by diligent marking where in euery note standeth" must "mark" another note, a third, a fifth or eighth above the pricksong note. Sonnet 8 plays with various harmonies within and without the "eight:" in line 11 a third, "sier, and child, and happy mother," in the fifth a "true concord," and in the twelfth, "all in one, one pleasing note do sing."

The sonnet begins by addressing the youth as, "Musick to heare." He is concord itself or to the poet sweet music. (In Sonnet 128 the mistress as she plays the virginals is entitled, "my musicke.") The opening line is antiphonal and chiastically decussated: the parallel clauses have their order of words inverted from one clause to the other. The antiphonal affords it a musical quality (Puttenham calls the device, technically an epanalepsis, an "Eccho sound" and gives the example "*Much must he be beloued, that loueth much*"). [4] Why, given his harmony, should the youth listen to music discordantly ("sadly"), when "Sweets with sweet warre not" and "ioy delights in ioy" (according to Morley a concord enters "*with delight into the eare*")? [5] Why does he love something (music), which he receives with no gladness, or why does he accept with pleasure something that irritates him ("thine annoy")?

A "true concord" intends both 'with cords together' and 'with hearts together' (*con* + *corda* = with hearts together). It is composed of "well tuned sounds," that are knitted ("married") together by "vnions;" "true" introduces a conceit that identifies music and marriage: "By vnions married," "husband," and "mutuall ordering." If such concord "offend thine eare," then the sounds gently rebuke him, because normally it would be the function of a discord, defined as a "compact of diuers sounds naturallie, offending the eare." [6] He is guilty because he "confounds / In singleness the parts that thou should'st beare." To 'confound' (*cum* + *fundere* = pour together) was to fuse or combine into one. In the youth the various parts of counterpoint, which he should carry ("beare"), are reduced to a single note. Unmarried or single he will "beare" no child.

The youth must "Marke" or take notice of how in singing counterpoint, "one string sweet husband to an other, / Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering." Each cord, striking another, acts as complement to the other. To 'strike' was to play or stroke the cords of a stringed instrument (Cooper's *Thesaurus* gives "Pulso, "*To strike . . to play on an harpe or like instrument*"); Shakespeare possibly had in mind a double-harp or barbiton which was strung doubly. The action is a "mutuall ordering," evoking the "mutuall societie" of the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Rite of Marriage," and "Resembling sier, and child, and happy mother." One string makes a single sound, a unison; a second makes a futher unison; between them a third, a concord, is produced as in a marriage between sire and blessed mother. As a family of notes, "all in one," they sing "one pleasing note" or harmony. Their song, though of diverse parts, seems one. But it can only be a "speechlesse song," an 'unvoiced song' (with a hint at *infans* = speechless), if a third, a child, is not produced to make up the concord. Without it their song can only remonstrate, "thou single wilt proue none;" "proue" points to the mathematical maxim, 'One is no number' or 'One is as good as none,' which Whitney, like Shakespeare, in his motto *Mutuum auxilium* ("mutuall societie") renders, "The prouerbe saieth, one man is deemed none, / And life, is deathe, where men doo liue alone." [7]

8.1. William Barley, *A Pathway to Musicke* (London: William Barley, 1596) and Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (London: Peter Short, 1597).

8.2. Barley F1^{r}.

8.3. Morley 71-2.

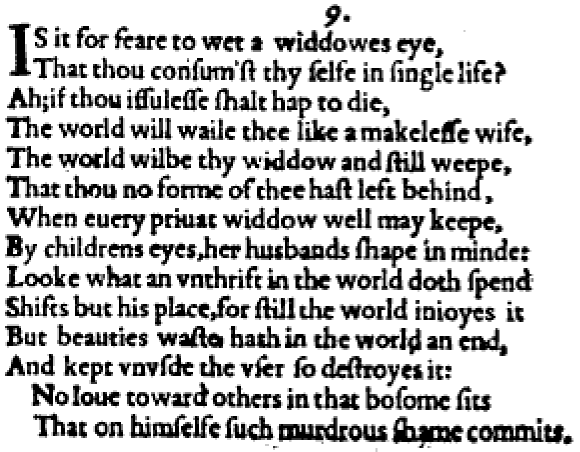
8.4. Puttenham 167.

8.5. Morley 70.

8.6. Morley 71.

8.7. Whitney 66.

Sonnet 9



9.

IS it for feare to wet a widdowes eye,
That thou conſum'ſt thy ſelfe in ſingle life?
Ah;if thou iſſuleſſe ſhalt hap to die,
The world will waile thee like a makeleſſe wife,
The world wilbe thy widdow and ſtill weepe,
That thou no forme of thee haſt left behind,
When euery priuat widdow well may keepe,
By childrens eyes,her husbands ſhape in minde:
Looke what an vnthrift in the world doth ſpend
Shifts but his place,for ſtill the world inioyes it
But beauties waſte hath in the world an end,
And kept vnvſde the vſer ſo deſtroyes it:
No loue toward others in that boſome ſits
That on himſelfe ſuch murdrous ſhame commits.

9
IS it for feare to wet a widdowes eye,
That thou conſum'ſt thy ſelfe in ſingle life?
Ah; if thou iſſuleſſe ſhalt hap to die,
The world will waile thee like a makeleſſe wife,
The world wilbe thy widdow and ſtill weepe,
That thou no forme of thee haſt left behind,
When euery priuat widdow well may keepe,
By childrens eyes, her husbands ſhape in minde:
Looke what an vnthrift in the world doth ſpend
Shifts but his place, for ſtill the world inioyes it
But beauties waſte hath in the world an end,
And kept vnvſde the vſer ſo deſtroyes it:
  No loue toward others in that boſome ſits
  That on himſelfe ſuch murdrous ſhame commits.

Sonnet 9 argues again that the youth should marry and father children. The poet first asks if the reason he has remained single ("consum'st thy selfe in single life") was a "feare" that, if he were to die, he would leave some woman a widow and in tears ("to wet a widdowes eye"). To 'consume one self' meant to 'waste oneself away' even to death and was used particularly of self-inflicted death. As in preceding sonnets echoes persist of Narcissus, of whom Golding writes, "Did he consume and melt away . . [and] did wanze away at length / So that in fine remayned not the bodie." [1] The poet exclaims, "Ah," a musing and a sigh before the wailing to come. If he were to die without children or yield ("issulesse, continued in "vnthrift" later), then the world would lament his absence as might a wife without a mate ("makelesse"). The public world would be his widow and forever weep ("still weepe"), because he has left behind no figure of himself, especially since every “priuat widdow” can preserve (“keepe,” also suggesting ‘guard’) in her memory or mind’s eye (“minde”) her departed husband’s figure (“shape”), seen in or through the eyes of her children in whom their father is re-membered. A “priuat widdow,” a Shakespearean coinage, is one who has withdrawn from public life or, tautologically, one who is bereaved (from *privatus* = bereaved).

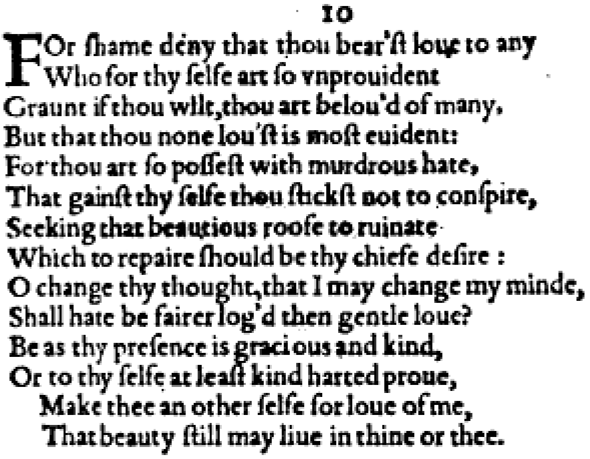
Whatever (“Looke what” = whatever) a wastrel or improvident person or one who wastes a resource (“vnthrift”) might expend, he is merely moving the reserve around (“shifts but his place”), because the world continues to enjoy it wherever it is spent. But where beauty is mis-spent there is a limit to its line (“hath an end”), and, as the psalmist claims, it leads to the grave: “their beautie shall consume. . to graue” (Ps. 49.14; *GV*). If beauty is not put to (procreative) use and is hoarded as if by a non-yielding, sexual miser (“kept vnusde”), he will destroy it. Since no outgoing love dwells in his bosom (“No loue . . in that bosome sits”), he is like Narcissus, guilty of self love (“Amor sui”), [2] and one who commits on himself (solitarily and sexually) “murdrous shame,” either ‘shameful self-murder’ through waste or ‘a shame that kills.’ From Aristotle onwards “virtue sits in the bosom” (“in gremio virtus”), not shame or self-murder. [3]

9.1. Golding 3.616-19.

9.2. Ovid, *Met*. 3.464.

9.3. See John Case, *Speculum Moralium Quaestionum in Universam Ethicen Aristotelis* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1585) 81.

Sonnet 10



10
FOr ſhame deny that thou bear'ſt loue to any
Who for thy ſelfe art ſo vnprouident
Graunt if thou wilt,thou art belou'd of many,
But that thou none lou'ſt is moſt euident:
For thou art ſo poſſeſt with murdrous hate,
That gainſt thy ſelfe thou ſtickſt not to conſpire,
Seeking that beautious roofe to ruinate
Which to repaire ſhould be thy chiefe deſire :
O change thy thought,that I may change my minde,
Shall hate be fairer log'd then gentle loue?
Be as thy preſence is gracious and kind,
Or to thy ſelfe at leaſt kind harted proue,
Make thee an other ſelfe for loue of me,
That beauty ſtill may liue in thine or thee.

10
FOr ſhame deny that thou bear’ſt loue to any
Who for thy ſelfe art ſo vnprouident
Graunt if thou wilt, thou art belou’d of many,
But that thou none lou’ſt is moſt euident:
For thou art ſo poſſeſt with murdrous hate,
That gainſt thy ſelfe thou ſtickſt not to conſpire,
Seeking that beautious roofe to ruinate
Which to repaire ſhould be thy chiefe deſire:
O change thy thought, that I may change my minde,
Shall hate be fairer log’d then gentle loue?
Be as thy preſence is gracious and kind,
Or to thy ſelfe at leaſt kind harted proue,
  Make thee an other ſelfe for loue of me,
  That beauty ſtill may liue in thine or thee.

The sonnet’s opening, “For shame,” looks back to Sonnet 9.14, “murdrous shame,” and forward to the “murdrous hate” of line 5; it is either an exclamation or a reason (‘deny because of your shame’). The youth is challenged to “deny,” the first of a series of imperatives, that “thou bear’st loue to any,” either ‘carries’ his love to anyone or ‘bares’ it or ‘makes it public.’ In looking after himself alone he is accused of being “vnprouident,” of not disposing of his wealth properly and of not thinking of the future (*pro* + *videre* = to look in advance). He must concede (“Graunt”), if he is so disposed (“if thou wilt”), that he is loved by many, as was Narcissus, who in Golding’s words, “the hearts of divers trim yong men his beautie gan to move, / And many a Ladie fresh and faire was taken in his love.” Like Narcissus, who “to be toucht of man or Mayde . . wholy did disdaine," he also refuses be touched by or to love another. [1] He is accused of being so "possessed with murdrous hate," a hatred that will not allow life, that he won't hesitate ("stickst not") to plot secretly to divide himself against himself ("gainst thy selfe . . conspire"). He is like the biblical house, which if it "be deuided agaynst it selfe, that house can not continue" (Mark 3.25; *BB*). The verse was used of the house of Satan and was a familiar topic of sermons: the well-known preacher John Boys in his *Exposition of the Dominical Epistles and Gospels* argues, "The diuell ruinates euery tenement, wherein he dwels . . [but] as for the spirituall and inward building; the foundation of Gods tenement in our soule is faith, the walles hope, the roofe charity." [2] Here the youth is accused of wanting to ruinate his "beauteous roofe:" to bring to nought his "roofe" or body as a house perfected in love, or to stop the continuance of his 'house,' his lineage. He should, by contrast, seek to "repaire" or make anew that "roofe," both his 'body' and his line (with a hint perhaps of 're-père' = re-father).

The youth is instructed to "change thy thought," a change similar to the biblical imperative of *metanoia*, to change one's mind, often translated as "repent," [3] so that the poet will be of a different "minde" or memory. Should the habitation of the youth's body, he asks, perfected by love as its roof, not be a dwelling of love rather than its opposite, hate? [4] He must be as his bearing ("presence") is, full of grace and kindness, both naturalness and generosity, or at least he should prove to himself "kind harted," possessing a heart that generates abundance or children ("kind"). He must replicate himself ("Make thee an other selfe") out of affection for the poet ("for loue of me"), a new motif in the sequence. Then beauty will continue to live ("still") in either the youth's heirs or himself ("in thine or thee"), an odd conclusion since beauty would be expected to fade in the youth.

10.1. Golding 3.339-43; see Ovid, *Met*. 3.353-55.

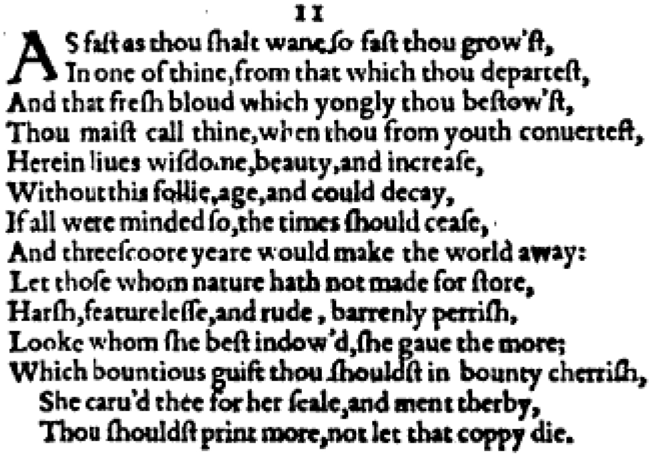
10.2. John Boys, *An Exposition of the Dominical Epistles and Gospels, vsed in our English Liturgie, throughout the whole yeere* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1610) 91. The metaphor was a translation of Augustine, "Domus Dei credendo fundatur, sperando erigitur, diligendo perficitur." The *locus biblicus* of the body as building was 2 Cor. 5.1-

2, where "our earthly house" is contrasted with "an habitation not made with hands" (*BB*).

10.3. The *GV* sidenote to the "Repent" of John 3.2 runs, "The word in the Greeke tongue, signifieth a changing of our minds."

10.4. The line hints at a child lodging in the body: the Christ-child traditionally "lodged" in the Virgin's womb; see John Field, *An excellent treatise of Christian righteousnes, written first in the French tongue by M.I. de l'Espine, and translated into English by I. Feilde* (London: Thomas Vautrollier, 1577) 67: "And euen as, when he woulde be borne of the Virgin Marie, and before he woulde be lodged in her wombe, he sent his seruauntes before him."

Sonnet 11



11
AS faſt as thou ſhalt wane,ſo faſt thou grow’ſt,
In one of thine,from that which thou departeſt,
And that freſh bloud which yongly thou beſtow’ſt,
Thou maiſt call thine,when thou from youth conuerteſt,
Herein liues wiſdome,beauty,and increaſe,
Without this follie,age,and could decay,
If all were minded ſo,the times ſhould ceaſe,
And threeſcoore yeare would make the world away:
Let thoſe whom nature hath not made for ſtore,
Harſh,featureleſſe,and rude , barrenly perriſh,
Looke whom ſhe beſt indow’d,ſhe gaue the more;
Which bountious guift thou ſhouldſt in bounty cherriſh,
She caru’d thee for her ſeale,and ment therby,
Thou ſhouldſt print more,not let that coppy die.

11
AS faſt as thou ſhalt wane ſo faſt thou grow’ſt,
In one of thine, from that which thou departeſt,
And that freſh bloud which yongly thou beſtow’ſt,
Thou maiſt call thine, when thou from youth conuerteſt,
Herein liues wiſdome, beauty, and increaſe,
Without this follie, age, and could decay,
If all were minded ſo, the times ſhould ceaſe,
And threeſcoore yeare would make the world away:
Let thoſe whom nature hath not made for ſtore,
Harſh, featureleſſe, and rude, barrenly perriſh,
Looke whom ſhe beſt indow’d, ſhe gaue the more; thee?
Which bountious guift thou ſhouldſt in bounty cherriſh,
She caru’d thee for her ſeale, and ment therby,
Thou ſhouldſt print more, not let that coppy die.

Sonnet 11’s opening line, “As fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow’st,” echoes the maxim, “Youth waineth by increasing,” an aside of the elderly, with which Shakespeare will conclude the series of sonnets to the young man at Sonnet 126. [1] It was associated with Narcissus who wasted away as he grew as a youth. Here the aphorism is used allusively to argue for procreation: as quickly as the youth ages (“wane”), at the same rate he will increase (and multiply), either as issue in the womb of his wife or in his child as it grows (“In one of thine”); he will grow “from that which thou departest,” that which is the result of his endowing (“departest” = distribute or yield) or from the youthhood from which he is being distanced (“departest” = leave). The “fresh bloud,” either the ‘new life’ or the ‘life-blood’ (or even the ‘semen,’ which was thought a distillation of blood), which he will pour out ("bestow") while young or in a young way ("yongly"), he may claim as his or bestow his name upon ("call thine"), when he changes from his early years ("conuertest"). In that "fresh bloud" ("Herein," with a hint of 'heir in') will be found "wisdome, beauty, and increase." If no generation ensues ("Without this"), the youth's bequest will be folly, age, and deathly dissolution ("could decay"). If the whole world were to choose not to sire heirs ("if all were minded so"), then "times," ages, would come to an end within a generation; "three scoore yeare" is a poetic contraction of the life-span of Ps. 90.10, "The time of our life *is* threescore yeeres and ten" (*GV*).

For the sonnet's sestet Shakespeare has had recourse to Ovid's account of the recreating of man, the dominant metaphor for which is a stone being carved. After describing primaeval chaos as a "rudis indigestaque moles," which elsewhere Shakespeare renders as "that indigest . . so shapeless and so rude," [2] Ovid describes how Deucalion and Pyrrha, following the oracle's instructions, took stones of mother earth and threw them behind themselves: then 'the stones began to lay aside their harshness ("duritiem") and rigidity ("rigorem") and presently began to grow soft, and once softened to take on a shape ("formam"). Then, as these increased and a gentler nature touched them ("contigit"), an indistinct outline of a man could be detected, like a marble statue, whose features, while initially being carved, are inexact and resemble rudely shaped impressions ("rudibus signis")'. Golding is more expansive:

> The stones (who would beleve the thing, but that the time of olde
> Reportes it for a stedfast truth?) of nature tough and harde,
> Began to warre both soft and smothe: and shortly afterwarde
> To winne therwith a better shape: and as they did encrease,
> A mylder nature in them grew, and rudenesse gan to cease.
> For at the first their shape was such, as in a certaine sort
> Resembled man, but of the right and perfect shape came short.
> Even like to Marble ymages new drawne and roughly wrought,
> Before the Carver by his Arte to purpose hath them brought. [3]

The poet allows that those whom nature has not destined to be perfected, whose "store" like Narcissus' "copia" or "aboundance" is purposed to go unused, and who are "harsh" or insensible (Ovid's "duritiem" and "rigorem") and "featureless, and rude" (Ovid's "indigesta" and "rudis") should die like a barren stone without issue. (The Latin "rudis," meaning 'untried,' was also used of the sexually untried.) [4] On the other hand Nature has given a greater gift to whomever ("Looke whom") she has already generously enriched ("best indow'd"): the power to procreate children. (If the *quarto*'s "the" is emended to "thee," then 'whomever Nature has enriched the most, she has given you even more.') The gift of that abundance ("bountious gift") should be treasured bountifully ("cherrish") by using it to generate plentiful return or issue ("cherish" and "endow" were requirements of the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Rite of Marriage" in conjunction with "depart").

Nature has "caru'd" out the youth so that he is no longer like an inchoate form or rudely shaped impression in stone. Her intention is that the youth be her seal (a *signum* [see Ovid above, "signis"] is also the impression a seal makes). He is a perfectly shaped, featured figure, which nature has carved and stamped as an authentic, validated and perfect copy, intending that the youth should stamp further copies ("should'st print more"), not stand alone like an unused die or pattern that can only die ("not let that coppy die," where "coppy" evokes the "copia" which Narcissus will not spend).

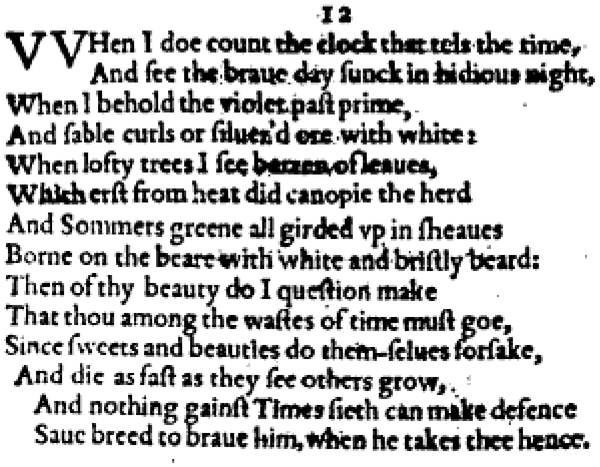
11.1. See Sonnet 126 and George Peele, *Polyhymnia Describing, The honourable Triumph at Tylt, before her Maiestie, on the 17. of Nouember, last past* (London: Richard Jones, 1590) B4^{v}. The phrase was well-known; see William Segar, *Honor, Military and Ciuill* (London, Robert Barker, 1604) 198: "youth waineth by encreasing."

11.2. *Jn*. 5.7.26, "To set a forme on that indigest / Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude;" see Ovid, *Met*. 1.7: "Quem dixere chaos, rudis indigestaque moles."

11.3. Golding 1.476-84; Ovid, *Met*. 1.400-06:
saxa (quis hoc credat, nisi sit pro teste vetustas?)
ponere duritiem coepere suumque rigorem
mollirique mora mollitaque ducere formam.
mox ubi creverunt naturaque mitior illis
contigit, ut quaedam, sic non manifesta videri
forma potest hominis, sed uti de marmore coepta
non exacta satis rudibusque simillima signis.

11.4. Compare Ovid, *Amores* 2.6, "rudis ignoto tactus amore puer" ('an untried youth touched by unknown love,') cited by Cooper, *Thesaurus* rudis; Ovid, *Fasti* 335-6, "coniugii rudis iuuenca," a young woman (or heifer) unknowing of a male, rendered by Cooper as, "An heighfer that hathe not been at bull;" Ovid, *Tristia* 3.3.58, "ad quae iampridem non rude pectus habes," which Cooper renders as "An heart not touched with the pangues of loue."

Sonnet 12


12
VVHen I doe count the clock that tels the time,
And ſee the braue day ſunck in hidious night,
When I behold the violet paſt prime,
And ſable curls or ſiluer'd ore with white:
When lofty trees I ſee barren of leaues,
Which erſt from heat did canopie the herd
And Sommers greene all girded vp in ſheaues
Borne on the beare with white and briſtly beard:
Then of thy beauty do I queſtion make
That thou among the waſtes of time muſt goe,
Since ſweets and beauties do them-ſelues forſake,
And die as faſt as they ſee others grow,
And nothing gainſt Times ſieth can make defence
Saue breed to braue him, when he takes thee hence.

12
WHen I doe count the clock that tels the time,
And ſee the braue day ſunck in hidious night,
When I behold the violet paſt prime,
And ſable curls or ſiluer'd ore with white:
When lofty trees I ſee barren of leaues,
Which erſt from heat did canopie the herd
And Sommers greene all girded vp in ſheaues
Borne on the beare with white and briſtly beard:
Then of thy beauty do I queſtion make
That thou among the waſtes of time muſt goe,
Since ſweets and beauties do them-ſelues forſake,
And die as faſt as they ſee others grow,
And nothing gainſt Times ſieth can make defence
Saue breed to braue him, when he takes thee hence.

The sonnet's position in the sequence at No. 12 coincides with the 12 hours on a clock-face. Unusually, it comprises one sentence, divided rhetorically by "When I," "When I," "When . . I," and "Then." Its opening line with the alliterated 'c' of "count" and "clock," and 't' of "tels" and "time" conjures up the sound of a clock's strokes. The poet counts with the clock, marking time with its numbers as it "tels the time," spells out the time or counts it as a teller, as it presses inevitably onwards. He reflects on the "braue day," both 'splendid' and 'defiant' in the face of the powers of darkness, "sunck in hidious night;" "sunck," because the sun has descended into the west and night or because it has been drowned under the weight of frightful ("hidious") night.

The imagery now shifts from the span of a day to that of the year. By aligning the ages of man with the year’s seasons Shakespeare is following a popular tradition whose *locus classicus* was found in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Ovid exclaims, ‘Do you not see how the year, passing through its seasons (“species”), resembles our journey through life.’ [1] Shakespeare’s accepts from him the oppressive force of winter to argue for the youth’s producing children. The poet ponders the violet, a spring flower associated with youth (Hamlet is “A Violet in the youth of Primy Nature”), which is “past prime,” past its moment of perfection, but alluding to “prime” as ‘spring’ (and possibly drawing on Ovid’s “post ver” = “past prime”). [2] He looks upon “sable curls or siluer’d ore with white;” “sable” is black and also an heraldic colour. The phrase, “or siluer’d ore,” has caused editorial debate: if the final “ore” is read as ‘o’er’ or ‘over,’ as it seems it should, then the first “or” should probably be emended to ‘all,’ to give ‘all silvered over’ and to establish a parallel with “all girded vp” (‘o’er silvered all’ is a further possible reading). Both “or” (gold) and silver are heraldic colours. Ovid pictures winter as ‘senile and “hidious”’ (“senilis hiems . . horrida”) and covered with ‘white hair’ (“alba capillos”), while the ghost of Hamlet’s father has a beard that is “sable Siluer’d.” [3] The poet has observed “lofty trees,” both ‘high’ and ‘noble’ trees, which earlier (“earst”) acted as canopies to shelter the herd from summer heat, but which are now “barren of leaues.” (Canopies were a feature of funeral processions, being borne over the biers of nobles.) He has looked upon “Sommers greene,” the growing produce in its freshness, harvested in autumn (“girded vp in sheaues”), scythed and tied by hempen cords in litches. The final element is the harvest procession: the bier (“beare”) is the litter on which the harvested cereal is carried with its “white and bristly beard.” The “beard” is the awn that barley, oats, and other cereals carry when fully ripe. But the seasonal procession is also a funeral one with a litter or hearse carrying an old man, the bristles of whose white beard have kept growing after death. Shakespeare has here followed Golding, who expands Ovid’s ‘winter covered with white hair’ by adding the word “shirle” (bristly) which he has taken from an earlier passage, “Hir haire was harsh and shirle,” to give “overcast / With shirle thinne heare as whyght as snowe.” [4]

The poet now submits to scrutiny the youth's beauty ("of thy beauty do I question make") and the fact that he must advance forward to be included among the things to which time lays waste ("among the wastes of time"). He argues that things that give delight ("sweets") and beauty "do them-selues forsake," depart from themselves as they decline. The phrase recalls Narcissus, to whom Shakespeare refers in *Venus and Adonis*, "Narcissus so himself himself forsook, / And died to kiss his shadow in the brook" (161-2), while Golding has the dying Narcissus say to himself, "Forsake me not so cruelly that loveth thee so deere." [5] As fast as they wane and die, so they see "others grow." Nothing can defend itself ("make defence") against time's all-encompassing scythe, other than by braving or defying ("braue") time by begetting progeny ("breed") who will outlast time, even after it has taken the youth from the world ("takes thee hence").

12.1. Ovid, *Met*. 15.199-200, "non in species succedere quattuor annum / adspicis, aetatis peragentem imitamina nostrae?" Golding (15.221-22) has, "Seest thou not how that the yeere as representing playne / The age of man, departes itself in quarters fowre?"

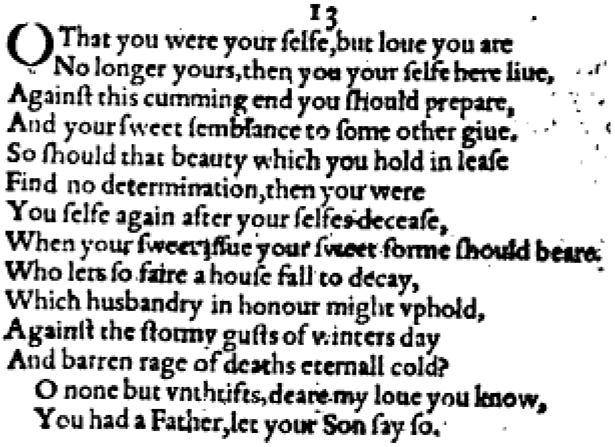
12.2. *Ham*. 1.3.7 & Ovid, *Met*. 15.206.

12.3. *Ham*. 1.2.241 & Ovid, *Met*. 15.212-13.

12.4. Ovid, *Met*. 8.995.

12.5. Golding 3.601.

Sonnet 13


13
O That you were your ſelfe,but loue you are
No longer yours,then you your ſelfe here liue,
Againſt this cumming end you ſhould prepare,
And your ſweet ſemblance to ſome other giue.
So ſhould that beauty which you hold in leaſe
Find no determination,then you were
You ſelfe again after your ſelfes deceaſe,
When your ſweet iſſue your ſweet forme ſhould beare.
Who lets ſo faire a houſe fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might vphold,
Againſt the ſtormy guſts of winters day
And barren rage of deaths eternall cold?
O none but vnthrifts,deare my loue you know,
You had a Father,let your Son ſay ſo.

13
O That you were your ſelfe, but loue you are
No longer yours, then you your ſelfe here liue,
Againſt this cumming end you ſhould prepare,
And your ſweet ſemblance to ſome other giue.
So ſhould that beauty which you hold in leaſe
Find no determination, then you were
You ſelfe again after your ſelfes deceaſe, Your
When your ſweet iſſue your ſweet forme ſhould beare.
Who lets ſo faire a houſe fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might vphold,
Againſt the ſtormy guſts of winters day
And barren rage of deaths eternall cold?
O none but vnthriſts, deare my loue you know,
You had a Father, let your Son ſay ſo.

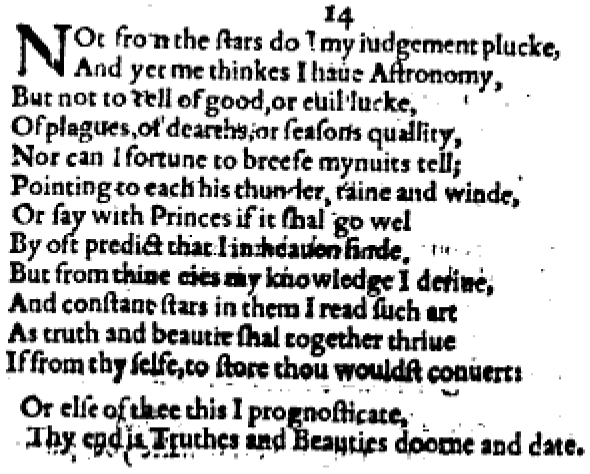
Sonnet 13 addresses the friend first as "loue" and then as "deare my loue" and for the first time in the sequence as "you." Its neatly argued conceit is that of leases and conveyancing. It opens with a wish, "O that you were your selfe," that the youth might be his own or belong to himself. However, argues the poet, he belongs to himself for no longer than, or only for the term that, he lives on this earth ("you your selfe here liue"). He should insure himself ("prepare") against death ("this cumming end") and leave in his heirs his "sweet semblance" or likeness. In 16th century conveyancing 'the determination of a tenancy' or 'the determination of a lease,' its ceasing, occurred when the husbandman or leasee died without heirs and the use of the lands or estate fell again to the leasor. The poet here argues that, if the youth were to have sired children, then the beauty, at present leased to him, should on his death not find a “determination” or cessation, because heirs would exist to whom the lease of beauty could be bequeathed. Thus after the death of his self (“after your selues decease”) he would again be himself in his heirs (“you were / Your selfe again”). His “sweet issue” would carry (“beare”) his imprint (“sweet form”), a reversal of the normal process where parents “beare” or produce “issue.”

The sestet’s argument parallels one against priestly virginity voiced by Thomas Wilson in *The Arte of Rhetorique*. Nothing, he claims, “could be inuented more perilous to a common weale then virginitie.” It is a man’s obligation, “seeing it lieth in your handes to keepe that house from decay, wherof your lineally descended, and to continue still the name of your auncesters.” [1] The poet asks a similar but double layered question: firstly, who would allow (“lets”) to fall into dissolution (“decay”) such a beautiful body (“house” as in the “earthly house” of 2 Corinthians 5.1), or such a fair family (“house” as in the ‘House of Tudor’), which might be sustained (“vphold”) in an honourable estate (“in honour”) through matrimony (“husbandry” or procreatively as a husband) or through being managed frugally (as a husbandman might)? Secondly “let” means ‘lease’ and the argument is a legal one: who would lease out such a beautiful house that it might fall into decay, where prudent fiscal management (“husbandry”) or begetting offspring (“husbandry”) would defend what of right (“in honour”) is his as lord? An “honour” in the law of leases was the ownership or seignory of lands that had been leased to a tenant by a Lord, the right to which he continues to “vphold” as his own. Such husbandry might protect the house against future hard times (“the stormy gusts of winters day”), not unlike the house of the parable on which “the wyndes blewe, and beat vpon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it” (Matt. 7.27; *BB*). It might also insure against the “barren rage of deaths eternall cold,” where “barren rage” intends a vehemence or force that prevents the bearing of any issue (in *Ham*. 3.3.89 “in his Rage” indicates sexual climax).

The answer, the couplet asserts, is that only someone who is improvident (an “vnthrift”) and who lacks husbandry would let such a house fall into ruin. But the youth (“deare my loue") knows that he "had a Father," a pregnant past tense. He is counselled, "let your Son say so:" beget a son who can speak of you as his father.

13.1. Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetorique, for the vse of all such as are studious of Eloquence* (London: George Robinson, 1585) 52-53.

Sonnet 14



14
NOt from the ſtars do I my iudgement plucke,
And yet me thinkes I haue Aſtronomy,
But not to tell of good,or euil lucke,
Of plagues,of dearths,or ſeaſons quallity,
Nor can I fortune to breefe mynuits tell;
Pointing to each his thunder, raine and winde,
Or ſay with Princes if it ſhal go wel
By oft predict that I in heauen finde.
But from thine eies my knowledge I deriue,
And conſtant ſtars in them I read ſuch art
As truth and beautie ſhal together thriue
If from thy ſelfe,to ſtore thou wouldſt conuert:
Or elſe of thee this I prognoſticate,
Thy end is Truthes and Beauties doome and date.

14
NOt from the ſtars do I my iudgement plucke,
And yet me thinkes I haue Aſtronomy,
But not to tell of good, or euil lucke,
Of plagues, of dearths, or ſeaſons quallity,
Nor can I fortune to breefe mynuits tell;
Pointing to each his thunder, raine and winde,
Or ſay with Princes if it ſhal go wel
By oft predict that I in heauen finde.
But from thine eies my knowledge I deriue,
And conſtant ſtars in them I read ſuch art
As truth and beautie ſhal together thriue
If from thy ſelfe, to ſtore thou wouldſt conuert:
   Or elſe of thee this I prognoſticate,
   Thy end is Truthes and Beauties doome and date.

Most sonnet sequences contain an example of an astrological conceit, in which eyes are stars, the most notable being Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 26, “Though dustie wits dare scorne Astologie.” Sonnet 14's term, “Astronomy,” retains its older sense of ‘judicial’ astrology, a word Shakespeare doesn't use. The 16th century reformers had attacked judicial astrology as distracting from divine providence, although they did allow natural astrology, the forecasting of natural seasons and tides. (Calvin's tract against astrology had been loosely translated and published in 1561 by Goddred Gilby as *An Admonicion against Astrology Iudiciall*.) [1] In part their admonitions drew on Isaiah's derision of astrologers and like genethliacs: “let now the astrologers, the starre gasers, and prognosticatours stand vp, & saue thee from these things, that shall come vpon thee” (Isa.

47.13; *GV*). Closer to Shakespeare was James I's division of astronomy and astrology in *Daemonologie*. Astronomy is lawful as is any astrology based on mathematical rules:

> There are two thinges which the learned haue obserued from the beginning, in the science of the Heauenlie Creatures, the Planets, Starres, and such like: The one is their course and ordinary motiones, which for that cause is called *Astronomia*. Which word is compound of νομος and αστϵρων, that is to say, the law of the Starres: And this arte indeede is one of the members of the *Mathematicques*, & not onlie lawful, but most necessarie and commendable. The other is called *Astrologia*, being compounded of αστϵρων & λογος, which is to say, the word and preaching of the starres: Which is deuided in two parts: The first, by knowing thereby the powers of simples, and sicknesses, the course of the seasons and the weather, being ruled by their influence; which part depending vpon the former, although it be not of it selfe a part of *Mathematicques*: yet it is not vnlawful, being moderately vsed, suppose not to necessarie and commendable as the former.

Attempts, however, to predict the future based on *pars fortunae* are condemned:

> The second part is to truste so much to their influences, as thereby to fore-tell what common-weales shall flourish or decay: what persones shall be fortunate or vnfortunate: what side shall winne in anie battell: what man shall obteine victorie at singular combate: what way, and of what age shall men die . . And this last part of *Astrologie* whereof I haue spoken, which is the root of their branches, was called by them *pars fortunae*. This parte now is vtterlie vnlawful to be trusted in, or practized amongst christians, as leaning to no ground of natural reason: & it is this part which I called before the deuils schole. [2]

The poet begins by denying any skill in reading the influence of the stars ("Not from the stars do I my judgement plucke"); "plucke" evokes the practice of *sortes virgilianae*, where lots were randomly drawn, or sortilegy, where a card was plucked from a pack to divine the future (to 'pluck for a card' was to draw one from a pack). Yet he admits to a mastery of an astronomy later identified as a reading of the youth's eyes ("I haue Astronomy"), even as he disclaims any skill in unlawful readings such as "to tell of good, or euil lucke." To "tell" is to predict as might a fortune-teller or one versed in *pars fortunae*. Nor does the poet's astral insight allow him to foretell "of plagues, of dearths, or seasons quallity," of what nature a coming season might have. Nor can he match fortune with each small minute, awarding to each ("Pointing" = 'appointing') thunder, rain, wind. (Some constellations have stars as 'pointers.') Finally his astronomy won't forecast if Princes and rulers will prosper (in James I's words, "fore-tell what common-weales shall flourish or decay") through frequent predictions ("By oft predict"), drawn from the course of the heavenly stars. [3]

The poet now focusses on the youth's eyes, the source of his true astrology ("But from thine eies my knowledge I deriue"). In those eyes ("constant stars") he can divine ("read") an art where truth and beauty will flourish ("thriue"), if the youth would metamorphose himself out of himself into progeny ("store" or livestock; "store" was used to translate the Latin *foetura* = young animal), thus continuing the play on husbandry in Sonnet 13. To "conuert" the eyes (see Sonnet 7.11) is to direct them elsewhere: the youth must cease gazing upon himself like Narcissus, even as the poet "reads" his eyes by gazing upon them.

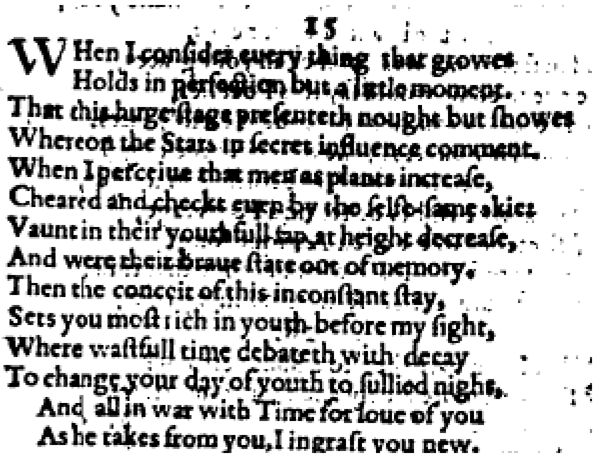
If, however, the youth refuses to beget an heir ("Or else"), the poet, contrary to Isaiah's scornful proscription, will "prognosticate" this: his death ("end;" see Sonnet 13.3, "cumming end") will be the end also of truth and beauty. The "doome," the legal judgement that gives a 'determination of the lease' (see Sonnet 13.6), and the date, when the lease that beauty and truth have on being will cease, will be the same date as the youth's decease.

14.1. John Calvin, *An Admonicion against Astrology Iudiciall*, trans. Goddred Gilby (London: Rouland Hall, 1561).

14.2. James I, *Daemonologie, In Forme of a Dialogue* (Edinburgh: Robert Waldegrave, 1597) 12-14.

14.3. Some editors have proposed changing "oft" to 'aught,' on the flimsy grounds that Shakespeare's use of 'predict' as a noun is the solitary instance cited in the *OED*. But the use of 'predict' as a noun and a verb antedates considerably the earliest citations (1652) of the *OED*, compare its use in 1572 by Holme, "Of these Countreys predict from their purpose indeuided," and, "And the earth curssed for Adam, for Christ do I sanctifie. / To these woordes predict Esay the Prophet" (*The fall and euill successe of Rebellion from time to time Wherein is contained matter, moste meete for all estates to vewe. Written in old Englishe verse* (London: Henry Binneman, 1572) C2^{v} & D4^{r}). It was in extensive use as a verb by the 1620s, see Heywoood, "and oft times predict such things," or "Besides these kind of Diuiners, there are such as are called Sortiligae, and these predict by lots" (*ΓΥΝΑΙΚΕΙΟΝ*: *or, Nine Bookes of Various History*. *Concerninge Women*: *Inscribed by the names of the Nine Muses* (London: Adam Islip, 1624) 100 & 102).

Sonnet 15



15
WHen I conſider euery thing that growes
Holds in perfection but a little moment.
That this huge ſtage preſenteth nought but ſhowes
Whereon the Stars in ſecret influence comment.
When I perceiue that men as plants increaſe,
Cheared and checkt euen by the ſelfe-ſame skie:
Vaunt in their youthfull ſap, at height decreaſe,
And were their braue ſtate out of memory.
Then the conceit of this inconſtant ſtay,
Sets you moſt rich in youth before my ſight,
Where waſtfull time debateth with decay
To change your day of youth to ſullied night,
  And all in war with Time for loue of you
  As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.

Sonnets 15 and 16 comprise a pair, whose theme is one of husbandry and gardening. Sonnet 15 accepts from Sonnet 14 its conceit of astral influences, focussing on how they operate in the vegetable world. Sowing, planting and grafting (setting) were all conducted according to times laid down by almanacs and determined by phases of the moon and motions of the stars (including the zodiac), which were thought to affect their increase. It was an occult knowledge, Thomas Hill describing it in his *Gardeners Labyrinth* as "darke in sense." He instructs that planting should occur

> at a due time of the yeare, in the increase of the moone, shee occupying an apt place in the Zodiacke, in agreeable aspect of Saturne, and well placed in the scite of heauen. All these thus afore hand learned, and with diligence bestowed, procure the plantes the speedier to grow, and wax the bigger

and guides the gardener to the "yearly Almanackes," which

> do meruellously helpe the Gardeners in the election of times, for sowing, planting, and graffing, but especially in obseruing the moone, about the bestowing of plante, as when the moone increasing, occupieth *Taurus* and *Aquarius*. But if it be for the setting of yoong trees, let the same be done in the last quarter of the moone . . for so these speedier take roote in the earth . . But this diligently learne, that the seeds and Plantes increase the better, if any of these signes shall be ascending in the Eastangle, and that *Mars* neither beholdeth the Ascendent, orn (sic) the Moone by anie aspect, but shall be weakly standing in a weake place of the figure at that time.
> Here might many other rules, as touching the particular fauour and hinderance of the starres bee uttered, but that is not my intent. [1]

The sonnet's structure, of one extended sentence divided by "When," "When" and "Then," opens with the poet's general observation: everything that grows keeps its perfection but momentarily ("but a little moment"); the choice of "consider" is likely deliberate, since it was thought to be of astrological origin (*sidera* = stars, hence to observe stars). The whole world is a stage that displays ("presenteth") nothing but "showes," both theatrical and floral displays. The metaphor of the world as a stage was commonplace, its renowned instance being Jacques' speech beginning "All the world's a stage" (*AYL*. 2.7.139), while the use of "nought" suggests their insubstantial and ephemeral hollowness. On them the "Stars in secret influence comment." An 'influence' is an astrological inpouring of an occult kind, often unknown to the recipient; plants were said to increase or not through the streaming of a "constellation" which Hill says, "of the skilfull is named an influence of heauen." [2] The stars are pictured as agents above, who devise what occurs below or cause it to be (the original Latinate meaning of "comment") [3] or discuss what occurs below (less likely). The line of 12 syllables (like the 12 astrological signs) is either deliberate or an unusual mistake.

Just as plants increase ("Cheared," Hill's "fauoured," but with a hint of a sidereal audience cheering) and are retarded in their growth ("check," Hill's "hinderance") so also, the poet observes, are men: both are affected by the "selfe-same skie." They 'revel in' or 'flaunt' ("Vaunt") their youthful "sap," their vigour or life-force; at their acme they diminish; then either they wear what was their state of glory ("braue state," with a hint of finery or splendid costumery) only as a memory ("out of memory"), or they 'wear out' or cause their glorious state to disappear from memory.

Then the poet considers the changeable nature of life, “the conceit of this inconstant stay” (“stay” as in “a little moment” above; in Sonnet 26 the youth’s “conceipt” will act in place of the “star that guides my mouing”). The thought “Sets you most rich in youth before my sight.” A first reading of “Sets” is ‘establishes you who are most rich in youth before my sight.’ But to ‘set’ also meant not only to ‘plant’ (see Sonnet 16) but to ‘graft’ (see Cooper, “a graffe or set of a young tree”). [4] The poet’s observation about transience, then, ‘grafts the friend splendidly to his youthfulness as the poet watches.’ In his mind’s eye “wastefull time debateth with decay;” “time” is that which lays waste or which is full of waste, while “debateth” recalls the second use of “comment.” Time and decay fight over how to reduce the height of the youth’s youthfulness (“your day of youth”) to soiled darkness (“sullied night;” the line’s chequered light/black recalling the earlier “checkt”).

In the couplet the poet affirms that he will strive against time with all his being (“And all in war with Time”) for the sake of or out of love for the youth (“for loue of you”). As time diminishes the youth (“As he takes from you”), the poet will “ingraft you new;” he will attach the youth to new stock through ‘grafting,’ that of the gardener but also that of the poet, who ‘engrafting’ or engraving (γραϕϵιν means to write or engrave) the youth in his writing keeps him ever new. The couplet looks forward to the opening of Sonnet 16, “But wherefore do not you a mightier waie . .”

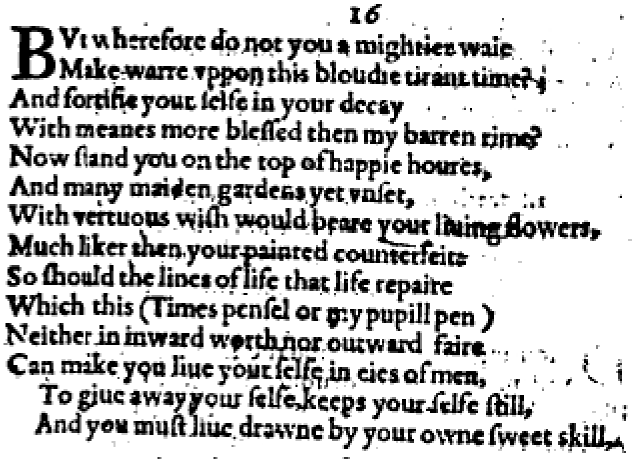
15.1. Thomas Hill, *The Gardeners Labyrinth. Containing a discourse of the Gardeners life, in the yearly trauels to be bestowed on his plot of earth, for the vse of a Garden*: *with instructions for the choise of seedes, apt times for sowing, setting, planting, and watering, and the vessels and instrumentes seruing to that vse and purpose* (London: Adam Islip, 1594) 42.

15.2. Hill 34.

15.3. See Cooper, *Thesaurus* commentus, “That inuenteth or deuiseth.”

15.4. Cooper, *Thesaurus* semen; compare “semina, Sets: graffes” and “Emplastrare, To take the bud of from a tree with the barke round about it, and set the same on another tree with a plaister of clay outware, to haue it prooue as a graffe.”

Sonnet 16


16
BVt wherefore do not you a mightier waie
Make warre vppon this bloudie tirant time?
And fortifie your ſelfe in your decay
With meanes more bleſſed then my barren rime?
Now ſtand you on the top of happie houres,
And many maiden gardens yet vnſet,
With vertuous wiſh would beare your liuing flowers,
Much liker then your painted counterfeit:
So ſhould the lines of life that life repaire
Which this (Times penſel or my pupill pen)
Neither in inward worth nor outward faire
Can make you liue your ſelfe in eies of men,
To giue away your ſelfe, keeps your ſelfe ſtill,
And you muſt liue drawne by your owne ſweet ſkill,

16
BVt wherefore do not you a mightier waie
Make warre vppon this bloudie tirant time?
And fortifie your ſelfe in your decay
With meanes more bleſſed then my barren rime?
Now ſtand you on the top of happie houres,
And many maiden gardens yet vnſet,
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Can make you liue your ſelfe in eies of men,
  To giue away your ſelfe, keeps your ſelfe ſtill,
  And you muſt liue drawne by your owne ſweet ſkill,

Sonnet 16 continues on from Sonnet 15 ("But wherefore") and asks why the youth doesn't strive more forcefully ("a mightier waie") to wage war against "this bloudie tirant time?" Defining time as a 'tyrant' was frequent, see Samuel Daniel, *Delia* 30.7, where beauty "Must yeeld vp all to tyrant times desire / Then fade those flowers that deckt her pride so long." [1] Why, the poet continues, doesn't the youth take precautions as he declines ("fortifie your selfe in your decay") by some more fruitful ("blessed") means than his own sterile efforts ("barren rime")? The instruction to "fortifie" contrasts with the poet's attempts to 'fortify' the youth or to 'record him in writing.' [2]

The poet pictures the youth standing "on the top of happie houres;" a 'happy hour' was the time when the stars or the wheel of fortune blessed an individual. (Compare Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso* 45.2.1-4:

> On tother side the more a man is pressed,
> And vtterly ou’rthrowne by Fortunes lowre,
> The sooner comes his state to be redressed,
> When wheele shal turne and bring the happy houre. [3]

The youth, standing on the top or the “happie houres,” controls his destiny and, since the “happy hour” was used of both nuptials and childbirth, controls the moment when he might beget children. Equally there are “many maiden gardens yet vnset.” A “maiden garden” is a womb yet to be made fruitful and evokes the figure of the *hortus conclusus*, used earlier in Sonnet 3, which derived from the Song of Solomon, “My sister my spouse *is as* a garden inclosed, as a spring shut vp, *and* a fountaine sealed vp” (4.2; *GV*). In medieval and Renaissance iconography, art and gardens the *hortus conclusus* was associated with the womb of the Virgin and, through the Song’s associated verse, “Thou art all faire, my loue, and there is no spot (“macula”) in thee” (4.7; *GV*), with her sinlessness and ever-inclosed maidenhood, which was impervious to the touch of time. To “set” a garden was to ‘sow’ it (compare Sonnet 15 where it is used of grafting); an “vnset” garden is one waiting to be planted, but which ‘chastely’ or ‘with grace’ desires (“vertuous wish”) that it give birth to the youth’s “liuing flowers,” self-generated new copies which are of a greater likeness than any “painted counterfeit,” either a secondary image of him wrought in time’s garden or in the poet’s rhyme, anticipating the painting image to follow.

Then, through children the “lines of life” would “repaire” his life, make it anew or newly father it (re + père). Classically the “lines of life” are the duration of a life determined by the length of thread spun by the Fates, specifically Lachesis: hence the length of the youth’s life during which he might beget life. Biblically the ‘line of life’ is the length by which an inheritance is determined, deriving from Ps. 16, “The Lorde *is* the portion of mine inheritance . . The lines are fallen vnto me in pleasant places: yea, I haue a faire heritage” (5-6 (*GV*); hence the youth’s lineage during which life might continue to be begotten. Thirdly the “lines of life” are the fate-lines found on the hand (and face); [4] by popular demand they were read by palmists so that the young could determine their matrimonial future, even if the practice was always subject to censure: George Hakewill in *The Vanitie of the eie* condemns "fortune-tellers, who vndertake to foretell men and womens marriages and fortunes by their pretended art of Phisiognimie and chiromancy, the one consisting in beholding, the traies of the visage, & the other the lines of the hande;" [5] hence the youth's physical traits which forecast and in which are contained his future progeny. Compared to his physical off-spring ("this") the depictions of time's pencil or the poet's novice pen ("pupill") are ineffectual. A pencil was both a small painter's brush (from *peniculus* = a small *penis* or tail) and a tool to engrave letters, although graphite pencils bound in wax, string or even wood were known in the 16th century; Florio has under "Stile," "*a marking-stone, or a pensill*." [6] The efforts of time and the poet to depict the youth's inner and outer beauty, cannot bring the youth to life ("can make you liue") in the eyes of men (compare the claim in Sonnet 81.8, "When you entombed in mens eyes shall lye"). By giving himself away in sexual union or in marriage ("giue away your selfe") the youth will paradoxically continue to preserve himself ("keeps your selfe still"). Continuing both the painterly and the fatherly image his lineage must be delineated ("drawne") by his own creative skill ("your owne sweet skill").

16.1. Daniel, *Delia* (1592) D1^r.

16.2. *OED* fortify 5b; see Sonnet 63.9.

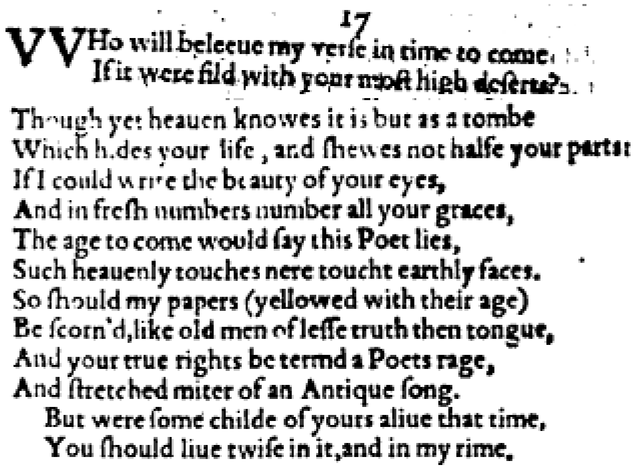
16.3 Lodovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse, by Sr Iohn Harington* (London: Richard Field, 1607) 384.

16.4. Compare Gobbo, who in *MV* looks at his palm and exclaims, "I shall haue good fortune; goe too, here's a simple line of life, here's a small trifle of wiues" (2.2.148).

16.5. George Hakewill, *The Vanitie of the eie* (Oxford: Ioseph Barnes, 2nd edition, 1608) 112.

16.6. Compare Carew, *World* 13, "*When I first tooke pensill in hand to draw the lineaments of this present Apologie*, *wherein I haue shadowed out a world of wonders*;" Drayton, *Peirs Gaueston* 290, "With the blacke pensill of defame is blotted;" or the Countess of Pembroke's translation of Ps. 83.45, "So paint their daunted face, / With pencell of disgrace."

Sonnet 17



17
WHo will beleeue my verſe in time to come,
If it were fild with your moſt high deſerts?
Though yet heauen knowes it is but as a tombe
Which hides your life, and ſhewes not halfe your parts:
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in freſh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would ſay this Poet lies,
Such heauenly touches nere toucht earthly faces.
So ſhould my papers (yellowed with their age)
Be ſcorn'd,like old men of leſſe truth then tongue,
And your true rights be termd a Poets rage,
And ſtretched miter of an Antique ſong.
  But were ſome childe of yours aliue that time,
  You ſhould liue twiſe in it,and in my rime.

17
WHo will beleeue my verſe in time to come,
If it were fild with your moſt high deſerts?
Though yet heauen knowes it is but as a tombe
Which hides your life, and ſhewes not halfe your parts:
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in freſh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would ſay this Poet lies,
Such heauenly touches nere toucht earthly faces.
So ſhould my papers (yellowed with their age)
Be ſcorn'd, like old men of leſſe truth then tongue,
And your true rights be termed a Poets rage,
And ſtretched miter of an Antique ſong.
  But were ſome childe of yours aliue that time,
  You ſhould liue twiſe in it, and in my rime.

Sonnet 17's opening question, a rhetorical one requiring a negative response, extends four lines rather than the two indicated by the *quarto*'s question mark. The poet asks who would believe his verse in the future ("in time to come"), if the youth's true excellence ("most high deserts") were either to 'fill' ("fild") his verse or if his verse were to be shaped and polished by the youth's worth ("fild," as in Sonnet 85.4, "precious phrase by all the Muses fil'd," where it rhymes with "compil'd" and carries the Ciceronian sense of a cut and polished phrase). The poet's verse is inadequate; "heauen knowes" is either an exclamation or part of the sentence: 'heaven knows that his verse is but a tomb' (with a hint of 'tome'), which contains ("hides") the youth's life and displays meagrely his qualities ("not halfe your parts"). [1]

If the poet could put into words ("write") the beauty of the youth's eyes or if he could number all the youth's graces in "fresh numbers," then future times would accuse him of falsehood; "fresh" intends 'new' and 'invigorating,' while "numbers" are looosely 'verses' and strictly the measure of syllables in a sentence or line so that it keeps "iust proportion in framing," in Wilson's words, "when we are able to frame a sentence handsomely together, obseruing number, and keeping composition." [2] Future ages would say, "this Poet lies / Such heauenly touches nere toucht earthly faces." (The phrase could be punctuated as direct speech.) "Such heauenly touches" are the divine touches traditionally bestowed by the Muses on the poet or they are the strokes of the brush or chisel of a divinely inspired hand, which, having 'touched' an earthly face, makes it perfect. [3] As in Sonnet 85 Shakespeare's precedent is Horace's phrase, "Factus homo ad unguem," 'it is the touch that perfects the man,' a sculptural expression from carvers who in modelling gave the finishing touch to their work with the nail ("unguem"). [4] A future age, believing that such divine perfection could never ("nere") happen, would think the poet's efforts exaggeration.

The poet, however, lacks such a touch and his manuscripts ("my papers"), once they are discoloured ("yellowed") with age like the sallow skin of an old man, will be the subject of ridicule ("scorn'd), just as "old men of lesse truth then tongue" are derided. The phrase verged on the proverbial and the habit of old men to lie or exaggerate was the frequent subject of discourse: in Sidney's *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* garullousness is natural to "olde age" and "our tongue . . [is] the only thing whereof we poore old men can brag." Talkativeness assuages an old man's desire to continue himself in a way other than begetting children, because "mankinde by all meanes seeking to eternize himselfe so much the more, as he is neere his end, dooth it not only by the children that come of him, but by speeches and writings recommended to the memorie of hearers and readers." [5] What the youth is truly owed ("your true rights") would be dismissed in the future as "a Poets rage," the heavenly inspiration that enthused poets and prophets (sometimes to a frenzy), Plato's 'mania' (μανία), rendered by Cicero as "furor" and popularized by Ficino whose 1482 translation of Plato's *Ion* bore the subtitle, *De Furore Poetico* (compare Sidney, "they are so beloued of the Gods, that whatsoeuer they write, proceeds of a diuine fury").[6] What is owed the youth would be rejected as the "stretched miter of an Antique song;" "stretched" firstly intends 'exaggerated,' but was used technically of earlier poetic styles where each syllable of metre, arsis and thesis, was given equal emphasis. Sidney in the *Defence of Poesie* categorizes the ancient way of versifying as drawn out:

> Now, of versifying there are two sorts, the one Auncient, the other Moderne: the Auncient marked the quantitie of each silable, and according to that framed his verse; the Moderne, obseruing onely number, (with some regarde of the accent) the chiefe life of it standeth in that lyke sounding of the words, which wee call Ryme.[7]

"Antique song" is both ancient and distorted ('antic') song. If, however, the youth were to beget a child, then he would leave a physical witness to future ages ("some childe of yours"). He would thus survive in double fashion: in the child and in the poet's verse ("in my rime").

17.1. Booth cites at Sonnet 83.12, T. Walter Herbert, "Shakespeare's Word-play on *Tombe*" (*MLN* 64 [1944] 235-41), who "successfully argued the historical and artistic probability of a *tomb*/"tome" pun here and in 17.3 ("[my verse] is but a tomb"), 86.4, 101.11, 107.14. Kokeritz dismissed Herbert's suggestion crankily but without reason." Sonnet 81.8 seems to have been overlooked.

17.2. Wilson 180.

17.3. Compare *Tim*. 1.1.39-41, "Heere is a touch: Is't good? / *Poet*: I will say of it, / It Tutors Nature, Artificiall strife / Liues in these toutches, liuelier then life."

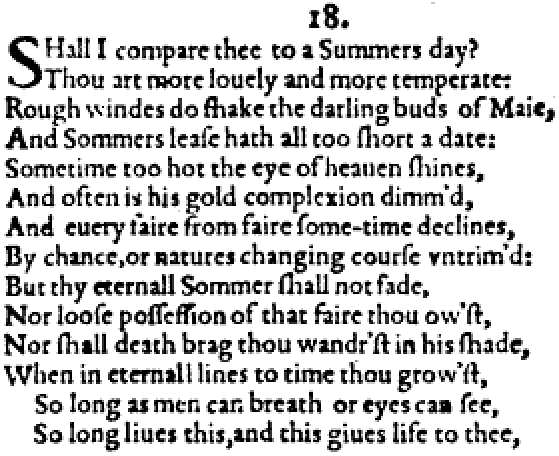
17.4. Horace, *Sermones* 1.4.32; Horace takes his phrase from the Greek, ἐν ὄνυχι ὁ πηλὸς γίγνϵται, 'the clay is born in the fingernail.'

17.5. Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia, Written by Sir Philippe Sidnei* (1590) $16^{\text{r-v}}$.

17.6. See Plato, *Phaedrus* 245 A; that associated with prophecy is found in *Phaedrus*, 244 D, 'an innate and prophesying 'mania' ("ἡ μανία ἐγγϵνομένη καὶ προφητϵύσασα"); Cicero *De Divinatione*, 1.31.66, 'If the power to prophesy burns too hotly, it is called a 'rage,' when the soul is drawn out of the body and is violently excited by a divine touch or impulse' ("ea [praesagitio] si exarsit acrius, furor appellatus, cum a corpore animus abstractus divino instinctu concitatur"); Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie* (London: William Ponsonby, 1595), L3^{r}.

17.7. Sidney, *Defence* L1^{v}-L2^{r}.

Sonnet 18


18.
SHall I compare thee to a Summers day?
Thou art more louely and more temperate:
Rough windes do ſhake the darling buds of Maie,
And Sommers leaſe hath all too ſhort a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heauen ſhines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,
And euery faire from faire ſome-time declines,
By chance,or natures changing courſe vntrim'd:
But thy eternall Sommer ſhall not fade,
Nor looſe poſſeſſion of that faire thou ow'ſt,
Nor ſhall death brag thou wandr'ſt in his ſhade,
When in eternall lines to time thou grow'ſt,
So long as men can breath or eyes can ſee,
So long liues this,and this giues life to thee,

18
SHall I compare thee to a Summers day?
Thou art more louely and more temperate:
Rough windes do ſhake the darling buds of Maie,
And Sommers leaſe hath all too ſhorte a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heauen ſhines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,
And euery faire from faire ſome-time declines,
By chance, or natures changing courſe vntrimm'd:
But thy eternall Sommer ſhall not fade,
Nor looſe poſſeſſion of that faire thou ow'ſt,
Nor ſhall death brag thou wandr'ſt in his ſhade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'ſt,
  So long as men can breathe or eyes can ſee,
  So long liues this, and this giues life to thee,

The sonnet's opening question supposes a negative answer, even if the reasons for not comparing are based on comparisons. A "Summers day" is a day of summer not metonymically the season of summer. The youth, compared to a summer's day, is more "louely," both more 'beautiful' and more 'loving,' and is more "temperate:" "temperate" of weather is neither too hot nor too cold and of persons is not given to extremes or equitable. A summer's day is subject to variety and the wind's harshness ("Rough windes do shake the darling buds of Maie"), where "darling" (dear + ling) means 'small' and 'precious.' "Maie" as a summer month is problematic: in the 16th and 17th centuries the calendar was 10/11 days in arrears and, although reformed under Pope Gregory in 1582, the recalculated dates were not fully introduced into England until 1752. The midsummer solstice in the 1590s still occurred not on June 21/22 but on June 11, the Feast of St.

Barnabas, celebrated by Spenser in his *Epithalamion* as "the longest day in all the yeare, / And shortest night." Thereafter Spenser sees the sun "declining daily by degrees" as the house of Cancer progresses. [1] May, then, was a month straddling spring and summer. Moreover summer only has a lease on time, a limited contract with a short-term concluding date, "Sommers lease hath all too short a date."

A summer day's intemperate nature is demonstrated by the sun ("the eye of heauen") which 'sometimes' or 'at some time' ("Sometime") shines "too hot" and frequently, when masked by the clouds ("gold complexion dimm'd"), too coolly. [2] Although "complexion" suggests facial colouring, it was thought to result from an infusion of humours: a combination of qualities such as hot or cold in a certain proportion determined the nature of a plant or body. Because the hot and cold of the sun are not in proper proportion or degree, it is not temperate. It is also an example of the maxim that "euery faire from faire some-time declines," as both it and its brightness decline daily to the west and seasonally after the summer solstice. The declining occurs either by accident ("By chance") or by "natures changing course," its seasonal change after the solstice as it loses its richness or embellishment; "vntrim'd" means 'with its ornamentation removed' (gold was customarily used as trim) or reduced to ruins; 'untrimmed' was used to translate the Latin *acosmus*, without order or without decoration (see Cooper's *Thesaurus*, "Acosmus . . Vndecked: vntrimmed: a sloouen"). [3] A lamp untrimmed was one that was extinguished.

The poet's argument now foresees a time when the youth will grow to time (" when . . to time thou grow'st"). 'To grow to' was a legal term occuring in the law of leases which recalls Sonnet 13's "beauty which you hold in lease," and which should "Find no determination," a 'determination' being where the lessee dies without heirs and possession of the estate reverts to the lessor. The reverting or forfeiting technically occurred under "the law of growing-to" and the estate was said to 'grow to,' to revert or escheat to the lessor. The "immortall lines" are either those of the poet in which the youth is engraved or engrafted (see Sonnet 15.14, "I ingraft you new"), which because immortal will forestall any 'growing-to' time. Or, as in Sonnet 16.9, they are the "lines of life," the immortal lines that are the length of the "faire inheritance" or lineage that the youth will bequeath through his ever-continuing line, which will prevent any 'growing-to' or being ceded to time. (Compare Sidney, Ps. 39.15, "Lo, thou a spanns length mad'st my living line.") Such poetic or generational immortality means that the youth's non-seasonal ("eternall") summer will not fade away. Nor will it be dispossessed ("loose possession") of the beauty the youth owns ("ow'st") in contrast to the lease on time which temporal summer has. Nor will death boast of or lay claim to the youth ("brag thou wandr'st in his shade," with its echo of Ps. 23.4 "though I walke through the valley of the shadowe of death" (*BB*)); "shade" also evokes the shades or ghosts who wander the underworld, as well as hades or the abode of the dead. [4] Until the end of time ("So long as men can breath or eyes can see"), the poet claims, his off-spring ("this") will prevail and will afford immortality to the young man ("this giues life to thee").

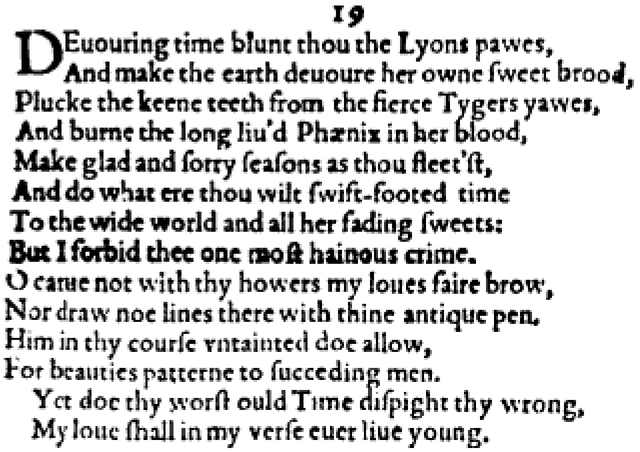
18.1. Edmund Spenser, *Amoretti and Epithalamion* (London: William Ponsonby, 1595) 271-72; compare 265-66, "This day the sunne is in his chiefest hight, / With Barnaby the bright," or Donne, *LXXX Sermons* 70, Sermon VII, "That man that is blinde, or that will winke, shall see no more sunne upon S. *Barnabies* day, then upon S. *Lucies*; nor more in the summer, then in the winter solstice." Daniel also has May as a summer month in *Delia* (1592) 35.1-6.

18.2. Compare *R2* 3.2.190-91, "Men iudge by the complexion of the Skie / The state and inclination of the day."

18.3. See also Cooper, *Thesaurus* "Acosmia . . A disordered heape of thinges."

18.4. Shakespeare elsewhere uses "shade of death" for 'shadow of death' see *1H6* 5.4.89 & *2H6* 3.2.54.

Sonnet 19



19
DEuouring time blunt thou the Lyons pawes,
And make the earth deuoure her owne ſweet brood,
Plucke the keene teeth from the fierce Tygers yawes,
And burne the long liu’d Phænix in her blood,
Make glad and ſorry ſeaſons as thou fleet’ſt,
And do what ere thou wilt ſwift-footed time
To the wide world and all her fading ſweets:
But I forbid thee one moſt hainous crime.
O carue not with thy howers my loues faire brow,
Nor draw noe lines there with thine antique pen,
Him in thy courſe vntainted doe allow,
For beauties patterne to ſucceding men.
Yet doe thy worſt ould Time diſpight thy wrong,
My loue ſhall in my verſe euer liue young.

19
DEuouring time blunt thou the Lyons pawes,
And make the earth deuoure her owne ſweet brood,
Plucke the keene teeth from the fierce Tygers yawes,
And burne the long liu’d Phænix in her blood,
Make glad and ſorry ſeaſons as thou fleet’ſt, flee’st (?)
And do what ere thou wilt ſwift-footed time
To the wide world and all her fading ſweets:
But I forbid thee one moſt hainous crime,
O carue not with thy howers my loues faire brow,
Nor draw noe lines there with thine antique pen,
Him in thy courſe vntainted doe allow,
For beauties patterne to ſucceding men.
  Yet doe thy worſt ould Time diſpight thy wrong,
  My loue ſhall in my verſe euer liue young.

Sonnet 19 rounds off the cycle of sonnets urging the youth to beget an heir. (The number 19 was the number of years, beyond which Prime could not extend [“Prime neuer exceedeth the number of 19”]. The Prime or Golden Number [“The pryme is the time of .19. yeres”] in the metonic calendar was the course of Julian yeares required for the moon to complete the cycle in which it “returneth to the selfe same day of the yeere of the Sunne: and therefore it is called the Cycle of the Moone, in y^{e} which the Solstices & Equinoctials do returne to al one point in the Zodiaque.” The Prime was always attached to the ecclesiastical calendar in the *Book of Common Prayer* to assist in calculating the time of Easter.) [1]

The sonnet addresses time directly as “Deuouring time,” a rendering of the often-used Ovidian phrase, “Tempus edax,” which became a sonneteers’ stock expression. [2] It is comprised of a series of imperatives, in which time is commanded to disempower its own instruments: it must “blunt . . the Lyons pawes;” it must force mother earth (“her”) to “deuoure” that to which she has given birth (“owne sweet brood,” with its echo of the *Book of Common Prayer*’s “Order for the Burial of the Dead,” “earth to earth”). Time is ordered to pull (“plucke”) the tiger’s “keene teeth,” its ‘eager,’ its ‘sharp,’ and its ‘fierce’ (as in a keen tiger) teeth from the tiger’s jaw. Fourthly, and impossibly, time is required to “burne the long liu’d Phænix in her blood.” The fabulous phoenix was an emblem of immortality: only one existed at a time and, having burnt itself on a pyre, it rose again from its ashes. Its span of years was variously reported as between 500 and 1000 years: Pliny has the phoenix as male and living 660 years, Ovid five centuries, while Whitney claims it “dothe liue vntill a thousande yeares be ronne.” [3] Here time is to control the phoenix rather than the phoenix defeat time; “in her blood” intends either that the phoenix’ blood be the fuel in which she is burnt, or, as in the hunting phrase, “in blood,” it means ‘while full of life.’

As time speeds by (“fleet’st,” or, if “flee’st,” then the proverbial ‘time flies’ or ‘tempus fugit’), it must vary the seasons (“make glad and sorry seasons”), not only cycles of nature but periods of human moods. (Shakespeare speaks of youth who “fleet” or ‘while away’ time in *AYL* 1.1.124: “they say many yong Gentlemen . . fleet the time carelesly as they did in the golden world.”) The penultimate command verges on the careless or dismissive: “do what ere thou wilt.” The epithet “swift-footed time” was commonplace, as was “the wide world,” while the feminine “all her fading sweets” recalls the earth’s “sweet brood.” [4]

Finally the poet denies time a singular, most grievous sin (“one most hainous crime”). It must “carue not with thy howers my loues faire brow.” In associating crime and wrinkles Shakespeare has drawn on Ovid’s Latin adage, “de rugis crimina multa cadunt” (‘from wrinkles many crimes are exposed), rendered by Marlowe as “wrinckles in beauty is a grieuous fault.” [5] The hours must not etch into the beloved’s brow any wrinkle (compare

Sonnet 63.3-4, "When houres haue . . fild his brow / With lines and wrinkles"). Nor must time's "antique pen," both its 'ancient' and its 'antic' or crazy pen, "draw . . lines there," a further Latinism, "in fronte contrahere rugas" ('in the brow to draw wrinkles'). [6] Since time is often figured as feathered, then a pen (*penna* = feather) is appropriate. Daniel employs the same etymological pun, "Swift speedy Time, feathred with flying howers, / Dissolues the beautie of the fairest brow." [7]

Time must allow the youth to remain "vntainted" in its "course;" "vntainted" (from *tangere* = to touch) firstly intends 'untouched' or 'unaffected' by the course of time. Secondly "vntainted" means without 'taint' or 'spot' as in the Pauline passage read in the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Rite of Marriage," Ephesians 5.27, where spouses, like the Church, are acclaimed as "not hauing spot or wrinkle" (*GV*). [8] Thirdly "vntainted" evokes the course of a tilt-yard and the victory shout 'attaint' or a hit; hence time must not claim victory over the youth. He will remain impervious to its instruments, chisel, pen or lance, so that ("For") he might be "beauties pattern to succeeding men," the poet's final oblique call to him to father children. During the 16th century a 'pattern,' meaning a 'template' or 'copy,' was spelled 'patron' (from *pater* / *patris* = father) and a separate spelling, 'pattern,' occurred only late in the century. (Shakespeare plays with the same ambiguity in Sonnet 98.12.) The youth's beauty will prove a "pattern" or matrix, whose lines will copied by successive generations, but the poet hints at his being a 'patron,' whose line will be continued in subsequent generations.

The couplet dismisses time's efforts ("Yet doe thy worst ould Time"). Whatever injuries or faults ("wrongs") time might commit, the poet's "loue," both his affection and the beloved, will prevail in the poet's lines ("verse") as ever fresh and never growing old ("euer liue young"). (The final line with its stress on 'evér' appears awkward.)

19.1. *The Booke of Common Prayer* (London: Christopher Barker, 1582). See William Bourne, *A Regiment for the Sea* (London: Thomas Hacket, 1574) C2^r, "The Prime or Golden Number, is the tyme of 19 yeares, in the which tyme the Moone maketh all her chaunges or coniunctions with the Sunne, and when all these .19. yeares be expired, then she beginneth againe," and John Davis, *The Seamans Secrets. Deuided into 2 partes, wherein is taught the three kindes of Sayling, Horizontall, Paradoxall, and sayling vpon a* *great Circle* (London: Thomas Dawson, 1595) A3^{v}-A4^{r}, "Of the prime or Golden number. The Prime is the space of 19. yeeres, in which time ye moone performeth all the varieties of her motion with the sunne, and at the end of 19. yeres beginneth the same reuolution againe, therefore the Prime neuer exceedeth the number of 19. and this prime doth alwaies begin in Ianuary, and thus / the prime is found: vnto the yeere of the Lord wherein you desire to know the prime adde 1. then deuide that number by 19. and the remaining number which commeth not into the quotient is the prime."

19.2. See Ovid, *Met*. 15.258, "tempus edax rerum" (Golding 15.258, "tyme the eater vp of things). Compare Watson 77.16, "Time eats what ere the Moon can see below;" Drayton, *Shepheardes Garland* Eclogue 1.61-62, "Deuouring time;" Spenser, *Amoretti* 58.7, "deuouring tyme and changeful chance," and *Ruines of Time* 420, "Deuour'd of Time."

19.3. See Pliny, *Hist*. 10.2.2; Ovid, *Met*. 15.395, "haec ubi quinque suae complevit saecula vitae" (Golding 15.436, "And when that of his lyfe well full fyve hundred yeeres are past"); Whitney 177.

19.4. See Richard Linche, *Diella, Certaine Sonnets, adioyned to the amorous Poeme of Dom Diego and Gineura* (London: Henry Olney, 1596) 3.1, "Swift-footed Time."

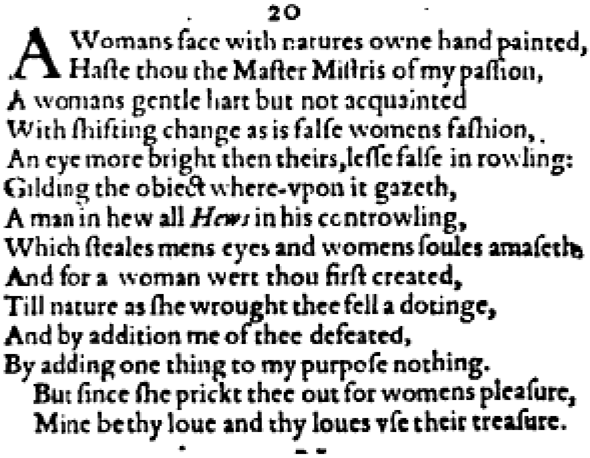
19.5. Ovid, *Amores* 1.8.46; Christopher Marlowe, *Ouids Elegies: Three Bookes. By C[hristopher] M[arlowe]. Epigrames by I[ohn] D[avies]* (London?: s.n., post 1602) 1.8.46.

19.6. Varro, *De Re Rustica* 1.2.26; compare Vergil, *Aen*. 7.417, "frontem . . rugis arat" ('carves the brow with wrinkles') or Drayton, *Shepheardes Garland* Eclogue 2.21-22, "My dreadful thoughts been drawen vpon my face, / In blotted lines with ages iron pen."

19.7. Daniel, *Delia* (1592) 31. 10-11.

19.8. The Geneva Version's gloss to Eph. 5.27, with a race or course in mind, runs, "The Church as it is considered in it selfe, shall not be without wrincle, before it come to the marke it shooteth at for while it is in this life, it runneth in a race: but if it be considered in Christ, it is cleane and without wrincle."

Sonnet 20


20
A Womans face with natures owne hand painted,
Haſte thou the Maſter Miſtris of my paſſion,
A womans gentle hart but not acquainted
With ſhifting change as is falſe womens faſhion,
An eye more bright then theirs,leſſe falſe in rowling:
Gilding the obiect where-vpon it gazeth,
A man in hew all *Hews* in his controwling,
Which ſteales mens eyes and womens ſoules amaſeth,
And for a woman wert thou firſt created,
Till nature as ſhe wrought thee fell a dotinge,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpoſe nothing.
  But ſince ſhe prickt thee out for womens pleaſure,
  Mine be thy loue and thy loues vſe their treaſure.

20
A Womans face with natures owne hande painted,
Haſte thou, the Maſter Miſtris of my paſſion,
A womans gentle hart but not acquainted
With ſhifting change as is falſe womens faſhion,
An eye more bright then theirs, leſſe falſe in rowling:
Gilding the obiect where-vpon it gazeth,
A man in hew all *Hews* in his controwling,
Which ſteales mens eyes and womens ſoules amaſeth,
And for a woman wert thou firſt created,
Till nature as ſhe wrought thee fell a dotinge,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpoſe nothing.
  But ſince ſhe prickt thee out for womens pleaſure,
  Mine be thy loue and thy loues vſe their treaſure.

Sonnet 20 has gained notoriety for its phrase, "thou the Master Mistris of my passion." Its apparent homoeroticism has caused divergent readings, sometimes supportive, sometimes defensive. The sonnet's argument, however, is strategically placed in the sequence, following as it does exhortations to the youth to father a child, because it sees the poet ultimately acknowledging that his physical attractiveness is for the use of women, while his non-physical love will remain the poet's domain. (The sonnet is one of only two in the sequence with feminine endings to its lines; the other is Sonnet 87.) The youth's beauty is, the sonnet argues, "with natures owne hand painted," not therefore an artificially contrived beauty obtained through cosmetics. It is the first of a number of sonnets where Shakespeare treats (often disapprovingly) of cosmetics: in Sonnet 82 "grosse painting" is indicted and in Sonnet 83 he observes of the youth that "I neuer saw that you did painting need." In Sonnet 20 the friend is free of artificially applied beauty, his face having been coloured solely by nature.

Applying cosmetics to the face was a widespread Elizabethan practice: white fucus, normally made of mercury sublimate, was laid as a foundation or base coat and a second red fucus, generally made of vermilion or mercuric sulphide, was then applied to cheeks and lips. Instructions on how to mix a fucus were readily available: Hugh Plat in his *Delights for Ladies* gives the following for a "*minerall fucus*:" "Incorporate with a woodden pestle and in a woodden morter with great labour foure ounces of sublimate, and one ounce of crude Mercurie at the least sixe or eight houres (you cannot bestowe too much labour herein) then with often change of colde water by ablution in a glasse, take away the salts from the sublimate, change your water twise euerie day at the least, and in seuen or eight dayes (the more the better) it will bee dulcified, and then it is prepared. Lay it on with the oyle of white poppey." [1]

It was known to Elizabethans that such cosmetics were highly dangerous; writers condemned both their use and their long-term effect. Thomas Tuke inveighs against this "inuersion of nature, to dissemble and hide the naturall visage with an artificial . . Truly vertue is the best beautie, which is indeed so beautiful and bright, that were it to be seene with eies, it would draw and hold all mens eye vnto it. A vertuous woman needs no borrowed, no bought complexion, none of these poysons . . What doe this white and red paint, and an hundred other poisons of colours in an honest body?" [2] The effects of the the fucus of mercury sublimate and the ceruse made of white lead were evident. Richard Haydock observes that "such women as vse [sublimate] about their face . . become disfigured, hastening olde age before the time," while the use of ceruse causes them to "quickly become withered and gray headed, because this doth so mightely drie vp the naturall moysture of their flesh." Tuke contains a warning that, when sublimate is applied to the face, "it drieth vp, and consumeth the flesh that is vnderneath;" it makes women, "tremble . . as if they were sicke of the staggers." [3]

The youth, claims the poet, is the "Master Mistris of my passion." On the one hand "Master Mistris" carries the homoerotic sense of a 'masculine mistress of the poet's affection,' a reading that is emphasized if the two words are hyphenated as they often are by modern editors; on the other hand the youth can be construed as the dominant or chief ("Master") controller ("Mistris") of the poet's passion (compare *JC* 3.1.163, "Master Spirits of this Age"). Shakespeare is being technically correct, because "Mistris" rather than 'master' was used of words such as "passion," which are feminine in Latin.

As the youth has a "Womans face," so also he has a "womans gentle hart." His heart is kindly and well-born; it is always constant: it does not know, is "not acquainted" with "shifting change," as is the case with the ephemerality of fashion; "false womens fashion" is the fashion of "false women," particularly of courtesans either male or female. In using "acquainted" Shakespeare is also anticipating the sonnet's later fescennine sub-text: Florio's dictionary has an entry giving the English for *Becchina* (from "*Becchi, goats, or cuckolds*") as "*a womans quaint or priuities*." Shakespeare, as later with a-maze ("amaseth") and a-doting ("a dotinge"), is thus playing with the neologism, 'a-cunted,' intending either not equipped with a cunt – below he has a prick - or unapproached by a cunt, hence not having known sexually or virginal, as well as constant (compare Robert Greene's like pun in "he that acquainteth himselfe . . with any of these Connycatching strumpets"). [4]

The youth has "An eye more bright then theirs, lesse false in rowling." Artificially induced bright eyes were part of courtly practice, where drops of belladonna were used to dilate the pupils and make the eyes sparkle. Used consistently, belladonna gave the eyes a lifeless appearance, a result to which Shakespeare alludes in Sonnet 67.6 "And steale dead seeing of his liuing hew." Here the youth's eyes are "more bright" than the chemically induced bright eyes of the courtly lady. They are also "lesse false in rowling," straighter and more direct, therefore, and not like the coquettish looks of the court lady and the practice of making the eyes more alluring. Youth, is defined by John Davies in *Microcosmos* as a time when "we *Wantons* play, in *Venus* plaies / And offer *Incense* to a rowling *eie*." A rolling eye was the object of censure: Tuke, condemning "*wandring, or rolling eyes*," has recourse to Isaiah's lament "Because the daughters of Zion are hautie . . with wandering eyes, [sidenote: "As a signe, that they were not chaste") walking and minsing as they goe" (3.16; *GV*). Preachers pronounced against it: George Hakewill claims that it is "by a rowling vnsetled eie [we discouer] wantonnesse" and Henry Smith in his *A Preparative to Marriage* accounts "a rolling eye" as one of "the forerunners of adultery." [5] The youth gives no such sign of not being chaste or "false." Furthermore his eye, being bright, is able to add a golden lustre to any object on which it might look ("Gilding the obiect where-vpon it gazeth"); the eye was thought to issue forth a beam with which to enlighten the object on which it looks (compare the sun as a "soueraine eie . . Guilding pale streames" in Sonnet 33.2-4).

The youth is termed "A man in hew all *Hews* in his controwling;" "hew" can mean shape, figure, or even apparition, hence a man whose shape or bearing dominates all other shapes or deportments. But the sonnet's cosmetic conceit argues primarily for "hew" as colour. As in Sonnet 82, where the youth is "as faire in knowledge as in hew" and needs no painting, so here in his natural colouring and complexion he has a mastery over all other hues falsely laid on as cosmetics ("controwling" may also carry the bawdy notion of 'cunt-rolling'). The antecedent of "which" in "which steales mens eyes" is "hew:" the youth's complexion captivates or distracts the eyes of men just as Marina's "excellent complexion . . did steale the eyes of yong and old" (*Per*. 4.1.40-41). Likewise it confounds or stupifies ("amazeth") the "soules" or inner emotions of women.

The sestet is an elaborate conceit: Dame Nature, when first creating the young man, intended him to be a female ("for a woman"). But as she created him ("as she wrought thee"), Nature became besotted or fell inordinately in love with her creation ("fell a dotinge") and cheated or deprived the poet of the friend by adding to her creation male organs ("by addition"; compare Sonnet 135.4, "to thy sweet will making addition thus"). The sestet's "addition," "one thing," "nothing," "prickt," and "treasure," all continue the sexual punning, in the case of "prickt" and "addition" from musical idioms. Contemporary musicians such as William Barley and Thomas Morley defined four kinds of musical points or pricks: "The first of perfection, the second of addition, the third of deuision, and the fourh (sic) of alteration." [7] Firstly "The pricke of perfection is that which beeing placed with a perfect note, defendeth it from imperfection." Morley explains that it is used in the first mode, the "perfect of the more prolation" (or lengthening), whose "signe is a whole cirkle with a prick . . in the center or middle." [8]

The second prick, which Barley calls "the pricke of addition," adds to a note a further half-length of its normal time-value. The upright phallic suggestiveness of some Elizabethan musical notation, the frequent use of a "nothing" (a term for the vagina) or circle with a prick in its middle, and the "pricke of addition," whose function is elongation, all combine to give a bawdiness on which Elizabethan poets often drew, as does Shakespeare in Sonnets 134 and 135.

Nature, thus, by a prick of addition has "defeated" the poet by adding a penis (a "thing" was used of both the male and female sexual organs), which is of no value or "vse" to the poet ("to my purpose nothing"), but with a hint of 'which cannot serve as a vagina.' In the final couplet the poet indicates a change of direction. Nature has "prickt" out the young man: either has chosen the young man by using a pin to select from a list, or has equipped the young man with a prick or penis. The "purpose" of the prick is that it be used "for womens pleasure," to give pleasure, particularly sexual pleasure, to women. The poet thus resolves to accept the "loue" of the youth, which he implies is a higher love than the physical love ("thy loues vse"), which is the province or "treasure" of women. There is, finally, a suggestion in "treasure" of a women's private parts and in "vse" (as there is in Sonnet 6.5) of gain or issue; hence that which issues from the youth's love (children) will be the "treasure" of future women.

20.1. Hugh Plat, *Delights for Ladies, to adorne their Persons, Tables, closets and distillatories with Beauties, banquets, perfumes and Waters* (London: Peter Short, 1603) G7^{v}.

20.2 Thomas Tuke, *A Discourse Against Painting and Tincturing of Women* (London: Edward Marchant, 1616) 21.

20.3. Richard Haydock in Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *A Tracte Containing the Artes of curious Paintinge Caruinge Buildinge written first in Italian by Io: Paul Lomatius painter of Milan And Englished by R[ichard]. H[aydock] student in Physik* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1598) 130; Tuke B4^{v}.

20.4. Greene, *Disputation* A3^{r}.

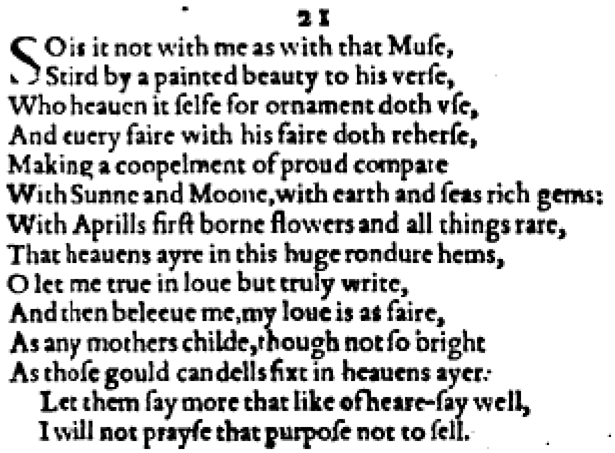
20.5. Tuke 36.

20.6. John Davies, *Microcosmos. The Discovery of the Little World, with the government thereof* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1603) 65; Hakewill 90; Henry Smith, *A Preparative To Mariage* (London: Richard Field, 1591) 68.

20.7. Barley D4^{v}.

20.8. Morley 12.

Sonnet 21



21

SO is it not with me as with that Muſe,
Stird by a painted beauty to his verſe,
Who heauen it ſelfe for ornament doth vſe,
And euery faire with his faire doth reherſe,
Making a coopelment of proud compare
With Sunne and Moone,with earth and ſeas rich gems:
With Aprills firſt borne flowers and all things rare,
That heauens ayre in this huge rondure hems,
O let me true in loue but truly write,
And then beleeue me,my loue is as faire,
As any mothers childe,though not ſo bright
As thoſe gould candells fixt in heauens ayer:
Let them ſay more that like of heare-ſay well,
I will not prayſe that purpoſe not to ſell.

21
SO is it not with me as with that Muſe,
Stird by a painted beauty to his verſe,
Who heauen it ſelfe for ornament doth vſe,
And euery faire with his faire doth reherſe,
Making a coopelment of proud compare
With Sunne and Moone, with earth and ſeas rich gems:
With Aprills first borne flowers and all things rare,
That heauens ayre in this huge rondure hems,
O let me true in loue but truly write,
And then beleeue me, my loue is as faire,
As any mothers childe, though not ſo bright
As thoſe gould candells fixt in heauens ayer:
Let them ſay more that like of heare-ſay well,
I will not prayſe that purpoſe not to ſell.

The "Muse," to which the poet takes exception and whom through "compare" he parodies to make his own point, differs from the tenth "Muse" of Sonnet 38, although the two sonnets share vocabulary, rhyme and the theme of praise. His opening disclaimer asserts that his Muse is not like some other Muse that is "Stird by a painted beauty to his verse." To "Stir" was the standard rendering of 'excitare,' to arouse or awaken an emotion, an idea, and especially the action or 'energia' proper to a Muse. It connects with "painted," since paint is stirred. Such a Muse is moved either by a painted replica or, given the sonnet's position next to Sonnet 20, by someone like a courtesan, who is not naturally but cosmetically decorated. Eloquence that was merely the "vaine painting of the matter" was generally condemned: Sidney derides verse that is overly ornamental, ("that honny-flowing Matron Eloquence, apparelled, or rather disguised, in a Curtizan-like painted affectation"), while the Geneva Bible contrasts Paul's eloquence with "that painted kinde of speach which too many nowe a daies hunt after and followe" (2 Cor. 11.6, sidenote). [1] Shakespeare derides the sonneteer, who affectedly searches for images even from the heavens to embellish ("ornament") his comparison, and who will "rehearse," or 'describe at length' his "fayre" by comparison with every other "fayre" to make a "coopelment," either a coupling in a comparison or a couplet or stanza. The rhetorical device, *compar*, was a favourite among sonneteers, especially in blazons where the mistress was contrasted with the sun, moon, and precious stones (compare Spenser's *Amoretti* 9, "Long-while I sought to what I might compare . . Not to the Sun: for they doo shine by night . .nor to the Moone: for they are changed neuer . . nor to the Diamond: for they are more tender"). Shakespeare will resist their practice of "proud compare" and ignore the sun, moon, the "rich gems" of earth and sea, and "Aprills first borne flowers," both 'born' and 'borne.' He will disregard "all things rare," that are contained within the bounds of the universe ("hems"), of which another poet's pen might make use. The image of the "rondure" or circle of the heavens as a hemmed fabric originated with Isaiah's God who "sitteth vpon the circle of the earth, and . . stretcheth out the heauens, as a curtaine" (40.2; *GV*). The line anticipates the conclusion of another anti-blazon in the sequence, Sonnet 130.13-14, "And yet by heauen I thinke my loue as rare, / As any she beli'd with false compare."

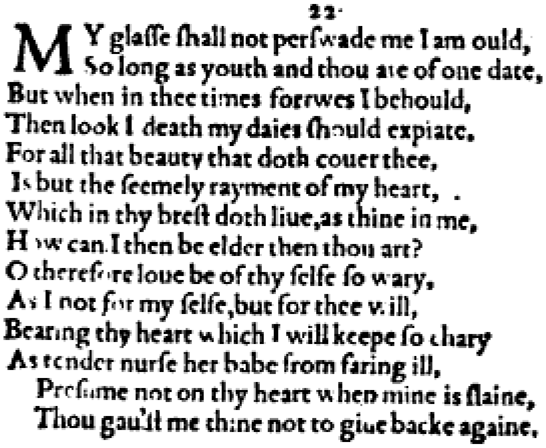
This poet is different and plain speaking. He knows the hallmark line of Astrophil, the lover of a star, "Foole saide my Muse to mee, looke in thy heart and write." [2] Because he is "true in love," he will "truly write" and require of the youth (or reader) that he "beleeue" him: "my loue is as faire / As any mothers childe," the last allusion in the sequence to the youth to beget an 'heir' (intimated in the pun on "heauens ayer"). His praise, however, is properly qualified: the youth is not "so bright / As those gould candells fixt in heauens ayer." The circle of fixed stars in the sky is naturally the brighter. Other poets ("them"), those who "like of heare-say well," may write more extensively; "heare-say" intends 'by report,' not necessarily trustworthy report. It is also the last reference in the sonnet to Sidney since it implies falsely painted or "hear-say pictures," a Sidneian coinage: in *Arcadia* Lamon sings of shepherds whose strength of character "he could not bende / With hear-say, pictures, or a windowe looke . . or letter finely pend, / That were in Court a well proportion'd hooke." [3] These creations, painted and not true and often produced for venal purposes, the poet dismisses. His praise is not so purposed, but given truly and freely.

21.1. Wilson 107; Sidney, *Defence* K4^{r}.

21.2. Sidney, *Astrophel and Stella* 1.14.

21.3. Sidney, *Arcadia* (1593) 45^{r}.

Sonnet 22



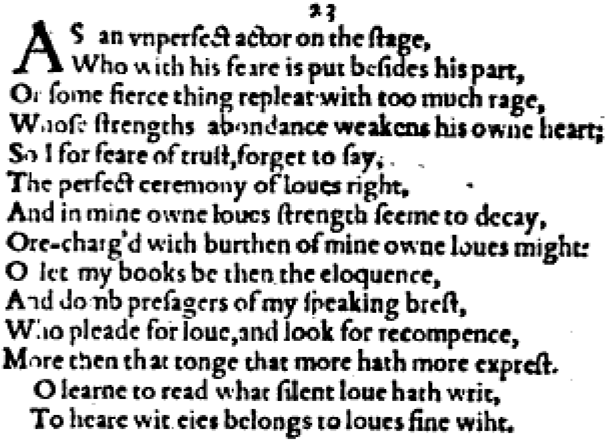
22.
MY glaſſe ſhall not perſwade me I am ould,
So long as youth and thou are of one date,
But when in thee times forrwes I behould,
Then look I death my daies ſhould expiate.
For all that beauty that doth couer thee,
Is but the ſeemely rayment of my heart,
Which in thy breſt doth liue,as thine in me,
How can I then be elder then thou art?
O therefore loue be of thy ſelfe ſo wary,
As I not for my ſelfe,but for thee will,
Bearing thy heart which I will keepe ſo chary
As tender nurſe her babe from faring ill,
  Preſume not on thy heart when mine is ſlaine,
  Thou gau'ſt me thine not to giue backe againe.

22
MY glaſſe ſhall not perſwade me I am ould,
So long as youth and thou are of one date,
But when in thee times forrwes I behould,   ſorrowes/forrowes?
Then look I death my daies ſhould expiate.
For all that beauty that doth couer thee,
Is but the ſeemely rayment of my heart,
Which in thy breſt doth liue, as thine in me,
How can I then be elder than thou art?
O therefore loue be of thy ſelfe ſo wary,
As I not for my ſelfe, but for thee will,
Bearing thy heart which I will keepe ſo chary
As tender nurſe her babe from faring ill,
  Preſume not on thy heart when mine is ſlaine,
  Thou gau'ſt me thine not to giue backe againe.

Sonnet 22 differs from Sonnet 3, where the youth is instructed to gaze upon himself in a mirror; here the poet uses his glass to argue about age and its effects. He will not be persuaded, looking at himself in the mirror, that he is old, as long as the friend retains his youth: as long as the youth and youthfulness have the same terminal date ("one date" as in a lease or contract) or cease at the same time. On the other hand, when the time comes that he sees furrows on the youth's brow ("times forrwes," to be preferred to "times sorrowes"), then he will contemplate the fact ("look") that he must pay his debt to death ("death my daies should expiate"); to "expiate" or 'extinguish what is owed' was linked with death (see *R3* 3.3.23, "the houre of death is expiate"). The youth's outer beauty, that which 'covers' him, is but a proper garment ("seemely raiment") dressing the poet's heart. His heart thus lives in the youth’s breast as the youth’s heart lives in his: the hearts being one, no difference of age is possible (“How can I then be elder then thou art?”).

The poet admonishes the youth to be cautious about himself (“of thy selfe so wary”), just as the poet will be, not for his own sake but for the youth’s (“As I not for my selfe, but for thee will”). He will carry about the youth’s heart (“Bearing thy heart”) and protect (“keepe”) it; “chary” is an adverbial usage and means ‘carefully.’ His chariness will be like a solicitous (“tender”) nurse preventing her ward from faring ill. The couplet is cautionary and conventional: when the poet’s heart is slain, then the youth should not take for granted (“presume”) that his heart, dressed in the poet’s, will be restored to him. It was not given as something to be returned or as a debt needing expiating: “Thou gau’st me thine not to giue backe againe.”

Sonnet 23


23
AS an vnperfect actor on the ſtage,
Who with his feare is put beſides his part,
Or ſome fierce thing repleat with too much rage,
Whoſe ſtrengths abondance weakens his owne heart;
So I for feare of truſt,forget to ſay,
The perfect ceremony of loues right,
And in mine owne loues ſtrength ſeeme to decay,
Ore-charg'd with burthen of mine owne loues might:
O let my books be then the eloquence,
And domb preſagers of my ſpeaking breſt,
Who pleade for loue,and look for recompence,
More then that tonge that more hath more expreſt.
O learne to read what ſilent loue hath writ,
To heare wit eies belongs to loues fine wiht.

23
AS an vnperfect actor on the ſtage,
Who with his feare is put beſides his part,
Or ſome fierce thing repleat with too much rage,
Whoſe ſtrengths abondance weakens his owne heart;
So I for feare of truſt, forget to ſay,
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Who pleade for loue, and look for recompence,
More then that tonge that more hath more expreſt.
  O learne to read what ſilent loue hath writ,
  To heare wit eies belongs to loues fine wiht. with wit/whit

Sonnet 23 begins with a long, closely applied stage metaphor and concludes with a petrarchist commonplace. An “imperfect actor” is one of limited ability or one whose lines are not word-perfect. The reason is his “feare,” which causes him to be “put besides his part:” stage fright makes him freeze; “put” suggests ‘put out,’ or ‘disconcerted,’ while “besides his part,” with its echo of “besides himself,” implies not in control of his part. “Or” introduces a parallel alternate: “some fierce thing” is a wild creature or theatrical creation, who is so frenzied (“repleat with too much rage”), that his plentiful strength undercuts (“weakens”) his heart, both his physical heart and his courage. His passion prevents his words from being vocalized.

As the actor, so the poet is fearful, because there is not sufficient trust ("feare of trust") for him to voice his feelings. Too fearful to speak and fearful also of the response, he is overcome and "forgets" to pronounce the "perfect ceremony of loues right;" "perfect" contrasts with the "vnperfect" actor who, like the poet, had the words but couldn't enunciate them. A "ceremony" is an outward rite requiring spoken words, which, like vows in a marriage ceremony, are portents of what will be; "loues right" is that which belongs to love as a right, or is 'love's rite,' the declaration of the vows of love. The poet, so strong in love, seems to find himself overtaxed, so that the strength of his love is enfeebled.

A common petrarchist plaint is that the poet, reduced to silence by the mistress, pleads that his verse do the talking. Daniel has Rosamond speak of the "Sweet silent rethorique of perswading eyes: / Dombe eloquence, whose power doth moue . . More then the words." [1] Linche, speaking of "*Loue*" in *Diella*, exclaims, "such eloquence was neuer read in bookes," [2] while Spenser resolves,

> Yet I my hart with silence secretly
> will teach to speak, and my iust cause to plead:
> and eke mine eies with meeke humility,
> loue learned letters to her eyes to read.
> Which her deep wit, that true harts thought can spel,
> wil soone conceiue, and learne to construe well. [3]

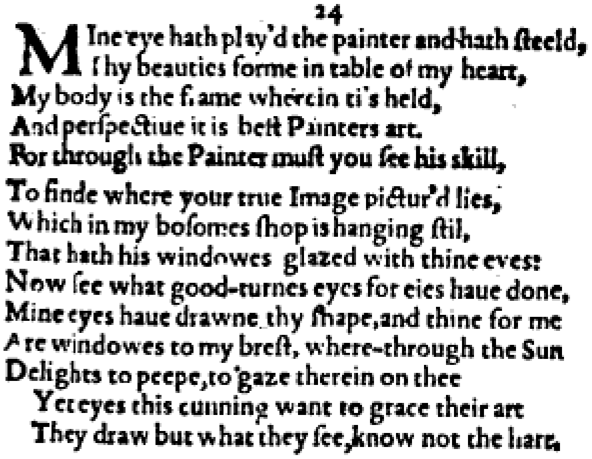
Here the poet's "books," his 'papers' or 'verse' rather than printed publications, will be his "eloquence." They will give unpronounced expression to his love as "dumb presagers," silent 'portents' awaiting their being voiced by the poet's "brest." As 'heralds,' they will "pleade for loue" and seek "recompence," or ask requital for a love that, unspoken, would be unrequited. (What is "ore-charg'd" must have "recompence.") The recompence should be "More then that tonge that more hath more exprest," a line that seems deliberately a tongue-twister, a kind of gabbling or stutter to which the imperfect poet/lover is reduced. Love, which speaks from the breast, is to be learned and read there: it is a love beyond words, "silent loue." The final line is conventionally synaesthetic: "To heare wit[h] eies" belongs to the divining ability of love, which can construe well "fine wit."

23.1. Daniel, (1592) I1^{v}.

23.2. Linche B2^{v}.

23.3. Spenser, *Amoretti* 43.9-12.

Sonnet 24



24
MIne eye hath play'd the painter and hath ſteeld,
Thy beauties forme in table of my heart,
My body is the frame wherein ti's held,
And perſpectiue it is beſt Painters art.
For through the Painter muſt you ſee his skill,
To finde where your true Image pictur'd lies,
Which in my boſomes ſhop is hanging ſtil,
That hath his windowes glazed with thine eyes:
Now ſee what good-turnes eyes for eies haue done,
Mine eyes haue drawne thy ſhape,and thine for me
Are windowes to my breſt, where-through the Sun
Delights to peepe,to gaze therein on thee
  Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art
  They draw but what they ſee,know not the hart.

24
Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath ſteeld,
Thy beauties forme in table of my heart,
My body is the frame wherein ti's held, 'tis
And perſpectiue it is beſt Painters art.
For through the Painter muſt you ſee his skill,
To finde where your true Image pictur'd lies,
Which in my boſomes ſhop is hanging ſtil,
That hath his windowes glazed with thine eyes:
Now ſee what good-turnes eyes for eies haue done,
Mine eyes haue drawne thy ſhape, and thine for me
Are windowes to my breſt, where-through the Sun
Delights to peepe, to gaze therein on thee
  Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art
  They draw but what they ſee, know not the hart.

Sonnet 24, and to a lesser degree Sonnet 47, show Shakespeare taking as his topic the recently developed painters' device known subsequently as a *camera obscura* but by Shakespeare's contemporaries as a 'perspective house.' The principle, that a light shining through a small hole (in a window shutter) into a darkened room (*camera obscura*) will project images from outside onto the opposite wall or onto a piece of paper, had been know from antiquity. It was only in the mid 16th century, however, that Girolamo Cardano first proposed placing in the hole a lens that is convex on both sides ("orbem").

> If you want to see things occur in the street outside, when the sun is at its brightest place in the window a double convex lens of glass. Then, with the window shut you will see images carried over through the hole onto an opposite plane, although with the colours confused. So place a very white sheet of paper in the place where you see the image and you will obtain the desired result with amazement. [1]

About the same time Giambattista della Porta, who was to become the device's most prominent exponent, proposed the use of a concave mirror ('one that unifies rather than dissipates an image' ["speculum non quod disgregando dissipit sed colligendo uniat"]), held at a distance from the hole and reflecting back an image onto paper:

> If you wish to see all things in colours, on the other side [of the hole] put a mirror, one that unifies rather than dissipates an image. Then by moving it forwards and backwards you will establish the proper size of the true image, its proper distance from the centre. If you examine it more carefully, you will see the faces, gestures, movements of men and know their clothes, the sky with clouds spread out, with its deep blue colour, and birds flying. [2]

della Porta makes two further points: firstly he draws a parallel between his technique and the human eye claiming that it provides a solution to the vexed question of how sight occurs in the eyes, how an image is received through the pupil as an image through a window, and how something large comes to be reflected as something small. [3] Secondly, he argues, even someone ignorant of painting, using this method of a reflected image, can inscribe with a stylus the form of anything onto a laid-out table ("quisque picturae ignarus, rei alicuius effigiem stylo describere possit . . in subiectam tabulam . . imagine repercussa"). [4]

In the 1589 second edition of the *Magiae Naturalis* della Porta added a refinement to his concave mirror, a convex lens of spectacle glass placed before the hole, to obtain an upright image:

> Set before the hole the convex lens of a spectacle glass so that the image rebounds onto a concave mirror. Distance the concave mirror from the centre so that the image it receives as inverted it will return back corrected, depending on the distance from the centre. So you will project onto a white paper above the hole images of things brought forward from outside clearly and sharply. [5]

The instrument by which a large image could be projected onto a table or screen was almost immediately adopted by painters, among them Caravaggio painting in Rome in the 1590s and at the turn of the century it was combined with the rules of perspective, which were already well established, by Hans Vredeman de Vries in Holland. In his work, *Perspective,* Vredman defines "perspective" as, "the most famous art of sharp eyesight that looks at or looks through to things depicted on a wall, a table, or a canvas," and provides a plate illustrating how lines of perspective enter and exit a small aperture. [6]

della Porta was known in England: his *De Furtivis*, on secret writing, had been published in London in 1591 by Thomas Wolfe. He was in correspondence with the polymath, Robert Fludd, a contemporary of Shakespeare; in fact his principal interest in the device was not its use as a painter's aid but its theatrical possibilities. He records in the 1589 edition of *Magiae Naturalis* how in the intervals between acts in comedies he often used it to project images of wild animals and explains at length in the 1558 edition and in a more condensed form in 1589 how a concave lens can be used to create images that seem to hang in the air, so that neither the object that is reflected nor the reflecting mirror can be seen ("*nec visile*[sic], *nec speculum spectentur*"). Only the spectres and illusions can be seen ("*sed spectra, & praestigia videri possint*"). The first example he cites of a hanging image is that of a drawn dagger ("stricto mucrone"), which someone might have in hand and lunge at the mirror only to find that he is confronted by another who lunges back at him and pierces his hand. (Macbeth could have been confronted by a similarly projected image of a dagger which escapes the hand's clutch.) His other example is of a candle which when held out is seen to be alight in the air. [7]

The device was known in England. George Hakewill, a fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, in his *The Vanitie of the eie* (1608) provides an account of his having "often" seen it working. Writing of "the reflexion of glasses, and the like," he recounts

> I will onlie set downe one conclusion, which my selfe haue seene often practised, to the great astonishment of such, as beholding it, vnderstoode not the reason of it. The practise is thus: take a study, or closet, where (by cloasing the woodden leaues) you may shut out all the light; then bore an hole, through the midst of one of the leaues to the bignes of a pease, and cover it with a peece of spectacle glasse, and when the sunne shines on the ground before the window, hold on the inside right before the hole (to the distance of 2. foote or thereabout) a sheete of white paper or a large peece of faire linnen; and you shall perfectlie discerne by the shaddowes; the shapes, and motions of men, & dogs, and horses, and birds, with the iust proportion of trees, and chimnies, and towers, which fal within the compasse of the sun neere the window. [8]

Within 15 years of Shakespeare's sonnets in 1624 Francis Bacon writes of

> Perspectiue-Houses, *wher wee make* Demonstrations *of all* Lights, *and* Radiations: *And of all* Colours: *And out of* Things vncoloured *and* Transparent, *wee can represent vnto you all seuerall* Colours; *Not in* Raine-Bowes, (*as it is in* Gemms, *and* Prismes,) *but of themselues Single*. [9]

Sonnet 24 opens with the poet's eye taking upon itself the role of painter; "play'd the painter" suggests also playing at being a painter. The eye has "steeld, / Thy beauties forme in table of my heart;" "steeld" intends 'inscribed with a stylus,' as in della Porta's "stylo describere" (a reading of "stelled" or 'fixed' seems unlikely since all contemporary uses of "stelled" involve a military context). 'To engrave on the table of the heart' was a biblical trope as in Jer. 17.1, "written with a pen of yron ("stylo ferreo") . . and grauen vpon the table of their heart (*GV*)." The form of the youth's beauty reflected through the lens of the eye has been projected onto and scribed into the poet's heart by the eye. Two senses of "table" operate here, a hard substance which is engraved and a flat surface on which a picture is painted ("in tabula depictus"). While the poet's heart is a table on which the youth's beauty is portrayed, his body is the "frame" in which the picture is "held:" either the frame holding the picture or the easel on which the "table" is held.

Line 4, "And perspectiue it is best Painters art" is condensed and, depending on the punctuation awarded and the function appointed to "perspectiue," noun or adverb ('perspectively'), allows of two readings. Either "perspectiue" is the actual art of delineating objects on a table, so that from only one point of view they look true; it is an art possessed by the best painter(s) or it is the best art of a painter. Or "perspectiue" refers to an optical instrument that uses a lens such as a telescope as in *R2* 2.2.16-20, where the eyes are compared to "perspectiues." It was also used of the lens itself particularly one used in a perspective house as in the "chamber" with its key-hole lens in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of Humour*, 4.3, "to view 'hem (as you'ld doe a piece of *Perspectiue*) in at a key-hole." [10] The eye as a lens is thus the 'best Painter's art.'

It is "through the Painter," through the poet's eye, that the youth must discern the eye's "skill" or 'mastery.' Looking through the poet's eye he will find where his "true Image pictur'd lies" or is 'laid out;' "true" means 'faithfully produced' as well as 'fitting exactly.' The image is to be seen "in my bosomes shop hanging stil;" a "shop" was a space or studio in which a work of art was wrought, a workshop (Florio instructs his readers, if they wish to see fabulous images, to "goe to the Painters shop, or looking-glasse of Ammianus Marcellinus.") [11] But "shop" was also used of the body's parts: de la Primaudaye calls the heart, "the shop of all the vitall spirits," and the lungs, "the forge and shoppe of respiration." [12] Thus the youth must look through the "Painter," the poet's eye as a "perspectiue," both to discern the eye's painterly skill and to see portraited in the shop of the poet's heart the picture of his true image laid down as on a table. The windows of the poet's bosom, the poet's eyes, are "glazed" by the beloved's eyes: they gain their colours from his eyes, because in looking at his eyes they see reflected in them what is portraited in the poet's breast. Thus both pairs of eyes are seen as doing each other a good turn ("Now see what good-turnes eyes for eies haue done"). The phrase 'one good turn deserves another' was proverbial, [13] but since eyes are turned in a particular direction, the notion of eyes glancing at each other is also suggested.

The eyes of the poet have "drawne" the youth's "shape" in the poet's heart, although by himself the poet cannot see that image within himself. But the young man by peering through the poet's eyes as into a 'perspective house' can see his image hanging there. The poet's only recourse is to look into the youth's eyes and see reflected there what is contained in his heart. The idea of the 'perspective house' is confirmed by the sun whose light is necessary, so that through the perspective of the eyes ("windowes") the youth's image can be projected and which "Delights to peepe," through them as through a hole. The subject of "gaze" is either the sun peeping through the eyes to gaze on the youth or the poet's eyes for whom the youth's eyes "Are windowes to my brest . . to gaze therein on thee."

The couplet, however, reverses the direction of the sonnet and takes up what was implicit in the eyes 'acting as a painter' ("hath play'd the painter"): the role of the eyes in the sonnet has been a theatrical rather than a painterly one. Eyes, the poet claims, in fact lack "this cunning," this 'function' or 'skill' as "perspectiue," and thus cannot bring "grace" or 'proportion' to their art. They "draw" (both 'portrait' and 'attract') what they see physically, but are unknowing of what lies in the heart.

24.1. Giroloamo Cardano, *De Subtilitate* (Paris: Michaelis Fezandas, 1550) 426, "Quod si libeat spectare ea, quae in via fiunt, Sole splendente in fenestra orbem e vitro collocabis, inde occlusa fenestra videbis imagines per foramen translatas in opposito plano sed tum obscuris coloribus, subiicies igitur candidissimam chartam eo loco quo images vides, & intentam rem miratione assequeris."

24.2. Giambattista della Porta, *Magiae Naturalis, sive de Miraculis Rerum Naturalium. Libri IIII* (Neapoli: Apud Matthiam Cancer, 1558) lib. 4, cap. 2, "vti omnia cum suis coloribus videre si quæritur: E regione speculum apponito, non quod disgregando dissipet, sed colligendo vniat, tam accedendo remouendoque, quousque ad suam veræ imaginis quantitatem cognoueris, debita centri appropinquatione, & si attentius perpenderis inspectator, vultus, gestus, motus, hominumque cognosces vestes, coelum nubibus dispersum, cyaneo colore, & volantes volucres."

24.3. della Porta (1558) lib. 4, cap. 2, "quo fiat in oculis visus loco, ac intromittendi dirimitur quæstio sic agitata: . . intromittitur enim idolum per pupillam fenestræ instar, vicemque obtinet speculi parua magnæ spheræ portio."

24.4. della Porta (1558) lib. 4, cap. 2.

24.5. Giambattista della Porta, *Magiae naturalis libri XX. Ab ipso authore expurgati, & superaucti*, 2nd ed. (Neapoli: Apud H. Saluianum, 1589) 266, "Opponito foramini specillum e conuexis fabricatum, inde in speculum concauum imago resiliat. Distet speculum concauum a centro, nam imagines, quas obuersas recipit, rectas reddet, ob centri distantiam. Sic supra foramen, & papyrum albam iaculabit imagines rerum obiectarum, tam clare, & perspicue."

24.6. See Iohannes Vredeman Frisio, *Perspective* (Henricus Hondius: Lugduni Batavorum, 1604) Front. "Celeberrima ars inspicientis aut transpicientis oculorum aciei, in pariete, tabula aut tela depicta." 'Transpicio' is a very rare word, found in Lactantius when defining how the mind sees through the eyes: 'that sense, which is called the mind, looks through those membranes to things which are external' ("per eas membranas sensus ille, qui dicitur mens, ea quae sunt foris transpicit" (Lactantius, *De Opificio Dei* 8.0037A).

24.7. della Porta (1589) 267, "in comediarum actibus interponere solemus, ceruos, apros, rhinocerotes, elephantes, leones, & alia quae volueris animalia effinges;" della Porta (1558) lib. 4, cap. 18; della Porta (1589) 264, "possible non est, quin mireris, nam si quis speculum stricto mucrone inuaserit, videbitur ab altero inuadi, & manus perfodi, si candelam ostendas, videbitur in aere accensa candela."

24.8. Hakewill 54-55.

24.9. Francis Bacon, *New Atlantis. A Worke vnfinished* in *Sylva Sylvarum: Or a Naturall Historie. In Ten Centuries* (London: J[ohn] H[aviland], 1626) 39-40.

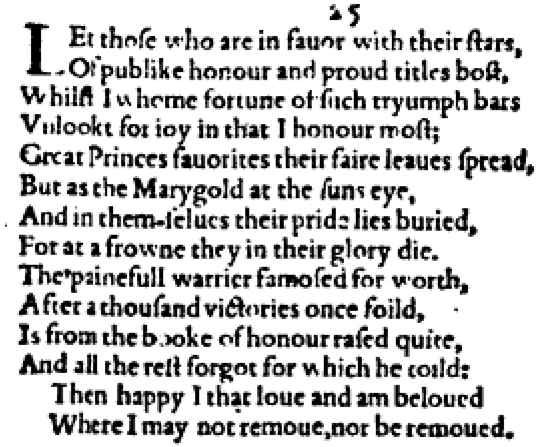
24.10. Ben Jonson, *The Comical Satyre of Euery Man Out Of His Humour* (London: William Holme, 1600) L2^{v}.

24.11. John Florio, *A Worlde of Wordes, Or Most copious, and exact Dictionarie in Italian and English* (London: Arnold Hatfield, 1598) a6^{v}.

24.12. de la Primaudaye, *Academie* (1594) 218 & 222.

24.13. John Heywood, *A Dialogue Conteining the Nomber in Effeet* [sic] *of all the prouerbs in the Englishe tounge, compact in a matter concernynge two maner of mariages* (London: Thomas Powell, 1556) Ciii^{v}, "one good tourue [sic] askth an other."

Sonnet 25



25
LEt thoſe who are in fauor with their ſtars,
Of publike honour and proud titles boſt,
Whilſt I whome fortune of ſuch tryumph bars
Vnlookt for ioy in that I honour moſt;
Great Princes fauorites their faire leaues ſpread,
But as the Marygold at the ſuns eye,
And in them-ſelues their pride lies buried,
For at a frowne they in their glory die.
The painefull warrier famoſed for worth,
After a thouſand victories once foild,
Is from the booke of honour raſed quite,
And all the reſt forgot for which he toild:
Then happy I that loue and am beloued
Where I may not remoue,nor be remoued.

25
LEt thoſe who are in fauor with their ſtars,
Of publike honour and proud titles boſt,
Whilſt I whome fortune of ſuch tryumph bars
Vnlookt for ioy in that I honour moſt;
Great Princes fauorites their fair leaues ſpread,
But as the Marygold at the ſuns eye,
And in them-ſelues their pride lies buried,
For at a frowne they in their glory die.
The painefull warrier famoſed for worth, fight/might?
After a thouſand victories once foild,
Is from the booke of honour raſed quite,
And all the reſt forgot for which he toild:
  Then happy I that loue and am beloued
  Where I may not remoue, nor be remoued.

In the 17th century identifying a courtier as a marigold was standard: Richard Brathwaite, for example, in "An Epigram called the *Courtier*" compares a courtier's wit to the marigold's phases:

> Nor did that Morall erre, who wisely would
> Compare a Courtiers witte to th'Marigold.
> It opens with the Sunne, but being set
> The Mari-gold shuts vp, so doth his witte.
> The Marigold's most cheer'd by mid-day sunne,
> So's he, whence i'st, he lies in bed till noone. [1]

The identification rested partly on a pun on 'jackanapes,' which could mean both a page or courtier (see *AWW* 3.5.82, "That Iacke-an-apes with scarfes") and a marigold. Gerard describes a "Marigolde . . called of the vulgar sort of women Iacke an apes a horse backe," whose seed multiplies a thousand-fold: "it bringeth foorth not one flower in a thousand, like the plant from whence it was taken." [2]

Sonnet 25 opens by invoking those who are astrologically blessed by chance and fortune ("Let those who are in fauor with their stars"). They may boast, claims the poet, of "publike honour and proud titles." He, however, is one whom "fortune" has excluded from success or advancement in the public arena ("such tryumph"), anticipating the later military "victories." Since he is neither sought nor regarded or smiled upon ("Vnlookt for"), it remains that he glory in that which he might "honour most," the young man. Favourites of great princes may disport themselves and their finery ("their faire leaues spread") like the marigold, whose "leaues" or petals are golden or gold-foiled (leaved). Courtly favourites are dependent on the benign looks of the sovereign, just as the "Marygold" is subject to the "suns eye." In Shakespeare's day the marigold or 'gold' was identified with "fortune" and "fauour," in the words of Nashe's Jack Wilton,

> monie is like the marigolde, which opens and shuts with the Sunne, if fortune smileth, or one be in fauour, it floweth [sic]: if the euening of age comes on, or he falleth into disgrace, it fadeth and is not to be found. [3]

As the marigold's display is diurnal, so the courtiers' is ephemeral and contingent: once the blessings of the sovereign's eye are removed, their splendour and "proud titles" fold in on themselves ("in them-selues their pride lies buried"), because the darkness of displeasure ("frowne") causes them to shrink and die ("in their glory die").

The rhymes of the third quatrain are problematic: either "worth" or "quite" is not correct. Generally editors change "worth" to 'fight' to obtain an alliterative rhyme, but both 'fight' and 'might' fit the context. A "painefull warrier" is one who both inflicts pain and bears the fulness of pain. His fame, gained by a "thousand victories," draws on Petrarch's much imitated line, "Mille fiate, o dolce mia guerrera" ('A thousand times, o my sweet warrior'), and recalls the thousand-fold plenty of the marigold. [4] A warrior despite his many victories can still be "once foild:" "foild" primarily means 'defeated' or 'overthrown,' but also continues the sonnet's gold and gold-leaf motif: gold foil, often shaped as leaves, was embossed and used as ornamentation on precious books or records of note such as a "booke of honour." A last single defeat can cause the warrior's name to be "rased quite," or 'erased' from such a book; earlier accomplishments ("all the rest), for which he "toild," will be wiped out.

The final thought is a sonneteer's standard consolation: "happy I that loue and am beloued," the reason being that there is no distance or "remoue" between the two: "Where I may not remoue, nor be remoued." Since the distance of stellar separation was known as a "remoue," the couplet affirms that their love is sufficiently remote not to succumb to the vagaries of the "stars" or "fortune." (In Sonnet 116.4 love is a "star" and "fixed marke," which never "bends with the remouer to remoue.") Finally "remoue" recalls the "perspectiue" of the preceding sonnet, whereby distance or "remoue" is foreshortened. [5]

25.1. Richard Braithwait, *A Strappado for the Diuell. Epigrams and Satyres alluding to the time* (London: I[ohn] B[eale], 1615) 125.

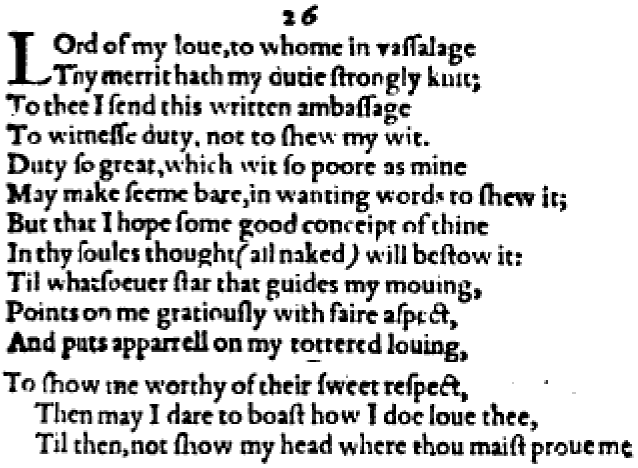
25.2. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 602.

25.3. Thomas Nashe, *The Vnfortunate Traveller. Or, The Life of Iacke Wilton* (London: Thomas Scarlet, 1594) C1^r.

25.4. Petrarch, *Canzoniere* 21.1; compare Spenser *Amoretti* 57.1 & 8, "Sweet warriour when shall I haue peace with you," with its, "thousand arrowes, which your eies haue shot." The trope's *locus classicus* was Ovid, *Met*. 5.380, "de mille sagittis."

25.5. Compare Owen Felltham, *Resolves Or, Excogitations. A Second Centurie* (London: Henry Seile, 1628) 41, "*Meditation* is the *soules Perspectiue glasse*: whereby, in her long *remoue*, shee discerneth *God*, as if hee were neerer hand."

Sonnet 26


26
LOrd of my loue,to whome in vaſſalage
Thy merrit hath my dutie ſtrongly knit;
To thee I ſend this written ambaſſage
To witneſſe duty, not to ſhew my wit.
Duty ſo great,which wit ſo poore as mine
May make ſeeme bare,in wanting words to ſhew it;
But that I hope ſome good conceipt of thine
In thy ſoules thought(all naked) will beſtow it:
Til whatſoeuer ſtar that guides my mouing,
Points on me gratiouſly with faire aſpect,
And puts apparrell on my tottered louing,
To ſhow me worthy of their ſweet reſpect,
Then may I dare to boaſt how I doe loue thee,
Til then,not ſhow my head where thou maiſt proue me

26
LOrd of my loue, to whome in vaſſalage
Thy merrit hath my dutie ſtrongly knit;
To thee I ſend this written ambaſſage
To witneſſe duty, not to ſhew my wit.
Duty ſo great, which wit ſo poore as mine
May make ſeeme bare, in wanting words to ſhew it;
But that I hope ſome good conceipt of thine
In thy ſoules thought (all naked) will beſtow it:
Till whatſoeuer ſtar that guides my mouing,
Points on me gratiouſly with faire aſpect,
And puts apparrell on my tottered louing,
To ſhow me worthy of their ſweet reſpect, thy?
  Then may I dare to boaſt how I doe loue thee,
  Till then, not ſhow my head where thou maiſt proue me

Sonnet 26's opening invocation, "Lord of my loue," was a sonneteer's stock address to Cupid from Petrarch's "Amor . . Signior," to Sidney's "my Lord Loues owne behest,' to Spenser's "Vnrighteous Lord of loue." [1] Shakespeare has, however, worked the cliché to different purpose, since the "Lord of my loue" is finally identified not as Cupid but as the beloved. The poet's "vassalage" is not unlike that of Sonnet 58 where he invokes Cupid, "That God . . that made me first your slaue . . Being your vassail bound." Sonnet 26's initial impression, that it is concerned with Cupid, to whom in servitude the poet's duty is "knit," is compounded by the later "bare" and "all naked." The figure of the naked Cupid can be traced back to its *locus classicus,* Ovid's *Amores*:

> While you were still without guile, I loved your soul and your body. Now your figure is tainted by vices of the mind. Love is both a boy and naked ("et puer est et

> nudus Amor"). That he might be open to all, he has neither years nor tattered mourning apparell ("sine sordibus . . nullas vestes . . habet"). Why do you instruct the son of Venus to sell his wares for a price? Where can he hide the money? He himself has no purse.[2]

The sonnet's ovidian echoes, "soules thought (all naked)," "apparell on my tottered louing," and its discreetly seeking remuneration, allows a cupidian or erotic reading and makes the extended arguments Booth gives in his edition of Shakepeare's sonnets for sexual significances in the sonnet – seen by Evans in his as "strained" – far more cogent.[3]

As well the poem is presented as a pastiche of ink-horn terms that might be found in an "ambassage" or submission of a vassal seeking preferment from a Lord. The plainant extols the Lord's "merit" and, disingenuously, his own meagre abilities, his "wit." (Compare Wilson's parodic letter claiming to "obtestate your sublimitie, to extoll mine infirmitie.")[4] Although subservience was a required feature of letters seeking favours, Sonnet 26's inflated formality exposes the convention. The poet seems properly dutiful, the purpose of his dispatch being not to display his "wit" but to bear "witnesse" to his "duty." (A "written ambassage" was a courtly device and can be found in Sidney's *Arcadia*, "I remember a birde was made flie, with such art to carry a written embassage among the Ladies.")[5] His "duty" is "so great" and his ability "so poore," that his language may seem "bare," lacking "words" and adornment. The sentiment is reminiscent of the dedication to *The Rape of Lucrece* to the Earl of Southampton: "The warrant I haue of your Honourable disposition, not the worth of my vntutord Lines makes it assured of acceptance . . Were my worth greater my duety would shew greater, meane time, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship." Except that ("But that") the poet's hope is that the youth's "good conceipt," his fine 'thought' or 'fancy' or even his 'opinion,' which can be found in his "soules thought," will dress up the poet's "all naked" or "bare" missive of love.

The sestet picks up the astrological motif of the preceding sonnet, where the poet's love, unlike those who boast of the "favor of the stars," is at sufficient "remoue" to be impervious to stellar influence. The youth's dressing is required until such time as the poet's personal star, that which "guides" his "mouing," shines favourably upon him ("points on me gratiously with faire aspect"); "points" means 'directs' or 'influences' the poet, but was used of the zodiacal signs especially the four cardinal points of Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn. Astrologically "aspect" (*ad* + *spicere* = to look at or upon) is the manner in which a heavenly body or a conjunction of bodies looks upon the earth and its individuals, in this case "with favor." The youth's "conceipt," then, is needed until the time that his star "puts apparrell on my totterd louing" (Ovid's "sine sordibus . . vestes"), until it dresses, as a bare or plain thing might be adorned, his (unsteady) loving which is clothed in tatters. He will be shown "worthy of their sweet respect," worthy of the countenance of "whatsoeuer star." (Some editors emend "their" to "thy," unnecessarily even if the mistake is made elsewhere, so that the line is made to read, 'be shown worthy of thy respect.') At such a moment the poet may boast of his love as others might have in Sonnet 25, but until then he dare not. Until then he vows not to "show my head," a proverbial phrase ('He dares not show his head [for debt or fear]'). To remain unnoticed or as an act of obeisance he will keep his head down, so that his Lord may not test him or his love ("proue"); "me" is a synecdoche for 'my love'.

26.1. Petrarch 121; Sidney, *Astophil and Stella* 50.6; Spenser, *Amoretti* 10.1.

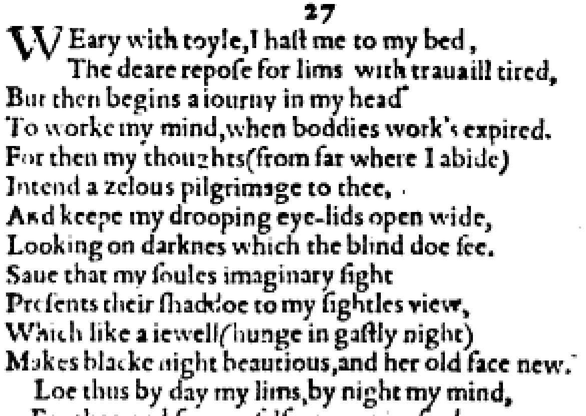
26.2. Ovid, *Amores* 1.10.12-17,
donec eras simplex, animum cum corpore amavi;
   nunc mentis vitio laesa figura tua est.
et puer est et nudus Amor; sine sordibus annos
   et nullas vestes, ut sit apertus, habet.
quid puerum Veneris pretio prostare iubetis?
   quo pretium condat, non habet ille sinum!
Compare Ovid's account of the birth of Adonis, "qualia namque corpora nudorum tabula pinguntur Amorum" (*Met*. 10. 516; Golding 10.592, "As are the naked Cupids that in tables picturde bee").

26.3. William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare's Sonnets,* ed. Stephen Booth (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977) 175-78; William Shakespeare, *The Sonnets*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 139.

26.4. Wilson 165.

26.5. Sidney, *Arcadia* (1590) 197.

Sonnet 27



27
WEary with toyle,I haſt me to my bed,
The deare repoſe for lims with trauaill tired,
But then begins a iourny in my head
To worke my mind,when boddies work's expired.
For then my thoughts(from far where I abide)
Intend a zelous pilgrimage to thee,
And keepe my drooping eye-lids open wide,
Looking on darknes which the blind doe ſee.
Saue that my ſoules imaginary ſight
Preſents their ſhaddoe to my ſightles view,
Which like a iewell(hunge in gaſtly night)
Makes blacke night beautious,and her old face new.
Loe thus by day my lims,by night my mind,
For thee,and for my ſelfe,noe quiet finde.

27
WEary with toyle, I haſt me to my bed,
The deare repoſe for lims with trauaill tired,
But then begins a iourny in my head
To worke my mind, when boddies work's expired.
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zelous pilgrimage to thee,
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Saue that my ſoules imaginary ſight
Preſents their ſhaddoe to my ſightles view, thy?
Which like a iewell (hunge in gaſtly night)
Makes blacke night beautious, and her old face new.
Loe thus by day my lims, by night my mind,
For thee, and for my ſelfe, noe quiet finde.

In differing ways Sonnets 27 and 28 work the sonneteer's habitual inability to obtain sleep. The conceit is also found in Sonnets 43-45 and 97-99. Similar tossings and turnings occur in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* 38-39, Spenser's *Amoretti* 87 and in a host of other poets.[1]

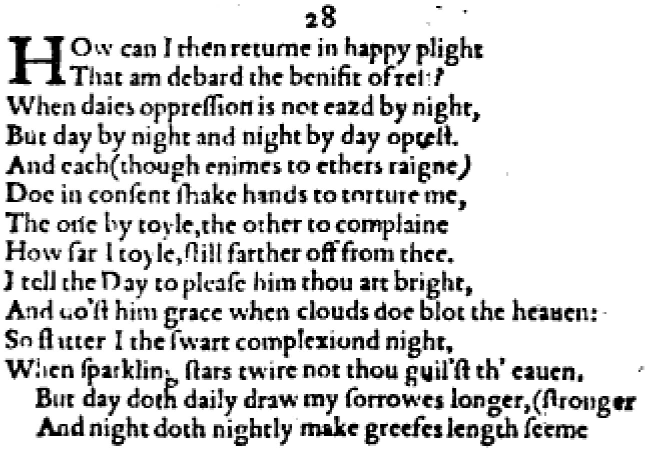
The sonnet's initial images of "toyle" and "worke" are modified immediately by those of "iourny" and "pilgrimage." The play on "trauaill," both 'travail' and 'travel,' ties together the themes of tiredness and absence. The poet's bed, towards which he hastens, is the "deare repose for lims with trauaill tired," where "deare" means both 'treasured' and 'hard-earned,' while 'to seek repose for travels/travails' was used commonly. His "repose," however, only leads to a further mental journey ("in my head"), which occupies (“worke”) his mind now that his body’s work is done (“expired,” with a hint of ‘out of breath,’ possibly even ‘death’). His thoughts, at a distance from himself (“from far where I abide”), are directed toward the beloved. They “Intend a zelous pilgrimage to thee;” “zelous” means ‘fervent’ or ‘passionate,’ while to ‘intend a journey’ was a Latinism (“iter intendere”) as was “cogitationes intendere,” to direct one’s thoughts, and “animum intendere,” to direct one’s mind. By Shakespeare’s time a “pilgrimage” to the beloved’s (saint’s) final place of repose was a hackneyed image. Thoughts of the beloved keep the poet’s eyes awake (“drooping eye-lids open wide”), as they look upon the natural darkness that those without the sense of sight see (“the blind doe see”).

Except that (“Saue that”) some vision is allowed the poet, that which issues from his “soules imaginary sight,” his imagination which forms images of things absent from the sense. His inner sight “presents their [thy] shaddoe to my sightles view.” If “their shaddoe,” then the shadow of poet’s “thoughts,” which contain the youth, is made to be seen by a sense of sight (“view”) that lacks sight. If “thy shaddoe,” then the shadow of the youth is similarly made visible. His spectral form (“shaddoe,” hinting at ghosts and “shades of the night”) can, paradoxically, enlighten the darkness “like a iewell (hunge in gastly night).” Elizabethans belived that some jewels shone brightly in darkness, although the common view was contradicted and censured: George Hakewill, for example, in *The vanitie of the eie*, gives as an instance of the eyes’ “false reporting,” “the sparkling in the darke of precious stones.” [2] In *Astophil and Stella*, 38, when “sleepe begins with heauie wings” to affect Astrophil, the first thing that comes to his “mind, is *Stellas* image,” which “not onely shines but sings.” For this poet the night is “gastly,” full of horror and the ‘ghostly.’ The youth’s image transforms the darkness (“makes black night beautious”) and makes “her old face new;” “her” is either an identification of night as female (Latin, *nox* = night, is feminine) or a reference to the *manes*, the shades or ghosts of the night, which present as hags or old wizened women, whose lines are now lightened out. The conclusion’s parallels (“thus”) are compressed: his limbs by day ‘travail’ and find no “quiet” or rest; his mind by night ‘travails’ and finds no rest. He will “trauaill” with his body, because of the young man and for his sake, and will “trauaill” with his mind for the sake of himself and the young man and because of the young man ("For thee, and for myself").

27.1. Compare Barnabe Barnes, *Parthenophil and Parthenophe. Sonnetes, Madrigals, Elegies and Odes* (London: J[ohn] Wolfe, 1593) 88; Daniel, *Delia* (1592) 23 & 45; Bartholomew Griffin, *Fidessa, more chaste then kinde* (London: Widow Orwin, 1596) 14-15; Giles Fletcher, *Licia, or Poems of Loue . . Whereunto is added the rising to the Crowne of Richard the Third* (Cambridge: John Legatt, 1593) 31.

27.2. Hakewill 50; compare *TA* 2.3.226-30,
Upon his bloody finger he doth wear
A precious ring, that lightens all the hole,
Which, like a taper in some monument,
Doth shine upon the dead man's earthy cheeks,
And shows the ragged entrails of the pit.

Sonnet 28



28
HOw can I then returne in happy plight
That am debard the benifit of reſt?
When daies oppreſſion is not eazd by night,
But day by night and night by day opreſt.
And each(though enimes to ethers raigne)
Doe in conſent ſhake hands to torture me,
The one by toyle,the other to complaine
How far I toyle,ſtill farther off from thee.
I tell the Day to pleaſe him thou art bright,
And do'ſt him grace when clouds doe blot the heauen:
So flatter I the ſwart complexiond night,
When ſparkling ſtars twire not thou guil'ſt th' eauen.
But day doth daily draw my ſorrowes longer,(ſtronger
And night doth nightly make greefes length ſeeme

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HOw can I then returne in happy plight
That am debard the benifit of reſt?
When daies oppreſſion is not eazd by night,
But day by night and night by day opreſt.
And each (though enimes to ethers raigne)
Doe in conſent ſhake hands to torture me,
The one by toyle, the other to complaine
How far I toyle, ſtill farther off from thee.
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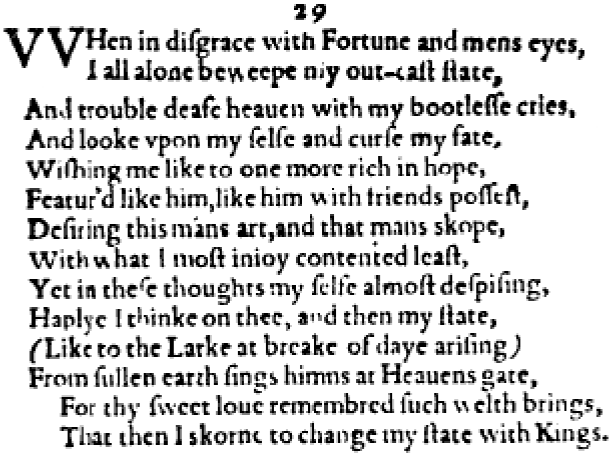
And do’ſt him grace when clouds doe blot the heauen:
So flatter I the ſwart complexiond night,
When ſparkling ſtars twire not thou guil’ſt th’eauen.
But day doth daily draw my ſorrowes longer, (ſtronger
And night doth nightly make greefes length ſeeme

Sonnet 28 continues Sonnet 27’s complaint about lack of sleep in the face of long “toyle” and “trauaill.” Given his lack of “quiet,” the poet now asks how he might “returne in happy plight,” in good physical or mental condition, when he is “debard the benifit of rest.” Legally a “benifit” was a privilege granted a particular class, such as ‘Benefit of Clergy,’ from whose “plight” or legal sanction to exercise the ministry one could be technically “debard” or excluded. For the poet “rest” is a privilege prohibited him.

As he twists and turns seeking sleep, he is subject to “torture” (with the play on its etymon, *torquere* = twist or turn), and to “oppression,” which, with “oprest,” suggests the ‘press’ of the punishment of *peine forte et dure* (normally sleep not its lack was thought to oppress). Being weighed-down by the day’s activities he finds no easing by night as day and night ‘oppress’ or compound each other. Day and night, though adversaries to each other (“ethers,” an obsolete though common Great Bible spelling of ‘eithers’), strike a bargain or seal a treaty (“shake hands”) to “torture” the poet. Day tortures him by “toyle,” by fatigue and “trauaill;” night tortures him by forcing him to lament the lengths to which he must now go (“How far I toyle”), given his distance from the youth.

The poet tries to appease both day and night: to pleasure day the poet informs him (Latin, *dies* = day, is masculine) of the youth’s brightness, which can compensate for the day’s lack of fairness when clouds block out the sun (“blot” with its added sense of ‘disfigure’). So too the poet will “flatter . . the swart complexiond night,” where “swart” is an archaic word for ‘black;’ “complexiond,” as in Sonnet 18’s “gold complexion dimm’d,” is both a dark body colour and a dark or melancholic humour. The night is told that the youth ‘guilds’ (gilts) or makes golden the evening (“guil’st th’eauen”), when the sparkling stars don’t “twire” or ‘peep’ down on earth. The night is illumined by the youth just as the “blacke night” is by a “iewell” in the preceding sonnet. The couplet is conventional and does not require the change of “length” to “strength” made by earlier editors. The lengthening of the poet’s pain recalls the lengthening out of the ‘presse,’ the torture wheel or rack, on which the pain is stronger as the body is stretched longer (“But day doth daily draw my sorrowes longer, / And night doth nightly make greefes length seeme stronger”).

Sonnet 29



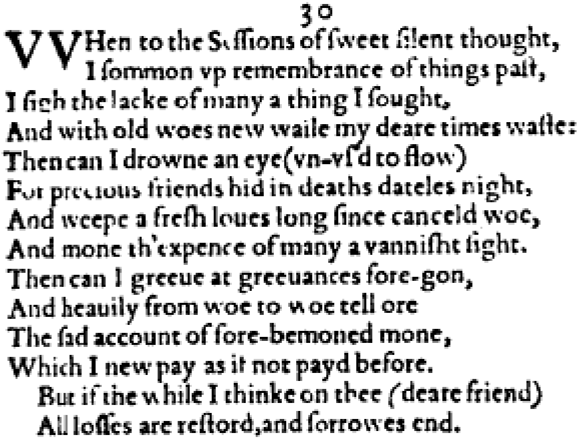
29
VVHen in diſgrace with Fortune and mens eyes,
I all alone beweepe my out-caſt ſtate,
And trouble deafe heauen with my bootleſſe cries,
And looke vpon my ſelfe and curſe my fate,
Wiſhing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur’d like him,like him with friends poſſeſt,
Deſiring this mans art,and that mans skope,
With what I moſt inioy contented leaſt,
Yet in theſe thoughts my ſelfe almoſt deſpiſing,
Haplye I thinke on thee, and then my ſtate,
(Like to the Larke at breake of daye ariſing)
From ſullen earth ſings himns at Heauens gate,
For thy ſweet loue remembred ſuch welth brings,
That then I skorne to change my ſtate with Kings.

29
VVHen in diſgrace with Fortune and mens eyes,
I all alone beweepe my out-caſt ſtate,
And trouble deafe heauen with my bootleſſe cries,
And looke vpon my ſelfe and curſe my fate.
Wiſhing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur’d like him, like him with friends poſſeſt,
Deſiring this mans art, and that mans skope,
With what I moſt inioy contented leaſt,
Yet in theſe thoughts my ſelfe almoſt deſpiſing,
Haplye I thinke on thee, and then my ſtate,
(Like to the Larke at breake of daye ariſing)
From ſullen earth ſings himns at Heauens gate,
  For thy ſweet loue remembred ſuch welth brings,
  That then I skorne to change my ſtate with Kings.

The sonnet opens with imagery evocative of the fall from grace of Adam and Eve. As a result God “cast out man” (Gen. 3.27; *GV*) from the garden. Adam earlier had been found “alone;” later both were “cursed” as the earth from which Adam came was cursed (“cursed *is* the earth for thy sake” [Gen. 3.17; *GV*]) and in “disgrace.” Beyond the biblical context “in disgrace” means ‘out of favour’ with “Fortune,” both with fate and with ‘wealth’ (taken up later in “rich” and “welth”). Being “in disgrace” in “mens eyes” suggests disfavour and ostracism. Solitarily (“all alone”) the poet becomes introspective and prey to self-pity: he will “beweepe my out-cast state,” his being excluded from grace. He will “trouble deafe heauen,” ‘bother’ or ‘importune’ heaven, which refuses to listen to his “bootless cries,” futile cries which gain no recompense. To “looke vpon my selfe” continues the gaze imagery, “eyes,” “looke,” “scope” (from σκοπέω = look), "despising" (from *de* + *spicere,* look down on). Being "out-cast" he will "curse" his lot. Consequently the poet envies another whose prospects might be brighter ("more rich in hope"); he wishes to be "featured like him," either 'fashioned like him' or 'having characteristics like him' or 'being comely like him.' The balanced anadiplosis, "like him, like him" could be two different 'hims' or a single 'him' that are/is possessed of friends. The "art" desired is skill and intelligence hinting at poetic ability; the "scope" is the way another looks on things or the range of his abilities. Finally and melancholically anything in which the poet once took pleasure is now the least satisfactory: "With what I most inioy contented least."

"Yet" in these desultory and secluded moments, "my selfe almost despising," the poet's thoughts fall on the beloved by chance ("Haplye" or 'happily' through assonance). Then his cast down "state," "(Like to the Larke at breake of daye arising) / From sullen earth sings himns at Heauens gate." The phrase is a favourite of Shakespeare, compare "Hearke, hearke, the Larke at Heauens gate sings, / and Phoebus gins arise" (*Cym*. 2.3.20-1). The lines are grammatically imprecise: "at breake of daye arising" can qualify either "Larke" or the poet's "state" (which would require a comma after "Larke"); "sullen" (or 'solein') originally meant "all alone" (from *solus* = alone), thus both poet's state and the earth are solitary and fallen. But "sullen" also means 'gloomy' as well as 'silent' or 'morose,' from which state the poet's song springs forth like the lark rising to sing from the dewy earth, as yet undried from night-time moisture. Likewise the poet's state will rise "from sullen earth," the earth of which he is made, to which he will return, and which is "cursed for thy sake." Thus "sullen earth" becomes a metonym for the fallen state, from whose depths the poet rises to sing "himns at Heauens gate." Solitariness and melancholy are overcome by remembrance of the youth's "sweet loue," which brings such reward ("wealth") that the poet, no longer "despising" himself, disdains ("skorne") to change his state with kings, who bestow grace and fortune.

Sonnet 30



30

VVHen to the Seſſions of ſweet ſilent thought,
I ſommon vp remembrance of things paſt,
I ſigh the lacke of many a thing I ſought,
And with old woes new waile my deare times waſte:
Then can I drowne an eye(vn-vſ'd to flow)
For precious friends hid in deaths dateles night,
And weepe a freſh loues long ſince canceld woe,
And mone th'expence of many a vanniſht ſight.
Then can I greeue at greeuances fore-gon,
And heauily from woe to woe tell ore
The ſad account of fore-bemoned mone,
Which I new pay as if not payd before.
But if the while I thinke on thee (deare friend)
All loſſes are reſtord,and ſorrowes end.

30
VVHen to the Seſſions of ſweet ſilent thought,
I ſommon vp remembrance of things paſt,
I ſigh the lacke of many a thing I ſought,
And with old woes new waile my deare times waſte:
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For precious friends hid in deaths dateles night,
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Then can I greeue at greeuances fore-gon,
And heauily from woe to woe tell ore
The ſad account of fore-bemoned mone,
Which I new pay as if not payd before.
But if the while I thinke on thee (deare friend)
All loſſes are reſtord, and ſorrowes end.

Sonnet 30 is an exercise in the classical rhetorical figure, *recordatio* or 'remembrance,' defined by Cicero as 'remembrance of past memory' ("recordatio praeteritae memoriae"). [1] Henry Peacham in his *Garden of Eloquence* describes the figure as

> a forme of speech by which the Speaker calling to remembrance matters past, doth make recitall of them. . . The use of this figure serueth in sted of a necessarie memorial of time past, whereby we are put in mind what we haue beene, what we haue done, what we haue heard or seene, what we haue suffred, what we haue receiued, and so to compare it with the time present for the profite of our selues and our hearers. [2]

The sonnet continues the reverie of Sonnet 29, as the poet's exercise in memory is given a juridical and accountancy framing: "When to the Sessions of sweet silent thought, / I sommon vp . ." "Sessions" were legal sittings (from *sedere* = to sit) for the transaction of business or the settling of accounts. In the sonnet's case the sitting is held in the presence of or in a court presided over by "sweet silent thought." To "sommon" was to call to court to answer charges or for a determination, but this sense of 'summon' is immediately modified by the preposition, "vp." The poet is calling up something from his memory, as if from a place or room, here the setting of a court. The practice was a feature of "the arte of remembrance," which is worked more exactly as the conceit of Sonnets 77 and 122. Rhetoricians like Wilson gave detailed advice on how to use as an associative mnemonic a memory place ("locum") or room, often a theatre or court, from which stored remembrances were recalled:

> When wee come to a place where we haue not bene many a day before, wee remember not onely the place it selfe, but by the place, wee call to remembraunce many thinges done there. [3]

That which is summoned up is the "remembrance of things past," a biblical phrase either from the apocryphal Book of Wisdom where the grief of the Israelites' enemies "was double with mourning, & the remembrance of things past" (Wisd. 11.10; *GV*), or from Ecclesiastes which argues that the new is merely the old and that past things are beyond remembrance:

> The eye is not satisfied with sight, the eare is not fylled with hearyng. The thyng that hath ben, commeth to passe agayne, and the thyng that hath ben done, shalbe done agayne . . The thyng that is past is out of remembraunce . . And [I] dyd applie my mynde to seke out & searche for knowledge of all thynges that are done vnder heauen. (Eccles. 1.8-13 *passim*; *BB*)

In the sonnet "remembrance" is the defendant being examined: the poet laments ("sighs") the "lack" of things for which he once "sought." The oratorical devices that constitute his pleading, alliteration, paradox, contrast and ambiguity, pile up in, "And with old woes new waile my deare times waste," the line's meaning partly depending on where the voice pauses, before or after "new." The most solid readings are: 'I newly bewail with old expressions of woe either the waste of time that is dear or the waste of things caused by dear time' ("deare" is either costly or precious), or 'I waste away my dear time or things dear with old woes newly wailed.' At the summons "Then can I drowne an eye," an oratorical homonym and periphrasis for 'weep," although it is an eye unaccustomed to weeping. The poet's grieving is for absent but "precious friends," now hidden in the interminable darkness of death ("dateles" is without term or closure).

The poet, in an act of accounting, can "weepe a fresh loues long since canceld woe;" he can lament anew ("a fresh") the woe caused by love but long ago balanced out ("canceld" derives from *cancelli*, a cross-worked lattice, whose decussated X shape was used by jurists to score out debts; the figure is reflected by Shakespeare in the repeated chiastic or rhetorical X structures of the sestet's lines). Likewise the poet can bemoan ("mone") the cost of "many a vannisht sight," where "sight" can be what was once seen or an archaic spelling of "sigh."

The sestet is marked by polyptota ("greeue" and "greeuances," "fore-bemoned" and "mone," "pay" and "payd"). Having summoned remembrances ("Then"), the poet can grieve again at grievances, legal injuries or complaints, which are "fore-gon," either 'foregone' (of an earlier date) or 'forgone' (for which payment has been forgiven). As each "woe" comes to mind, with heavy heart ("heauily") he can "tell ore," both 'count' or 'rehearse' to himself, the "sad account" of a moan earlier uttered and lamented ("fore-bemoned mone"). The moan extracts from him a new requital ("new pay"), as if it had gone unpaid in the past.

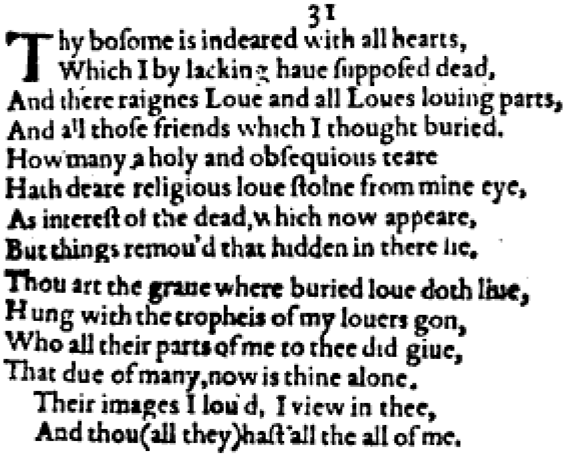
The couplet, however, breaks the poet's impasse and self-absorption by focussing on the external ("deare friend," the first occasion in the sequence that "friend" is used of the youth). If now he should, even for a moment ("the while;" 'alas the while' was often used in exclamations of grief), think of the friend, then it would "profite" the poet (see Peacham above) by bringing about complete restitution ("All losses are restord") and the "end" of sorrows. The "friend," in contrast to the "dateles" death of former "precious friends," would be alive to the poet and sorrow allowed an "end" or 'date.'

30.1. Cicero, *Epistulae ad Quintum Fratrem* 2.2.1; cf. *De Oratore* 1.2.4, "recordatio veteris memoriae."

30.2. Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence, conteining the Most Excellent Ornaments, Exornations, Lightes, flowers, and formes of speech, commonly called the Figures of Rhetorike* (London: Richard Field, 1593) 76.

30.3. Wilson 219.

Sonnet 31



31
Thy boſome is indeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking haue ſuppoſed dead,
And there raignes Loue and all Loues louing parts,
And all thoſe friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obſequious teare
Hath deare religious loue ſtolne from mine eye,
As intereſt of the dead, which now appeare,
But things remou'd that hidden in there lie.
Thou art the graue where buried loue doth liue,
Hung with the tropheis of my louers gon,
Who all their parts of me to thee did giue,
That due of many, now is thine alone.
Their images I lou'd, I view in thee,
And thou (all they) haſt all the all of me.

31
Thy boſome is indeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking have ſuppoſed dead,
And there raignes Loue and all Loues louing parts,
And all thoſe friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obſequious teare
Hath deare religious loue ſtolne from mine eye,
As intereſt of the dead, which now appeare,
But things remou'd that hidden in there lie. thee?
Thou art the graue where buried loue doth liue,
Hung with the tropheis of my louers gon, trophies
Who all their parts of me to thee did giue,
That due of many, now is thine alone.
Their images I lou'd, I view in thee,
And thou (all they) haſt all the all of me.

An example of an obsequial sonnet can be found in most sonnet sequences, while epicedia, and elegies were a stock literary form in Shakespeare's England. Composed for royalty and nobles as well as other persons of standing, their frequency suggests they were commercially profitable, being published either in small volumes or often as single sheets. Epitaphs and short poems including sonnets were also attached to the hearses of monarchs and nobles by friends and poets. A hearse or catafalque was originally a structure which was positioned over the bier carrying the deceased on which lighted candles were placed. By Shakespeare's time, in the case of the nobility, it had become a highly wrought edifice, often shaped like a castle – it was known as a *castrum doloris* (castle of suffering) - canopied like a baldacchino and decorated with escutcheons and mottos. By Shakespeare's time, as well, the distinction between the monumental and the literary had become blurred. George Chapman, for example, in 1612, has as the frontispiece to his *An Epicede or Funerall Song: On the most disastrous Death, of the High-borne Prince of Men, Henry Prince of Wales*, an illustration of the royal hearse with the prince's body laid out, but he has also had superinscribed on the hearse, as if attached, a pair of verses beside each other, the second of which bears his signature. [1] Fixing epitaphs to hearses was not confined to nobility; they were attached also to hearses of local notables, evidence being provided by preachers at their obsequies: William Leygh attests that at the funeral of a Katherin Brettergh of Lancashire in 1601 a gentleman "caused these few lines, as an Epitaph, to be fixed nigh her Hearse." [2]

The practice expanded to literary lovers pinning their laments to the hearse of departed ones, such as those in Richard Brathwait's *Loves Labyrinth* ("his hearse, / whereon engrauen was a doleful verse," and, "*his sacred hearse*, / *ranck set with embleames and with doleful verse*"), or Saladyne in Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* who "hangd about his Fathers hearse many passionate Poems." [3] It also found its place on the stage, for example in John Mason's *The Turke*, with its "passion curiously composd / Of riming numbers at my mistres hearse: / Or tell her dead truncke my true loue in vearse." [4] Literary epitaphs became very elaborate. Richard Niccols has an epitaph on the death of Henry, Prince of Wales, in 1612, which is a "sad acrostike Verse" with the initial letters of the lines comprising his name, [5] while a series of epitaphs composed by William Jones, on the death of Henry, the Earl of Southampton are entitled as anagrams: "HENRY WRIOTHESLEY Earle of *Southampton*. Anagram: *Vertue is thy Honour*; *O the praise of all men*." [6]

The practice of appending epitaphs to hearses had its origin in the 15th and 16th pre-reformation practice of commissioning diptyches by noble families. Earlier diptyches had been paired devotional paintings, often altar-pieces, sometimes hinged so they could be closed like a book. In the 16th century, however, under the influence of *Devotio Moderna*, which stressed the contemplative over public worship, they became private pieces and were privately commissioned. They often featured on one of the panels the diptych's commissioner or his family looking at a devotional topic such as the Virgin on the other.

They also became portable so that, opened on a prie-dieu, they would be used when praying and then folded into a drawer or special container. Upon the death of the owner they came to serve a commemorative function: they would be inscribed with epitaphs and hung above the tomb in the family church. The practice of hanging verses or epitaphs in churches prevailed in England after the reformation. Puttenham, having differentiated an epitaph from the longer elegy as something “a man may commodiously write or engraue vpon a tombe in few verses,” censures “bastard rimers,” who “make long and tedious discourses, and write them in large tables to be hanged vp in Churches and chauncells ouer the tombes of great men and others” and records his own experience of an epitaph, which was “so exceeding long as one must haue halfe a dayes leasure to reade one of them, & must be called away before he come halfe to the end, or else be locked into the Church by the Sexten as I my selfe was once serued reading an Epitaph in a certain cathedrall Church of England.” [7] Generally, however, epitaphs were succinct and bifold, the very first diptyches having been bifolded tablets or registers on which the names of the dead were inscribed. When epitaphs came to be published in the later decades of the 16th century, the paired structure of the commemorative diptych was continued. When printed on single sheets, they were regularly presented as paired columns with a middle bifold such as diptyches have. As well, the verses on each side of the bifold were heavily framed, the framing of each column giving a sense of panels and pictorial weightiness. The convention of presenting obsequial verses as paired has been carried over by Shakespeare in Sonnets 31 and 32 and in Sonnets 71 and 72.

Sonnet 31 takes the “bosomes shop” of Sonnet 24, in which the youth’s “true Image” is “hanging,” and turns it into a “bosome” where “trophies,” the “images” of former “louers,” are hung. The conceit of the trophy was a familiar one - Spenser’s *Amoretti* 69 which asks, “What trophee then shall I most fit deuize,” is a good example - and poets generally took advantage of etymological pun in trophy: originally a trophy was a tree, on which the spoils of victory were hung, and then a structure erected as a monument to which spoiles were attached, trophy derived from τρόπος from τρέπϵιν = to turn; a trophy is something ‘wrought’ or ‘turned,’ in a literary context a ‘trope.’ Since the Latin for ‘turn’ was *vertere,* from which ‘verse’ comes, “trophee” (trope) and “trophies,” both of which were hung on hearses, were identified.

The young man’s “bosome is indeared with all hearts;” “indeared” means ‘rendered more costly or precious’ (but not ‘beloved,’ a sense of ‘endeared’ that developed later). His bosom is strewn with all the hearts that in their absence (“by lacking”) the poet thought dead: “supposed” has been chosen because it combines the meaning of ‘thought’ with its Latin sense of ‘buried’ (from *sub* + *ponere* = to place under or bury in a tomb as in Ovid’s “*supposuit tumulo*”). [8] Reigning in the bosom, as a victor with spoils, is Eros (“Loue”), with all his “louing parts,” either with all his powers, or with all he has possessed, or even with all his legacies. In the bosom also hold sway all those “friends,” whom the poet thought past and buried.

The second quatrain is hyperbolic, its question rhetorical. How many “holy and obsequious” tears have been stolen from the poet’s eye: “holy” is associated with religious ceremonies; “obsequious,” as well as the sense of ‘owed,’ means ‘funereal’ (compare *TA* 5.3.152, “To shed obsequious teares vpon this Trunke”). On first reading a love other than Eros is suggested by “deare religious loue,” but the love proves to be Eros, who is scarcely “holy” or “religious,” since he has “stolne” the poet’s tears. (The anacreontic motif of Eros as thief, ῎Ερως κλέπτης, is used later in the fescennine Sonnets 153 and 154.) The tears extracted from the poet’s eyes are something which are owed to the dead as their right or title (“interest”) or they are the return gained by the poet, through Eros’ agency, on his earlier lovers lodged in the youth’s bosom. Such lovers are now seen only as “things remou’d,” absent through passing away, but living hidden in the youth’s bosom (“there” or ‘thee,’ depending on editorial judgement).

The sestet extends the trophy/trope *topos*. The beloved has become a “graue,” not where love lies dead but alive, even though buried. The funeral monument is “Hung with trophies:” all the poet’s past friends (“louers”) are now affixed within the young man as trophies or literary tropes are to a hearse. But each friend already possessed a part of the poet and this legacy, the poet, they have conferred on the youth. That which was the right or reward of earlier friends ("due" or "interest") is now invested in him ("now is thine alone"). Thus the "images" the poet once "lou'd" have become trophies, which he views in the beloved's bosom, possibly even as false images (Eros as a false god) improperly worshipped. The youth, now constituted the sum of all those friends, possesses the sum of the poet, since he was once constituted entirely of all the friends he loved. The young man thus possesses the poet's very "all," all his parts as well as "all Loues louing parts," the sum of the seven 'alls' contained in the sonnet ("all the all").

31.1. George Chapman, *An Epicede or Funerall Song: On the most disastrous Death, of the High-borne Prince of Men, Henry Prince of Wales, &c. With the Funeralls, and Representation of the Herse of the same High and mighty Prince* (London: T[homas] S[nodham], 1603).

31.2. William Leigh, *The Soules Solace Against Sorrow. A funerall Sermon preached at Childwall Church in Lancashire, at the buriall of Mistris Katherin Brettergh, the third of Iune 1601* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1602) N3^{v}.

31.3. Richard Brathwait, *Loves Labyrinth: Or The true-Louers knot: Including The disastrous fals of two star-crost Louers Pyramus & Thysbe* (London, I. B[eale], 1615) 28 & 60; Thomas Lodge, *Rosalynde. Euphues golden Legacie, found after his death in his Cell at Silexedra. Bequeathed to Philautus Sonnes, noursed vp with their Father in England. Fetcht from the Canaries by T.L. Gent.* (London: Abel Jeffes, 1592) B2^{v}.

31.4. John Mason, *The Turke. A worthie tragedie* (London: E[dward] A[llde], 1610) C4^{v}.

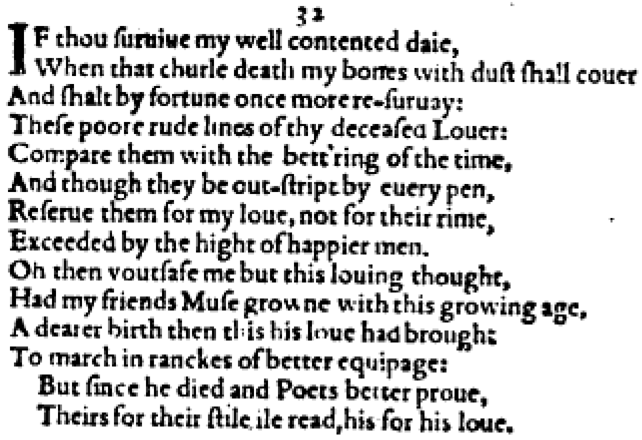
31.5. Richard Niccols, *The three sisters teares. Shed at the late solemne funerals of the royall deceased Henry, Prince of Wales* (London, T[homas] S[nodham], 1613) F2^{v}.

31.6. William Jones, *A Treatise of Patience in Tribulation: First, Preached before the Right Honourable the Countesse of Southampton in her great heauines for the death of her most worthy Husband and Sonne. . . Herevnto are ioyned the Teares of the Isle of Wight, shed on the Tombe of their most Noble Captaine Henrie Earle of Southampton and the Lord Wriosthely his Sonne* (London: William Iones, 1625) 47-8; compare also "HENRY SOVTHAMPTON, Anagam; *The Stampe in Honour*" and "*Henry Wriothesly* Earle of *Southampton*, Anagram: *Thy Honour is worth the praise of all Men*."

31.7. Puttenham 45-46.

31.8. Ovid, *Fasti* 4.756.

Sonnet 32



32
IF thou ſuruiue my well contented daie,
When that churle death my bones with duſt ſhall couer
And ſhalt by fortune once more re-ſuruay:
Theſe poore rude lines of thy deceaſed Louer:
Compare them with the bett’ring of the time,
And though they be out-ſtript by euery pen,
Reſerue them for my loue, not for their rime,
Exceeded by the hight of happier men.
Oh then voutſafe me but this louing thought,
Had my friends Muſe growne with this growing age,
A dearer birth then this his loue had brought:
To march in ranckes of better equipage:
  But ſince he died and Poets better proue,
  Theirs for their ſtile ile read, his for his loue.

Sonnet 32 continues the obsequial conceit of its pair, Sonnet 31. The poet imagines a time when the youth has outlived him and closes the sonnet by penning for him words to constitute an epicedium. The opening “suruiue” is a conditional tense, ‘if you were to survive’ (from *super* + *vivere* = to live beyond). The poet’s “well contented daie” is that day or due date when he will have paid in full his debt (to nature); the phrase ‘to content someone’ meant ‘to pay someone in full.’ Since in the 17th century “daie” still retained its biblical meaning of ‘judgement’ as in “mans daie” or ‘judgement,’ an echo of judgement day is also present. [1] The image of death as a “churle,” one of low or rude status as well as one lacking largesse, was both classically (*mors acerbissima*) and biblically redolent, especially of Isaiah’s words, with which Shakespeare shows familiarity in Sonnet 1.

> Then shall the foolishe nigarde be no more called gentle, nor the churle liberall . . The weapons of the churlishe are euyll . . that he may beguyle the poore with deceiptfull wordes, yea euen there as he should geue sentence with the poore. (32.5-7; *BB*)

The churl's weapons (Vulgate, *vasa* = military equipment) will be echoed in the sestet's "ranckes of better equipage," while his speaking falsely and judging the poor are reflected in the poet's "poore" lines, which in fact speak truth. A time when death will cover the bones with dust evokes the Committal from the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Order for the Burial of the Dead," "we therefore commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," itself an echo of Genesis 3.19, "For dust thou art, and into dust shalt thou be turned agayne" (*BB*). In the case of the youth's surviving the poet, he might by chance ("by fortune") once again "re-suruay" the poet's lines (from *super* + *videre* = to look over); to 'survey' was used also when reckoning or inspecting lines of accounts). The self-deprecating nature of "These poore rude lines" was customary when addressing a patron. [2] His lines are the remnants or relicts of the youth's "deceased Louer" which, as in Sonnet 31, means 'friend' rather than 'lover' in the modern sense.

The youth is instructed to "Compare" the poet's lines with the "bett'ring of the time," the advances poetry will make in the future. Although he will find the poet's verses "out-stript" or surpassed by every subsequent "pen" (metonymically 'poet'), he is instructed to preserve them ("Reserue," which keeps its legal sense of a part of a contract or rent kept back – unlike Death that keeps all). He must keep the lines, not for the sake of the poet's love, but for the sake of "their rime," their poetic value, even if they rank less than the reputations of "happier men," men of greater "fortune."

The sestet echoes the vocabulary of petitions and suits and is again self-deprecatory ("voutsafe me but . . "). The poet's "louing thought," put into the mouth of the youth, is this: 'If my friend (the poet) had survived, if his Muse had continued to grow as this age progressed, then his love would have brought forth - the image is one of poetic childbirth – issue that is "dearer," more treasured and more costly (not "poore") than this poem.' A poem of such worth would "march in ranckes of better equipage," would be ranked amid "better" equipment than the weapons of the churl which are evil. The line brings together a number of strands: "equipage" was a military term for equipment, but came to include a sense of orderliness, both in ranks and vesture. Thus the poet's literary tropes or verses, with their metrical feet in order, would be found marching in better company, a usage found in Marston's *The metamorphoses of Pigmalions image* with its "stanzaes . . Which like Soldados of our warlike age, / March rich bedight in warlike equipage."[3] Or the poet himself would be included in the register of subsequent and better poets, similar to the claim by Thomas Nashe for Thomas Watson, whose "*Amintas* . . may march in equipage of honour, with our ancient poets."[4] Or, finally, the poet is evoking the equipage of a funeral procession in which retainers marched in ranks in full uniform, a frequent feature of elegies, compare John Ford's instruction to the deceased Earl of Devonshire, "Then go great *Montioy* lustre of this age, / Pace still thy name in pompous equipage."[5]

The closing couplet awards the youth words that give assent to the poet's earlier instruction, "Reserue them for my loue, not for their rime." Since the poet has died and because the standard of poetry has improved ("Poets better proue"), the youth will read the lines of later poets for their literary quality, but will read those of the poet out of love for him ("his for his loue").

32.1. From 1 Cor. 4.3, Vulgate, "ab humano die."

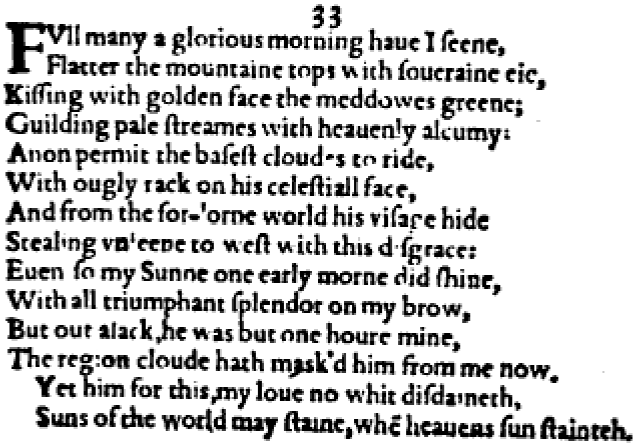
32.2. Compare the opening lines of the Dedicatory Sonnet to *The Tears of Fancie*, "Goe Idle lines vnpolisht rude and base, / Unworthy words to blason beauties glory" (T.W. *The Tears of Fancie. Or, Loue Disdained* (London: William Barley, 1593).

32.3. John Marston, *The metamorphosis of Pigmalions image. And certaine satyres* (London: Iames Roberts, 1598) 24.

32.4. Thomas Nashe, Preface to Robert Greene, *Menaphon Camillas alarum to slumbering Euphues, in his melancholie cell at Silexedra* (London: T[homas] O[rwin], 1589) A1^{r}.

32.5. John Ford, *Fames Memoriall, Or The Earle of Deuonshire Deceased: With his honourable life, peacefull end, and solemne Funerall* (London: Christopher Purset, 1606) B2^{v}.

Sonnet 33



33

FVll many a glorious morning haue I ſeene,
Flatter the mountaine tops with ſoueraine eie,
Kiſſing with golden face the meddowes greene;
Guilding pale ſtreames with heauenly alcumy:
Anon permit the baſeſt cloudes to ride,
With ougly rack on his celeſtiall face,
And from the for-lorne world his viſage hide
Stealing unſeene to weſt with this diſgrace:
Euen ſo my Sunne one early morne did ſhine,
With all triumphant ſplendor on my brow,
But out alack,he was but one houre mine,
The region cloude hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this,my loue no whit diſdaineth,
Suns of the world may ſtaine,whē heauens ſun ſtainteh.

33
FVll many a glorious morning haue I ſeene,
Flatter the mountaine tops with ſoueraine eie,
Kiſſing with golden face the meddowes greene;
Guilding pale ſtreames with heauenly alcumy:
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Euen ſo my Sunne one early morne did ſhine,
With all triumphant ſplendor on my brow,
But out alack, he was but one houre mine,
The region cloude hath mask'd him from me now.
  Yet him for this, my loue no whit diſdaineth,
  Suns of the world may ſtaine, whê heauens ſun ſtainteh.   when   staineth

Sonnet 33's crux concerns its last line, "Suns of the world may staine, when heauens sun staineth," where the play on sun and son adds layers of meaning, to which allusions in the preceding lines contribute. Its opening trope, of the sun's gathering effect, is reminiscent of Philip of France's speech in *King John,*

> To solemnize this day the glorious sunne
> Stayes in his course, and playes the Alchymist,
> Turning with splendor of his precious eye
> The meager cloddy earth to glittering gold. (3.1.75-8)

Here "Full many" indicates the numerous glorious mornings, that are the subject of "Flatter" and subsequent verbs. "Flatter" suggests an element of artificial improvement and veneer: the morning "with soueraine eie" (the sun), when rising, adds a patina of colour to the "mountaine tops," which it strikes first. It is the first of a range of references evoking courtly behaviour: “Flatter,” “soueraine,” “Kissing.” As the sun rises, the morning is seen as “Kissing,” touching lightly, “with golden face the meddowes greene,” turning the surface green of the grass to a richer yellow. Its rising light, cast on the translucent (“pale”) waters of streams, is seen to gild or turn them golden with “heauenly alcumy;” “heauenly” because the source of change is from the sun; “alcumy” or alchemy, is the pseudo-science, known for changing base metals into gold.

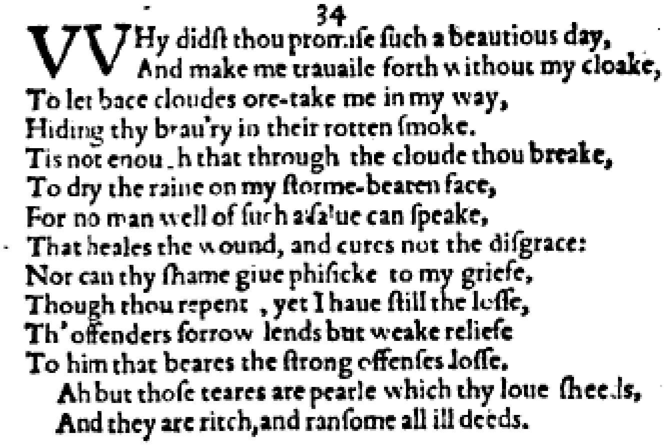
“Anon” intends shortly or presently. The “glorious morning” allows (“permit”) “the basest cloudes to ride / With ougly rack on his celestiall face.” The “basest cloudes” are either clouds that are lowest in the sky, or the darkest, or the those full of most unhealthy vapours (cf. Sonnet 34.3-4, “bace cloudes . . rotten smoke”); “basest” contrasts in rank with “soueraine” and extends the alchemical allusion. The “rack” of “ougly rack” is complex: “rack” first suggests a ‘grid’ of clouds, but clouds technically are said to “rack” or build up in the sky and “ougly” then implies something ‘threatening;’ as well a horse is said to “rack,” a gait that is a half-trot, which ties in with “ride” and where “ougly” intends ‘uncomfortable.’ The morning thus allows the clouds to ride or pile up and cover its heavenly (“celestiall”) face. Once done, it hides its “visage” or ‘face’ from the world that it has abandoned (“for-lorne”), as, like a thief, it steals away “vnseene” to the west – the conflation of morning and sun is now complete – with the mass of black clouds (“this disgrace”) hiding it.

The sestet allows two readings: either “my Sunne” is this present morning – a lesser reading – or “my Sunne” is the poet’s friend – the more cogent reading. The “he” of the sestet could be either. If it is identified as the youth, then the young man has gazed down upon the poet’s “brow” or face, “with all triumphant splendour.” Yet the moment of conquest was brief, for the poet complains, “But out alack, he was but one houre mine,” where “out alack” is an intensified ‘alas.’ The reason implied in the octet for the short morning stay is the departure by horse of either the youth or the poet - in next sonnet it becomes clear that it is the poet who leaves - as he rides off into the “region cloude.” (The sonnet is a kind of aubade, except that it is the clouds rather than the sun that interferes.) The “region cloude” means ‘local’ cloud or, since the atmosphere was divided into upper, middle, and lower regions, the 'lowest' or "basest" cloud; "region" (from *regere* = to rule) recalls the courtly "soueraigne" above and ties in with "mask'd," primarily meaning 'hidden,' but evoking the 'masks' and 'masques,' that were features of courtly activity. [1]

Yet the poet's disaffection in no way ("no whit") leads him to "disdain" or hold the friend in contempt. The final line, which gives the reason for his refusal to cast blame, is ambiguous. Either great people of the world ("Suns of the world") may sin, since the sun of heaven stains or is in "disgrace;" hence the youth's sin is permitted; or all men ('Sons of the world') may sin, since the sun of heaven stains; the youth may accordingly offend. As well, "heauens sun" homonymically evokes 'heaven's son' or 'son of heaven,' which begins a range of Christic echoes culminating in the references to the crucifixion at the end of Sonnet 34. The coming of Christ again is described as "then shall appeare the signe of the sonne of man, in heauen: And then shall all . . see the sonne of man comming in the cloudes of heauen, with power and great glory" (Matt. 24.30; *BB*). Accompanying the crucifixion was the eclipse of the sun, when "darknesse arose ouer all the earth" (Mark 15.33, *BB*; the Geneva Version notes, "the Sunne shined ouer all the rest of the worlde, and at midday, that corner of the worlde, wherein so wicked an act was committed, was ouercouered with most grosse darkenesse"). Despite the allusions to the crucifixion, it can only be coincidental that they should occur at Sonnet 33, the age at which Christ was customarily thought to have died.

33.1. Compare Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 22.1-3, "In highest way of heauen the Sunne did ride . . Hauing no maske of Clowdes before his face."

Sonnet 34


34
VVHy didſt thou promiſe ſuch a beautious day,
And make me trauaile forth without my cloake,
To let bace cloudes ore-take me in my way,
Hiding thy brau’ry in their rotten ſmoke.
Tis not enough that through the cloude thou breake,
To dry the raine on my ſtorme-beaten face,
For no man well of ſuch a ſalue can ſpeake,
That heales the wound, and cures not the diſgrace:
Nor can thy ſhame giue phiſicke to my griefe,
Though thou repent, yet I haue ſtill the loſſe,
Th’offenders ſorrow lends but weake reliefe
To him that beares the ſtrong offenſes loſſe.
  Ah but thoſe teares are pearle which thy loue ſheeds,
  And they are ritch, and ranſome all ill deeds.

34
VVHy didſt thou promiſe ſuch a beautious day,
And make me trauaile forth without my cloake,
To let bace cloudes ore-take me in my way,
Hiding thy brau’ry in their rotten ſmoke.
Tis not enough that through the cloude thou breake,
To dry the raine on my ſtorme-beaten face,
For no man well of ſuch a ſalue can ſpeake,
That heales the wound, and cures not the diſgrace:
Nor can thy ſhame give phiſicke to my griefe,
Though thou repent, yet I haue ſtill the loſſe,
Th’offenders ſorrow lends but weake reliefe
To him that beares the ſtrong offenſes loſſe.   crosse
  Ah but thoſe teares are pearle which thy loue ſheeds,
  And they are ritch, and ranſome all ill deeds.

Sonnet 34 expands the argument of Sonnet 33 ending with a range of Christic allusions similar to those of Sonnet 33. Its opening “thou,” on first reading seemingly the youth, is later found to be the sun. The sestet opens with “thy shame,” which subsequently is identified as the youth’s. The sonnet is constructed around parallels between the octet’s “raine” and the sestet’s “teares.”

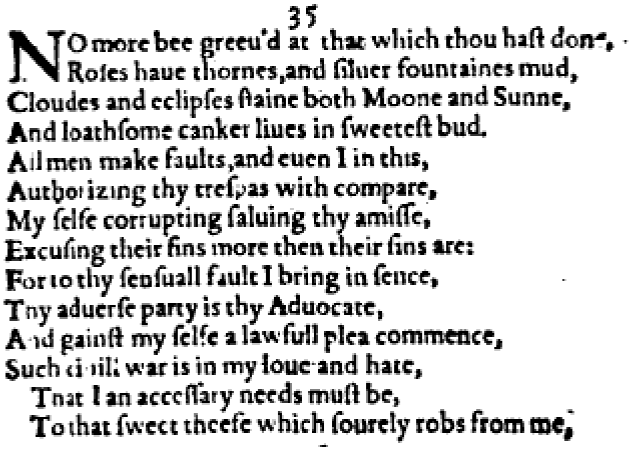
It is the sun that promises “such a beautious day,” so beautiful that the poet goes forth “without my cloake,” without forethought or protection; “trauaile” means ‘travel’ but includes the sense of labouring, ‘travail.’ “To let bace cloudes” suggests a malignant purpose and recalls the “basest cloudes” of the previous sonnet. The clouds “ore-take” the poet on his journey, “hiding” (compare “hide” of Sonnet 33.7) the sun’s “brau’ry” or ‘splendour’ in “their rotten smoke,” the disease-bearing vapours associated with fog. It is not sufficient that the sun provide temporary respite by momentarily breaking through the clouds and drying the rain on the poet’s “storme-beaten face.” Indeed no man would “speake” well of such a balm (“salue”), which touches only the surface (“heales the wound”), but which “cures not the disgrace,” the deeper malady or “shame.”

The sestet’s opening “thy” redirects the metaphor to the friend, who is guilty, like the sun, of disgrace or shame. He may express sorrow, but it does not alleviate the poet’s hurt; it does not “giue phisicke,” ‘medicine’ or ‘cure,’ to his “griefe.” The friend may “repent,” but the poet continues to feel the “losse” caused him. Indeed the “sorrow” of the offender “lends but weake reliefe” to one who “beares the strong offenses crosse” (“crosse” is the standard emendation to the *quarto*’s repeated “losse”). Expressions of regret, then, convey the youth’s sorrow, which the poet finds acceptable but scarcely a remedy. His heart, however, is touched by the youth’s “teares.” “Ah,” he exclaims, “those teares are pearle which thy loue sheeds,” where “sheeds” is less “sheds,” which is true of tears, and more ‘pours out;’ “sheeds” was a biblical rendering of *fundere* (to pour out) and was used specifically of love, for example, “because the loue of God is sheed abroad in oure hertes” (Rom. 5.5; *GB*). [1] Such tears are pretious (“ritch”) and “ransome,” ‘redeem’ or ‘cancel out’ all “ill deeds” or ‘betrayals.’

These later lines reintroduce the Christic subtext of Sonnet 33, firstly with the reference to “him that beares the strong offenses crosse.” Christ was made to “bare his crosse” (John 19.17; *BB*) and by his death ransomed the ill deeds of sinners, Matthew claiming that “the sonne of man came . . to geue his lyfe a raunsome for many” (20.28 *BB*), while Paul states he “was deliuered *to death* for our sinnes” (Rom. 4.25; *GV* with its sidenote, “To pay the ransome for our sinnes”). The tears of repentance shed by the youth are “pearles” that are “ritch,” not unlike the “pearle of great price” of the Matthew parable (13.46; *GV*), for the ransom obtained by Christ was one “bought for a price” (1 Cor. 6.20; *GV*, which explains that “God himselfe hath bought vs, and that with a great price”). If the youth’s offence involved infidelity, the Pauline context adds greater weight to the poet’s forgiveness, since the body, through the rich price paid by Christ, is no longer prey to the "fault of the flesh," because "Christ salueth this disease" (Rom.10.4; *GV* sidenote). The youth's tears, as ransom, thus gain pardon from the poet and cure the "disgrace." Of such a "salve," which cures the deeper "disgrace," the poet finds he can "speak well."

34.1. Both the Bishops' Bible and the Geneva Version have "shedde."

Sonnet 35



35
NO more bee greeu'd at that which thou haſt done,
Roſes haue thornes,and ſiluer fountaines mud,
Cloudes and eclipſes ſtaine both Moone and Sunne,
And loathſome canker liues in ſweeteſt bud.
All men make faults,and euen I in this,
Authorizing thy treſpas with compare,
My ſelfe corrupting ſaluing thy amiſſe,
Excuſing their ſins more then their ſins are:
For to thy ſenſuall fault I bring in ſence,
Thy aduerſe party is thy Aduocate,
And gainſt my ſelfe a lawfull plea commence,
Such ciuill war is in my loue and hate,
  That I an acceſſary needs muſt be,
  To that ſweet theefe which ſourely robs from me,

35
NO more bee greeu'd at that which thou haſt done,
Roſes haue thornes, and ſiluer fountaines mud,
Cloudes and eclipſes ſtaine both Moone and Sunne,
And loathſome canker liues in ſweeteſt bud.
All men make faults, and euen I in this,
Authorizing thy treſpas with compare,
My ſelfe corrupting ſaluing thy amiſſe,
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For to thy ſenſuall fault I bring in ſence,
Thy aduerſe party is thy Aduocate,
And gainſt my ſelfe a lawfull plea commence,
Such ciuill war is in my loue and hate,
  That I an acceſſary needs muſt be,
  To that ſweet theefe which ſourely robs from me,

Sonnet 35 returns to the "griefe" of Sonnet 34.9, for which the young man's tears have gained satisfaction: "No more bee greeu'd at that which thou has done." In trying to exculpate the youth the poet seeks precedents from other quarters: that "Roses haue thornes" was proverbial ('No rose without a thorn'), while the pellucid waters of "siluer fountaines" (omnipresent in Petrarchan poetry) are often naturally besmeared with "mud." "Cloudes and eclipses" darken ("staine," recalling Sonnet 33.14, "Suns of the world may staine") both superterrestial bodies, the "Moone and Sunne." Finally the enemy of the rose, the cankerworm ("loathsome canker"), inhabits the "sweetest bud."

The poet's argument, after the deed, is concerned with establishing its right or wrong and is an example of the iuridical argument termed "Comparing the fault." Thomas Wilson allows two modes or "states" of argument, either an "absolute" argument where "the matter by the [sic] owne nature, is defended to be right" or an "assumptiue" argument where a "little force or strength, to maintaine the matter" is used. One of the grounds by which an "assumptiue" argument can confirm or exculpate is "Comparing the fault," in which factors extraneous to the deed are used and which Wilson defines as "declaring that either they must haue done that, or els haue done worse." For example a faulty member can be authorized to be cut away to preserve the body (politic): "when we saie, that by slaying an euill man, we haue done a good deede, cutting away the corrupt and rotten member, for preseruation of the whole body." [1] The poet's exercise in the octet is an example of "Comparing the fault:" "All men make faults, and euen I in this / Authorizing thy trespas with compare." "All men make faults" is a general axiom: to "make" a fault was to transgress the law or commit a misdeed. Shakespeare admits to making one further fault in particular: "euen I in this," both in the comparative exercise of the prior four lines and in the three present participles that govern the following lines, "Authorizing," "corrupting," and "Excusing." In finding precedents taken from the natural world he has condoned the youth's fault and, by comparing the fault, has inculpated himself: "Authorizing thy trespas with compare." (If in "Authorizing" there is the hint of being an 'author,' then "faults" takes on the sense of an ungrammatical sentence or misprint.) In absolving the youth's transgression ("saluing thy amisse," compare Sonnet 34.7 "salue") the poet has, like Wilson's example, corrupted himself, an action which, by compare, must be a "worse" deed. More generally, by using as an exculpatory basis of comparison the "staine" found in nature and the faults of all men ("excusing their sins," with echoes again of "Suns of the world may staine"), the poet commits a sin greater than their sins ("more then their sins are"). (Editors are conflicted over the "their . . their" of line 8 and since Capell it has been emended to "thy . . thy," or to any combination of "their" and "thy," although to little advantage or clarification.)

The youth's "trespas" is now identified as a "sensual fault" or a "fault of the flesh" (Rom. 10.4; *GV* sidenote), a "disease" the poet had forgiven in Sonnet 34. To the "fault" the poet brings "sense," which retains its juridical Latinate meaning, defined by Rider as "iudgement, reason" [2] or the rational judgement of a courtroom, ("the sense of reck'ning" of *H5* 4.1.287). The poet is both the side presenting the case against the youth (“Thy adverse party”) and the side representing the youth (“thy advocate”). In such a divided role he can be seen as beginning (to “commence” an action or suit is technically correct) a “lawful plea” against himself; “lawful” intends ‘properly constituted.’

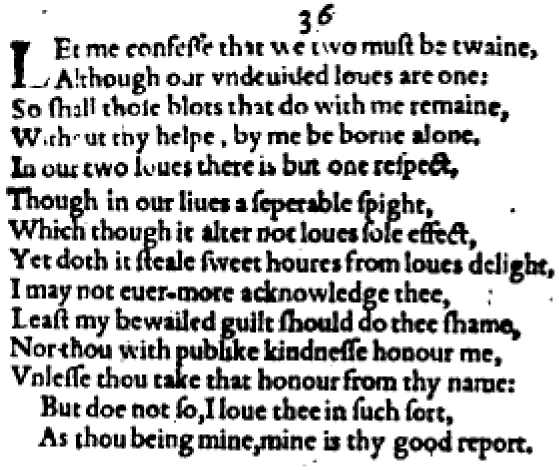
The sonnet’s final three lines rather than its final couplet must be seen as a unit. In them Shakespeare has recourse to a favourite *locus*, Whitney’s emblem, *Intestinae Simultates*, (“Ciuill Broyles” at *1H6* 1.1.53; cf. Sonnets 53-55). Shakespeare’s image of a divided self as a civil war was commonplace, but thieves and robbing as consequences of civil war is a thought specific to Whitney: “Intestine strife . . parteth frends . . robbes the good, and setts the theeues a floate.” [3] Torn beween “loue and hate,” the poet is compelled to recognize that he is an “accessary” to, or someone who, though not the principal offender and not necessarily present at the offence, is nevertheless inculpated in the youth’s crime. The youth is presented as a “sweet theefe,” suggestive of the earlier pun on “in sence,” one whom the poet finds “sweet,” but whose action is bitter since it “sourely robs” or takes from the poet. (In Sonnet 40.9, “I doe forgiue thy robb'rie gentle theefe,” the poet’s act of forgiveness will imitate that of Christ on the cross in forgiving the good thief.)

35.1. Wilson 99-100.

35.2. John Rider, *Riders Dictionarie Corrected and Augmented* (London: Adam Islip, 1606) sensus.

35.3. Cf. Spenser, *Amoretti* 44.5 and Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 39.7, “ciuill warre;” Whitney 7.

Sonnet 36


36
LEt me confeſſe that we two muſt be twaine,
Although our vndeuided loues are one:
So ſhall thoſe blots that do with me remaine,
Without thy helpe, by me be borne alone.
In our two loues there is but one reſpect,
Though in our liues a ſeperable ſpight,
Which though it alter not loues ſole effect,
Yet doth it ſteale ſweet houres from loues delight,
I may not euer-more acknowledge thee,
Leaſt my bewailed guilt ſhould do thee ſhame,
Nor thou with publike kindneſſe honour me,
Vnleſſe thou take that honour from thy name:
But doe not ſo,I loue thee in ſuch ſort,
As thou being mine,mine is thy good report.

36
LEt me confeſſe that we two muſt be twaine,
Although our vndeuided loues are one:
So ſhall thoſe blots that do with me remaine,
Without thy helpe, by me be borne alone.
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Which though it alter not loues ſole effect,
Yet doth it ſteal ſweete houres from loues delight,
I may not euer-more acknowledge thee,
Leaſt my bewailed guilt ſhould do thee ſhame,
Nor thou with publike kindneſſe honour me,
Vnleſſe thou take that honour from thy name:
  But doe not ſo, I loue thee in ſuch ſort,
  As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

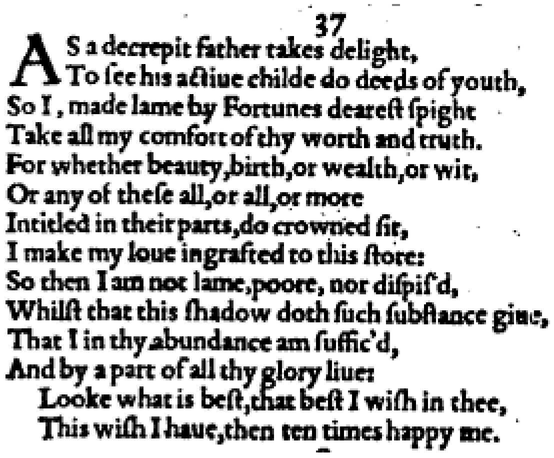
Sonnet 36 is of note, because it shares its couplet with Sonnet 96: "But doe not so, I loue thee in such sort, / As thou being mine, mine is thy good report." Quite why the repetition occurred is unclear: a compositor's error, a deliberate duplication on Shakespeare's part, an oversight, all remain possibilities. A case can be made for its placement in either sonnet, although the strong link between 2 Cor. 6.8, where Paul exhorts (godly) behaviour, "By honour and dishonour, by euyll report and good report" (*BB*), and the poet's associating the youth's "honour" with his "good report" confirms that the couplet fits well here.

The sonnet continues the themes of separation and stain of the preceding Sonnets 33, 34 and 35. The poet's admission, "Let me confesse that we two must be twaine," where "confesse" intends 'admit' (compare Sonnet 116's opening, "Let me not . . Admit"), hints at a religious confession, given the biblical subtexts of the preceding sonnets; "twaine," primarily means 'two,' but here 'separated into two parts,' 'distant from' or 'divided from' each other. The separation appears physical in contrast to the pair's "vndeuided loues," which remain "one." Given the spatial divide, the poet is forced to "bear" alone, "those blots that do with me remaine," the faults and spots of recent sonnets. In the youth's absence the poet must bear them, "Without thy helpe."

The second quatrain's "one respect," which is in "our two loues," emphasizes the unity of their loving relationship, but suggests a looking at each other ("respect" from *respicere* = look at), which unites them as one. Classically Fortune was titled *respiciens* or *respecta*, for her looking upon individuals, often spitefully, an allusion taken up in "seperable spight," which looks forward to "Fortunes dearest spite" of the next sonnet. The "spight" is that ill-will, which is able to separate or divide the lovers and which doesn't "alter . . loues sole effect," foreshadowing the love, which "alters not with his breefe houres and weekes" (Sonnet 116.11). The spite of separation reduces the number of hours available for the pleasures of love ("Steale sweet houres from loues delight").

The sestet continues the confessional motif, which requires an acknowledgement of fault and a resolve to amend. Henceforth the poet determines not to acknowledge the youth ("I may not euer-more acknowledge thee"). The reason behind his public avowal is to avoid inculpating the youth ("do thee shame") through his "bewailed guilt," the same "Comparing the fault" of Sonnet 35. On the reverse side the youthful patron is advised not to "honour" the poet "with publike kindnesse," or if he were to, then only after separating his favour from his name, so making it anonymous: "take that honour from thy name." The couplet, however, reverses the advice, instructing the youth to withdraw neither his name nor his support: "But doe not so." The poet's proferred motive is that he so loves the youth ("loue thee in such sort") and so strongly possesses him ("thou being mine"), that the "good report," the 'reputation' or 'standing' of the friend, is the prerogative of the poet. (See the commentary on Sonnet 96 for further discussion of the couplet.)

Sonnet 37



37
AS a decrepit father takes delight,
To ſee his actiue childe do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by Fortunes deareſt ſpight
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth.
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of theſe all, or all, or more
Intitled in their parts, do crowned ſit,
I make my loue ingrafted to this ſtore:
So then I am not lame, poore, nor diſpiſ'd,
Whilſt that this ſhadow doth ſuch ſubſtance giue,
That I in thy abundance am ſuffic'd,
And by a part of all thy glory liue:
Looke what is beſt, that beſt I wiſh in thee,
This wiſh I haue, then ten times happy me.

37
AS a decrepit father takes delight,
To ſee his actiue childe do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by Fortunes deareſt ſpight
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth.
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of theſe all, or all, or more
Intitled in their parts, do crowned ſit,
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Whilſt that this ſhadow doth ſuch ſubſtance giue,
That I in thy abundance am ſuffic'd,
And by a part of all thy glory liue:
  Looke what is beſt, that beſt I wiſh in thee,
  This wiſh I haue, then ten times happy me.

Sonnet 37, like Sonnet 91, is an example of the rhetorical figure, "paragon" or "comparison." Both sonnets are indebted to Puttenham's description of the device and to Horace's division of the ages between youth and old age, although its use in Sonnet 91 is fuller. The poet in Sonnet 37 chooses to disregard Horace's stricture against the "parts" ("partes") or characteristics to which each age is entitled being attached to any other age: those in which an old man "takes delight" should not be identified with those in which a youth finds "glory" ("gaudet") and *vice versa*. [1]

A "decrepit father" is in Cockeram's definition one that is "Old, feeble with age." The decrepit was traditionally the seventh age of man, Thomas Wright awarding it to the years after 63 ("after, till seauenty & seauentie seauen, for most part *decrepita aetas*);" [2] *decrepitus* literally meant 'noiseless' (*de* + *crepo* = not creaky) and was identified by the

Romans with old people who at a distance from the hearth "creep about like shadows." The paternal metaphor has the poet glorying in his "active childe," whose vigour is evident in his "deeds of youth." (In Sonnet 91 his deeds are compared with those who "glory" in their "birth . . wealth . . Hawkes and Hounds . . [and] . . Horse.") The aged poet is made "lame by Fortunes dearest spight" (compare *Lr*. 4.6.221, "A most poore man, made lame to Fortunes blows"); "lame" intends 'walking haltingly' with irregular steps, extending to irregular metrical feet as in Gower's disclaimer, "the lame feet of my rime" (*Per*. 4. Prol. 48). The poet's handicap is caused by the "dearest spight," both the 'intense spite' and the 'costly spite' of "Fortune," either the classical *Fortuna* which is commonly associated with spitefulness, or a lack of patronage which has caused his halting verse. The poet is forced to take not "delight" but the lesser "comfort" in the youth's "worth" and "truth;" 'true' implies 'straight' and 'straightforward,' not crooked or lame.

The rest of the sonnet is a complex and condensed example of the rhetorical "figure of comparison," where in Puttenham's definition "true ods" are purposely distorted:

> the figure of comparison: as when a man wil seeme to make things appeare good or bad, or better or worse, or more or lesse excellent, either vpon spite or for pleasure, or any other good affection, then he sets the lesse by the greater, or the greater to the lesse, the equall to his equall, and by such confronting of them together, driues out the true ods that is betwixt them, and makes it better appeare. [3]

The elements or the comparison, which we find later are not made because of "spite," are "beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit," characteristics or "parts" (Horace's "partes") of youth. Whether any of them, or all of them, or even more than them all, since they are "entitled" or been awarded their various ("in their parts") titles, they are said to sit "crowned" or at their peak in the youth. (Qualities and virtues normally 'sit in' or 'reside in,' although classically *Fortuna* is associated with the bosom, "in gremio.") [4] To this "store," this abundance of qualities, the older poet has attached ("ingrafted") his love, although unnaturally because the new is customarily engrafted to the old.

The "So" beginning the sestet is both 'thus' and 'so that.' With his love grafted to the young man's stock, the poet is no longer "lame," but upright, not "poore," but plenteous, and not susceptible to spite (“despised”). In contrast to Sonnet 1, where Shakespeare renders the Ovidian adage of Narcissus, “inopem me copia fecit,” as, “Making a famine where aboundance lies” [5] here the reverse is true: the poet finds not poorness in the young man’s “abundance” but sufficient sustenance. In an inverted line ample “substance” or plenty is now cast upon or given to him as “shadow,” with which a decrepit old man is classically identified, and he can “glory” in a characteristic or “part” of what was crowned as glory above. Or, less likely, but continuing the reversed image of Narcissus who mistook the shadow for the substance (in Golding, “He thinkes the shadow that he sees, to be a lively boddie”), he now sees himself as drawing “substance” from the shadow. [6]

The couplet is petitionary: whatever (“Looke what”) is best, the poet wishes that of his beloved and patron. [7] Since he possesses the wish, he affirms himself multiply happy (“ten times happy”), “ten times” being a usual ratio for an unsurpassed number (compare, “In number more then ten times numberlesse”). [8] Since “ten times” is a ratio out of proportion to a “part,” the poet observes the final requirement of Puttenham for the figure, “paragon,” that it lack “true ods.”

37.1. Horace, *Ars Poetica* 176-7, “Ne forte seniles / mandentur iuueni partes” (‘Lest perhaps the traits of old men are awarded to a youth’). Sonnet 91 makes extensive use of the passage.

37.2. Cockeram, *The English Dictionarie*, *Decrepite*; Wright, *Clymactericall* 9.

37.3. Puttenham 196.

37.4. Cicero, *De Divinatione* 2.41.85.

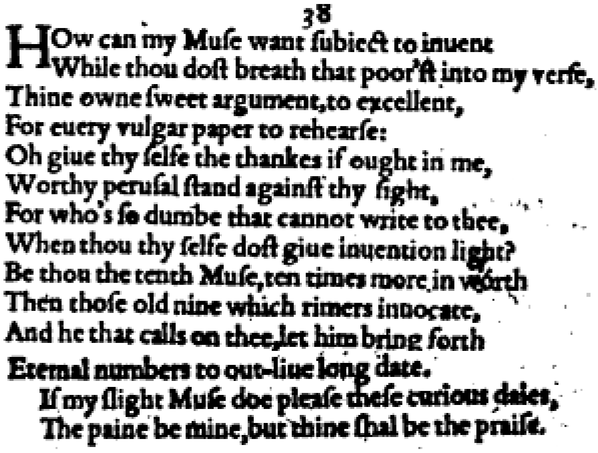
37.5. Ovid, *Met*. 3.466; Golding 3.587, “my plentie makes me poore”.

37.6. Golding 3.522.

37.7. Compare Sonnet 91.8, where the poet claims, “All these I better in one generall best [the youth]”.

37.8. E.C., *Emaricdulfe* 26.6.

Sonnet 38



38
HOw can my Muſe want ſubiect to inuent
While thou doſt breath that poor’ſt into my verſe,
Thine owne ſweet argument, to excellent,
For euery vulgar paper to rehearſe:
Oh giue thy ſelfe the thankes if ought in me,
Worthy peruſal ſtand againſt thy ſight,
For who’s ſo dumbe that cannot write to thee,
When thou thy ſelfe doſt giue inuention light?
Be thou the tenth Muſe, ten times more in worth
Then thoſe old nine which rimers inuocate,
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to out-liue long date.
  If my ſlight Muſe doe pleaſe theſe curious daies,
  The paine be mine, but thine ſhal be the praiſe.

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Sonnet 38 is built around the parts of rhetoric prescribed, for example, in Thomas Wilson’s *The Arte of Rhetorique* and laid down for schoolboy exercises. The five parts, classified in Cicero’s *De Inventione Rhetorica*, were Invention, Disposition, Elocution, Memory and Utterance:

> The finding out of apt matter, called otherwise Inuention, is a searching out of things true, or things likely, the which may reasonable set forth a matter . . in the second place is mentioned, the setling or ordering of things inuented for this purpose, called in Latine *Dispositio*, the which is nothing els but an apt bestowing, and orderly placing of things, declaring where euery argument shall be set . . Elocution, is an applying of apt wordes and sentences to the matter, found out to confirme the cause. When all these are had together it auaileth little, if man haue no Memorie to containe them. The Memorie therefore must be cherished, the which is a fast holding both of matter and words couched together, to confirme any cause. . . it is to no purpose if he [a man] haue no vtterance, when he should speake his

> minde, and shewe men what he hath to saie. Vtterance therefore, is a framing of the voyce, countenaunce, and gesture after a comely man [sic]. [1]

The element of "Vtterance" will become pivotal to the sonnet.

The poet's "Muse" is his source of inspiration, his personal genius or creative power. The opening rhetorical question asks how his muse could fail to search out a subject ("inuent"), when the young man is present and alive ("dost breath"). Besides 'breath of life' (compare Wilson, "God being the aucthour of mankinde, powring into him the breath of life"), [2] "breath" anticipates the inspiration (from *in* + *spirare* = to breathe into) of the youth, who "pour'st into my verse, / Thine owne sweet argument." (To 'pour into' was a standard term for the Muses' inspiration.) The poet can want no other muse than the youth who provides an "argument," in Cicero's and Wilson's terms a *Dispositio*, "to excellent, / for euery vulgar paper to rehearse;" "vulgar" means a writing that is common or ordinary, but since Elizabethans distinguished between the classical langauges (of Latin and Greek) and the "vulgar" tongue such as English as a vernacular, the youth has a worth equal to that of the non-vulgar or classical muses. To 'rehearse an argument' was standard (compare Wilson, "all such arguments as were before rehearsed"); [3] "rehearse" looks forward to the elements of Memory (to rehearse is to commit to memory) and of Utterance (the poet argues the youth's *Dispositio* should not be pronounced by unrefined tongues). Finally there is always a suggestion of a paper or poem, attached to a hearse, a privilege not granted to the vulgar (see Sonnet 31). The whole quatrain comprises an Elocution.

The youth is advised to thank himself if anything in the poet's verse can stand his scrutiny; "perusal" means 'scrutinize in detail' rather than 'cast eyes over a paper cursorily.' Without the youth the poet would remain silent ("dumb"), lacking rhetoric's final element, "Vtterance," except that he has the youth to enlighten, in an epiphanic moment, the very "Muse" he provides ("thou thy selfe dost giue inuention light").

The sestet picks up the "ten times" of the prior sonnet. The youth will be to the poet a tenth, non-vulgar muse beyond the original Greek nine, upon whom older classical poets, "rimers," called ("inuocate" from *in* + *vocare* = to 'call on' or 'pray to'). The poet's prayer is that the youth's worth will be of "ten times" greater worth than the earlier Muses. His further prayer is that whoever invokes the youth as muse might "bring forth," as in childbirth, "Eternal numbers," which will "out-liue" any age or long-term finite date (as in a temporal lease). Verses or metrical stresses, as the ten in iambic pentameter, were known as "numbers;" their due proportion was the mark of the rhetorican: Wilson commends the orator, who "can plainly, distinctly, plentifully and aptly, vtter both words & matter, and . . keepe an vniformitie, and (as I might saie) a nomber in the vttering of his sentence." [4]

The poet concludes self-deprecatingly - his muse is scarcely "slight" - but, if it were to please "these curious daies," these fastidious or censorious times (with its play on "curious" meaning 'full of pains'), then his prayer is that, "The paine be mine, but thine shal be the praise." The paradox works the pun on "paine," being both 'hurt' and 'punishment,' in opposition to "praise." The phrase, 'thine be the praise,' was a frequent biblical and liturgical one.

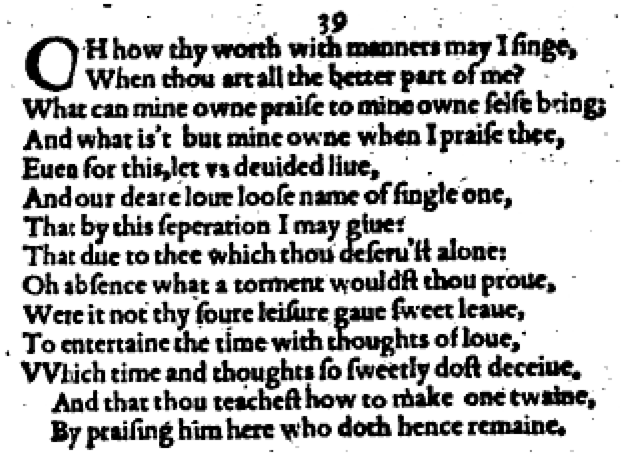
38.1. Wilson 6; the Ciceronian original is found in *De Inventione Rhetorica* 1.7.9, "partes autem eae, quas plerique dixerunt, inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, pronuntiatio" ('the parts, which most recognize, are invention, disposition, elocution, memory, pronouncing').

38.2. Wilson 18.

38.3. Wilson 116.

38.4. Wilson 163.

Sonnet 39



39
OH how thy worth with manners may I ſinge,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine owne praiſe to mine owne ſelfe bring;
And what is’t but mine owne when I praiſe thee,
Euen for this,let vs deuided liue,
And our deare loue looſe name of ſingle one,
That by this ſeperation I may giue:
That due to thee which thou deſeru’ſt alone:
Oh abſence what a torment wouldſt thou proue,
Were it not thy ſoure leiſure gaue ſweet leaue,
To entertaine the time with thoughts of loue,
VVhich time and thoughts ſo ſweetly doſt deceiue.
And that thou teacheſt how to make one twaine,
By praiſing him here who doth hence remaine.

39
OH how thy worth with manners may I ſinge,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine owne praiſe to mine owne ſelfe bring;
And what is’t but mine owne when I praiſe thee,
Euen for this, let vs deuided liue,
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That by this ſeperation I may giue:
That due to thee which thou deſeru’ſt alone:
Oh abſence what a torment wouldſt thou proue,
Were it not thy ſoure leiſure gaue ſweet leaue,
To entertaine the time with thoughts of loue,
VVhich time and thoughts ſo ſweetly doſt deceiue.
And that thou teacheſt how to make one twaine,
By praiſing him here who doth hence remaine.

The loosely linked series of Sonnets 39-42 picks up where Sonnets 33-36 leave off: they are preoccupied with the poet’s absence from the youth, but are now complicated by the presence of a mistress. They are punctuated by a range of biblical and christic echoes, none of which are sufficiently sustained to comprise a subtext.

Principal among the sets of allusions is the passage from Matthew in which Christ talks about separation and union and the “twaine” becoming one.

> For this cause, shall a man leaue father and mother, and shall be knit to his wyfe: and they twayne shall be one fleshe. Wherfore, they are no more twayne, but one fleshe. Let not man therefore put a sunder, that which God hath coupled together. (19.5-8 *passim*; *BB*)

Echoes of the passage are evident in the vocabulary of oneness and separation in Sonnet 39.13, "thou teachest how to make one twaine," in the opening confession to Sonnet 36, "Let me confesse that we two must be twaine, / Although our vndeuided loues are one," and in Sonnet 42.11-12, "And loosing her / Both finde each other, and I loose both twaine, / And both for my sake lay on me this crosse." The *locus biblicus* of a cross imposed lies not so much with Christ as with Simon of Cyrene: "on hymn layde they the crosse, that he might beare it after Iesus" (Luke 23.26; *BB*). It occurred as women "bewayled . . him" (Sonnet 36.10, "bewailed guilt," Sonnet 42.3, "wayling"). In forgiving the good thief (Sonnet 40.9, "I doe forgiue thy robb'rie gentle theefe"), the poet emulates Christ's forgiving the good thief on the cross: "Father forgiue them, for they wote not what they do" (Luke 23.34; *BB*). The element of inculpable ignorance becomes an alleviating factor in the sonnets. Finally any acceptance of the cross is in imitation of Christ: "And a mans foes [shalbe] they of his owne householde. . . And he that taketh not his crosse, & foloweth me, is not worthy of me . . He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his lyfe, for my sake, shall fynde it" (Matt. 10.36-39; *BB*). The poet's desire is that "we must not be foes" (Sonnet 40.4), while 'that which was lost is found,' is the paradox of Sonnet 42, which is marked by the triple plea, "for my sake."

In opening Sonnet 39 with the question, "O how thy worth with manners may I sing," Shakespeare (as he does also in Sonnet 85.1, "in manners holds her still") evokes the classical trope of a 'mannered poem,' Cicero's 'poema moratum,' a poem fitted to the character of a person or situation. [1] Its *locus classicus* was the *Ars Poetica*, where Horace claims that 'a correctly mannered tale ("morata recte"), of no grace/lasciviousness ("nullius veneris") and without weight or art, better pleases the people and remains with them longer than the poor verses of trifling words or songs.' [2] Horace's "fabula nullius veneris" created difficulty for translators because "venus" could mean both grace or elegance and venery or lasciviousness. Ben Jonson translated the phrase as "of no grace," while the standard Tudor translation of Thomas Drant rendered it as "lasciuiousnes away." Shakespeare conflates the two in the following sonnet's "Lasciuious grace." [3]

The sonnet asks how the poet might "with manners . . sing," how his song might be appropriate to the subject and situation and more than Horace's 'trifling words' ("rerum nugae"). The question is posed because, since the youth is "the better part of me," the poet in praising the youth would merely be praising himself: an unmannered poem and poor verse ("uersus inopes"). The phase, "the better part of me," reproduces the trope of poetic immortality, the final passage of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in Golding's rendition, "Yit shall the better part of mee assured bee to clyme / Aloft above the starrye skye." [4] Ovid's "better part" is his spirit that will prevail beyond death and earn immortality. Here the poet intimates that the young man, as his "better part," will prevail immortally.

If the poet, in praising the youth, were merely praising part of himself, then it raises the question, "What can mine owne praise to mine owne selfe bring"? Clearly nothing. Praising the youth is a praising of the self: "And what is't, but mine owne when I praise thee"? Because of this ("Euen for this"), because being identified prevents praise, it is better that the two be separated ("let vs deuided liue"). Only then the poet can resolve that their precious love ("deare loue") should forgo the "name" or 'title' of undivided oneness ("single one"). Only with their "seperation" can he render the friend the "due," which is owed solely to him ("which thou deseru'st alone").

The sestet argues against the conventional conceit that absence is a "torment," because the "leisure" absence gives, normally a source of bitterness ("soure"), has granted "sweet leaue" or 'permission' to idle away the time ("To entertaine the time") with "thoughts of loue." Thus absence "sweetly dost deceiue" or 'beguiles' time and thoughts. The couplet returns to the earlier argument: "absence" would be a torment, "Were it not" that absence teaches how to make two of one ("And that thou [absence] teachest how to make one twaine"), because, with the young man distant from the poet, praise becomes possible ("By praising him here who doth hence remaine") and the poet's work can be properly charactered and be sung "with manners."

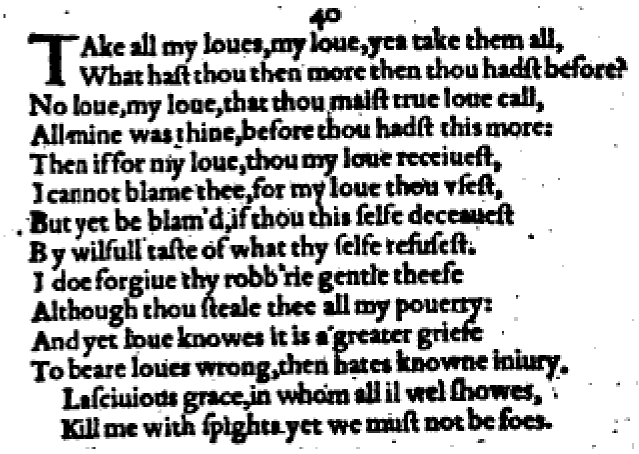
39.1. Cicero, *Divinatio in Caecilium* 1.31.66.

39.2. Horace, *Ars Poetica* 319-22, “morataque recte fabula nullius veneris, sine pondere et arte, valdius oblectat populum meliusque moratur quam uersus inopes rerum nugaeque canorae.”

39.3. Horace, *Q. Horatius Flaccus: His Art of Poetry. Englished by Ben: Jonson. With other Workes of the Author, never Printed before* (London: J. Okes, 1640) 19, 456-60; Jonson’s full translation runs: “A Poëm, of no grace, waight, art in Rimes / With specious places, and being humour’d right, / More strongly takes the people with delight, / And better stayes them there than all fine noyse / Of empty Verses, and meere tinckling toyes.” Horace, Drant B2^{v}.

39.4. Golding 15.989-90; Ovid, *Met*. 15.875-6, “parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis / astra ferar.”

Sonnet 40



40
TAke all my loues, my loue, yea take them all,
What haſt thou then more then thou hadſt before?
No loue, my loue, that thou maiſt true loue call,
All mine was thine, before thou hadſt this more:
Then if for my loue, thou my loue receiueſt,
I cannot blame thee, for my loue thou vſeſt,
But yet be blam'd, if thou this ſelfe deceaueſt
By wilfull taſte of what thy ſelfe refuſeſt.
I doe forgiue thy robb'rie gentle theefe
Although thou ſteale thee all my pouerty:
And yet loue knowes it is a greater griefe
To beare loues wrong, then hates knowne injury.
  Laſciuious grace, in whom all il wel ſhowes,
  Kill me with ſpights yet we must not be foes.

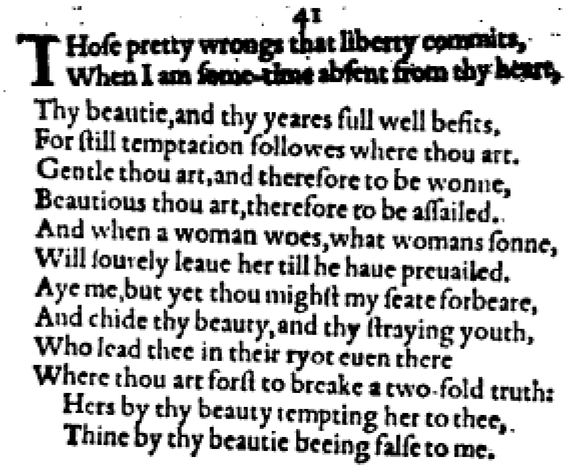
Sonnet 40's furacious conceit opens with an imperative to beloved, born of a moment of impetuousity or even jealous petulance, "Take all my loues, my loue, yea take them all," 'accept' or 'steal' from him all his love or all those whom he loves. The line's repetition and exclamatory, "yea," suggest the force of the poet's outburst, which is compounded by the lack of profit any 'taking' by the youth might afford, since he already possesses the poet's totality, "What has thou then more then thou hadst before?" The beloved's 'taking' would be futile: he would gain no love that he might call true love, because any love beyond the poet's totality of true love could only be false: "No loue . . that thou maist true loue call." He asserts, "All mine was thine," where the past tense, "was," is ominous and leads to the inspecific, "before thou hadst this more." Whatever "this" is, it can only be the object of false love, in the next sonnet identified as female.

The second quatrain’s “loue” remains imprecise: if, for the sake of the poet’s love (“for my loue”), the youth entertain the poet’s other love, his mistress (“thou my loue receiuest”), then the poet cannot impute blame to him (“I cannot blame thee”), because the friend is ‘using’ or sexually engaging the mistress (“my loue thou vsest”). (The innuendo becomes explicit in Sonnet 42, where the mistress of the poet is seen to “abuse” him by allowing the friend to “approoue” her.) On the other hand the poet would find blame, if the friend were to deceive “this selfe,” the poet’s true self (his “better part” in Sonnet 39), by obstinately or lasciviously (“wilfull,” with its pun on ‘will’) experiencing (“taste”) what the friend’s true self would refuse – but which his lesser self would not.

The sestet addresses the youth as “gentle theefe,” identifying his ‘taking’ as theft; “gentle” implies ‘well-born’ as well as, ironically, ‘good,’ while the title recalls the ‘good thief’ who sought forgiveness claiming, “We are righteously [punished] for we receaue according to our deedes” (Luke 23.4; *BB*). The poet grants forgiveness even if the youth for himself (“[for] thee”) has stolen “all my pouerty,” either the little the poet had or, if identified as the mistress, she who has reduced him to poverty. Yet, he claims, his love knows (“loue knowes,” with a hint of love itself knows) that to “beare loues wrong” causes “greater grief” than having to bear “hates knowne iniury.” The concealed wrongs caused by love are more difficult to sustain than the unjustly inflicted but open damage caused by hate. The final epithet ascribed the youth is “Lasciuious grace,” an Horatian ambiguity (from “veneris”) found in the *Ars Poetica*, lines used in the preceding sonnet. The youth is elegance and richness (“grace”), but of a lustful kind hinting at luxury. (Cooper’s *Thesaurus* defines *lascivus* as one who is “wanton in behauiour” and who “doeth things foolishly and toyingly.”) The paradox of grace and lust is continued in the amplification, “in whom all il wel showes,” in whom every evil appears as good or in whom every evil is clearly evident. The youth is ultimately instructed to “Kill me with spights;” “spights,” now the youth’s and not “Fortunes dearest spight” (Sonnet 37.3), intend injuries, especially those associated with contumely, hence reproaches or scornings that afflict the impoverished (Hamlet’s “poore mans Contumelie”). Even if the youth were so to scorn the poet, he resolves that they must not be “foes”, neither to engage in mortal combat nor to seek to injure each other.

40.1. *Ham*. 3.1.71

Sonnet 41



41
THoſe pretty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am ſome-time abſent from thy heart,
Thy beautie,and thy yeares full well befits,
For ſtill temptation followes where thou art.
Gentle thou art,and therefore to be wonne,
Beautious thou art,therefore to be aſſailed.
And when a woman woes,what womans ſonne,
Will ſourely leaue her till he haue preuailed.
Aye me,but yet thou mighſt my ſeate forbeare,
And chide thy beauty,and thy ſtraying youth,
Who lead thee in their ryot euen there
Where thou art forſt to breake a two-fold truth:
Hers by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
Thine by thy beautie beeing falſe to me.

41
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When I am ſome-time abſent from thy heart,
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And chide thy beauty, and thy ſtraying youth,
Who lead thee in their ryot euen there
Where thou art forſt to break a two-fold truth:
  Hers by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
  Thine by thy beautie beeing falſe to me.

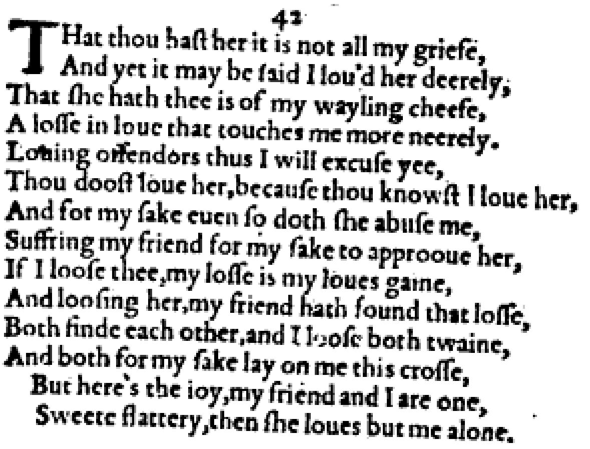
As foreshadowed in Sonnet 40, Sonnet 41 identifies the youth's love as that of a woman; its admission, "Gentle thou art," recalls Sonnet 40's epithet, "gentle theife." The pettiness of the wrongs he inflicts ("Those pretty wrongs") is undermined as the sonnet progresses: "pretty" wrongs are 'little' wrongs, an ironic usage, which to the youth may be little but which require allowance and forgiveness from the poet. They are also the wrongs of a libertine ("liberty" gives licence), which occur when the youth forgets the poet: "When I am some-time absent from thy heart." Yet, the poet concedes, they are the natural consequence of ("full well befits") and must be considered against the youth's "beautie" and "yeares." Third person singular verbs ("befits") for plural subjects ("wrongs") were common. Temptation continues to pursue him even till now ("still," the hunt metaphor will be extended later in "ryot") or 'silent' ("still") temptation stalks him wherever he is.

The second quatrain adapts a paradox which Shakespeare uses elsewhere: "She's beautifull; and therefore to be Wooed: / She is a Woman; therefore to be Wonne" (*IH6* 5.3.78-79), and, "Shee is a woman, therefore may be woo'd, / Shee is a woman, therfore may be wonne" (*Tit*. 2.1.83-84). The youth's "Gentle" nature, both 'kind' and 'well-born,' exists only "to be wonne," his beauty exists only "to be assailed;" "assailed," 'attacked or 'set upon,' introduces the petrarchist trope of a body under siege, but also plays on its root, '*ad* + *salire*,' to 'leap upon' or 'mount' (compare *TN* 1.3.60, "Accost, is front her, boord her, woe her, assayle her," where the sexual suggestion is strongly present). It is a woman's nature to woo ("woes") and what young man ("womans sonne") would, without proving victorious, depart from her bitterly ("sourely" hints at a hunting trail gone 'sour')?

The sestet begins with "Aye me," a hackneyed sigh of sonneteers meaning 'alas,' which introduces the poet's hope that the youth "might my seate forbeare." A "seate" is a place that is the property of someone, a chair or ancestral home. But, as in *Othello*, "I do suspect the lustie Moore / Hath leap'd into my Seate" (2.1.289; "leap'd," recalling the earlier "assailed"), it has an implied sexual sense. The poet wishes that the youth might forgo ("forbeare") the woman's "seate," the possession of the poet, or rebuke ("chide") his "beauty" and his youthful years, which have lead him astray ("straying youth") and into a dissolute life: "lead thee in their ryot" ("ryot," in the context of a hunt is the leading astray of the hounds through a false scent). [1] The result is a double falsity, where the youth is seen to "breake a two-fold truth" and which anticipates the mistress' double falsity in Sonnet 152, "thou art twice forsworne to me loue swearing," with its "bed-vow broake" and "two othes breach." Here, firstly, the "truth" ('troth' or 'totality') of the woman is broken through the tempting which arises from the youth's beauty. Secondly, the youth's truth is broken, since he has betrayed the poet because of his beauty. The twofold injury is taken up in Sonnet 42.

41.1. *OED* riot 3a.

Sonnet 42



42
THat thou haſt her it is not all my griefe,
And yet it may be ſaid I lou'd her deerely,
That ſhe hath thee is of my wayling cheefe,
A loſſe in loue that touches me more neerely.
Louing offendors thus I will excuſe yee,
Thou dooſt loue her,becauſe thou knowſt I loue her,
And for my ſake euen ſo doth ſhe abuſe me,
Suffring my friend for my ſake to approoue her,
If I looſe thee,my loſſe is my loues gaine,
And looſing her,my friend hath found that loſſe,
Both finde each other,and I looſe both twaine,
And both for my ſake lay on me this croſſe,
But here's the ioy,my friend and I are one,
Sweete flattery,then ſhe loues but me alone.

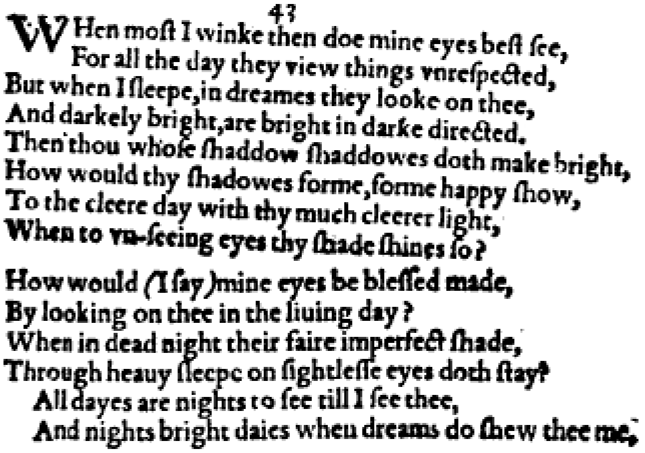
42
THat thou haſt her it is not all my griefe,
And yet it may be ſaid I lou’d her deerely
That ſhe hath thee is of my wayling cheefe,
A loſſe in loue that touches me more neerely.
Louing offendors thus I will excuſe yee,
Thou dooſt loue her, becauſe thou knowſt I loue her,
And for my ſake euen ſo doth ſhe abuſe me,
Suffring my friend for my ſake to approoue her,
If I looſe thee, my loſſe is my loues gaine,
And looſing her, my friend hath found that loſſe,
Both finde each other, and I looſe both twaine,
And both for my ſake lay on me this croſſe,
  But here’s the ioy, my friend and I are one,
  Sweete flattery, then ſhe loues but me alone.

Sonnet 42 opens with the poet accepting that the youth has possessed, sexually or otherwise, the poet’s mistress (“That thou hast her”). But, he claims, that is not the totality of his grief: although he had extended to her his dear love (“lou’d” is past tense), the larger factor in his grief (“of my wayling cheefe”) is that she has possessed the youth (“she hath thee”). (The relationship’s ongoing nature is confirmed by the two present tenses.) Her possessing the youth is for the poet a “losse in loue,” and that which affects him most intimately (“touches me more neerely”).

Yet the poet extends forgiveness (recalling Sonnet 40.9, “I doe forgiue thy robb’rie gentle theefe”). “Louing offenders,” is a hanging participle which can be attached to the poet, ‘I, loving offenders, will excuse you,’ or attached to the other two, ‘I will excuse you, loving offenders (offenders who sin through love).’ The poet will find excuses for both offenders: the youth for loving her, because he knows the poet loves her; her for loving the youth and thus permitting him to test or experience her (“approoue her”) for the poet’s sake, even if for his sake she is prepared (sexually) to betray or misuse him (“abuse”). The lines are marked by the too plaintive repetition of “for my sake.”

The sestet continues the hairsplitting: in losing the youth the poet’s loss would be her (“my loues”) gain. If the woman were to be lost to the poet, then the youth has discovered or “found that losse” (suggestively the ‘lost woman’). As a result, “Both finde each other” and the poet loses each separately (“I loose both twaine”). Both, the youth and the mistress, “lay on me this crosse” with its Christic echoes (see Sonnet 39). Throughout the paradoxes Shakespeare has played with the biblical adage common to the adjacent parables of the lost sheep, the silver piece, and the prodigal son, where what “was lost . . is founde.” In each parable the finding of what was lost is marked by joy; in the case of the lost sheep the shepherd, “when he hath founde it, he layeth it on his shoulders with ioy” (Luke 15.5; *BB*). Although both “lay on” the poet a cross, he construes it as a joy: “But here’s the ioy.” His joy lies in the fact that he and the youth are “one.” Since they are “one,” and since the woman loves the youth, then she also loves the poet: “she loues but me alone.” Any “Sweete flattery,” however, carries an element of the self-delusory, emphasizing the sonnet’s continuous sophistry.

Sonnet 43



43
WHen moſt I winke then doe mine eyes beſt ſee,
For all the day they view things vnreſpected,
But when I ſleepe,in dreames they looke on thee,
And darkely bright,are bright in darke directed.
Then thou whoſe ſhaddow ſhaddowes doth make bright,
How would thy ſhadowes forme,forme happy ſhow,
To the cleere day with thy much cleerer light,
When to vn-ſeeing eyes thy ſhade ſhines ſo?

How would (I ſay)mine eyes be bleſſed made,
By looking on thee in the liuing day?
When in dead night their faire imperfect ſhade,
Through heauy ſleepe on ſightleſſe eyes doth ſtay?
All dayes are nights to ſee till I ſee thee,
And nights bright daies when dreams do ſhew thee me,

43
WHen moſt I winke then doe mine eyes beſt ſee,
For all the day they view things vnreſpected,
But when I ſleepe, in dreames they looke on thee,
And darkely bright, are bright in darke directed.
Then thou whoſe ſhaddow ſhaddowes doth make bright,
How would thy ſhadowes forme, forme happy ſhow,
To the cleere day with thy much cleerer light,
When to vn-ſeeing eyes thy ſhade ſhines ſo?
How would (I ſay) mine eyes be bleſſed made,
By looking on thee in the liuing day?
When in dead night their faire imperfect ſhade, thy
Through heauy ſleepe on ſightleſſe eyes doth ſtay?
All dayes are nights to ſee till I ſee thee,
And nights bright daies when dreams do ſhew thee me,

Sonnet 43 develops the petrarchist conceit of the *chiaroscuro*, the precedent for which were Laura’s eyes that can in one moment make the night clear and the day obscure (“occhi, che ’n un punto / pò far chiara la notte, oscuro il giorno.” [1] Shakespeare brings to the convention a torturous working. In the opening line, “When most I winke then doe mine eyes best see,” the initial sense of “winke” is ‘to shut the eyes in a deep sleep,’ but, given the poet’s attempts in the previous sonnets to excuse the friend’s wrongs, the sense of ‘shut the eyes to faults’ is also present. It is when asleep that the poet’s “eyes best see,” either when his eyes see most clearly or when their object is the most valued. During the day (“For all the day”) his eyes “view things vnrespected,” either ‘without focussing on them’ (*re* + *spicere* = to look upon) or ‘without according them value.’ His eyes are at their most perceptive at night when they behold the youth in dreams. Then they are both "darkely bright," 'informed with light but in the dark' or 'made radiant by the dark' (the eyes of petrarchist mistresses are normally dark/bright) and "bright in darke directed," focussed brightly and clearly in the dark.

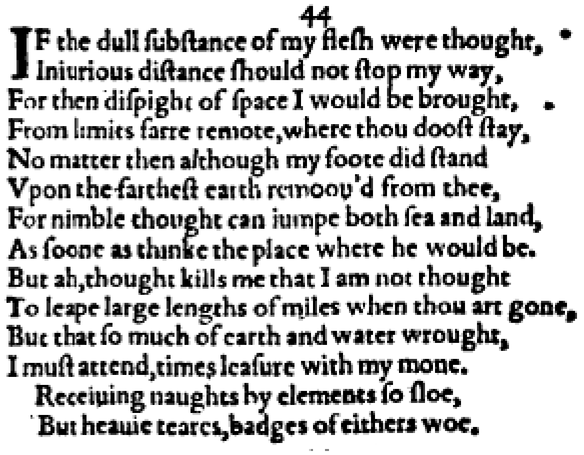
The youth's image in the phantasm or inner eye, his "shaddow," illumines all other shadows ("shaddowes doth make bright"). The poet poses the convoluted question: how would the youth's figure, which gives rise to the shadow ("thy shadowes forme"), create or present ("forme") a pleasing appearance ("happy show") to the clear day, when the youth's form is already brighter than the day ("thy much cleerer light") and would thus overshadow it, particularly since the youth's shadow shines so brightly to eyes that are closed at night ("vn-seeing eyes")?

The sestet expands the question, "How would (I say)"? How can the poet's eyes become "blessed" by looking on the youth face to face and not darkly ("in the liuing day"), since his bright but less fully formed shadow ("faire imperfect shade") enlightens "through heauy sleepe" eyes that cannot see ("sightlesse eyes")? The couplet makes the paradox explicit: until the youth becomes present again, days are nights ("All dayes are nights to see till I see thee"), and nights are bright days, when dreams show the youth to him ("And nights bright daies when dreams do shew thee me").

43.1. Petrarch 256.12-13.

43.2. See Spenser, *Amoretti* 87 and 88, for an extended treatment of the paradox between "darknesse of the night" and "clearest day" with its "shadowes vayne."

Sonnet 44



44
IF the dull ſubſtance of my fleſh were thought,
Iniurious diſtance ſhould not ſtop my way,
For then diſpight of ſpace I would be brought,
From limits farre remote,where thou dooſt ſtay,
No matter then although my foote did ſtand
Vpon the fartheſt earth remoou'd from thee,
For nimble thought can iumpe both ſea and land,
As ſoone as thinke the place where he would be.
But ah,thought kills me that I am not thought
To leape large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that ſo much of earth and water wrought,
I muſt attend,times leaſure with my mone.
Receiuing naughts by elements ſo ſloe,
But heauie teares,badges of eithers woe.

44
IF the dull ſubstance of my fleſh were thought,
Iniurious diſtance ſhould not ſtop my way,
For then diſpight of ſpace I would be brought,
From limits farre remote, where thou dooſt ſtay,
No matter then although my foote did ſtand
Vpon the fartheſt earth remoou'd from thee,
For nimble thought can iumpe both ſea and land,
As ſoone as thinke the place where he would be.
But ah, thought kills me that I am not thought
To leape large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that ſo much of earth and water wrought,
I muſt attend, times leaſure with my mone.
  Receiuing naughts by elements ſo ſloe,
  But heauie teares, badges of eithers woe.

Sonnets 44 and 45 constitute a pair, as do Sonnets 50 and 51, all four being concerned with travel and absence. Commentators point to the similarity in thought and vocabulary with a passage in *Henry V* (3.7.11-19), in which the Dauphin commends his horse which "is pure Ayre and Fire; and the dull Elements of Earth and Water neuer appeare in him, but only in patient stillnesse while his Rider mounts him: hee is indeede a Horse, and all other Iades you may call Beasts." To this should be added the passage about humours in *Julius Caesar*, 1.2. 260-7:

> Is *Brutus* sicke? And is it Physicall
> To walke vnbraced, and sucke vp the humours
> Of the danke Morning? What, is *Brutus* sicke?
> And will he steale out of his wholsome bed
> To dare the vile contagion of the Night?

> And tempt the Rhewmy, and vnpurged Ayre,
> To adde vnto his sicknesse.

More pertinent is the debt which Sonnets 44 and 45 owe to the Pythagorean section of the final book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* which treats of the elements. Shakespeare, as is customary, makes extensive use of Ovid's original with only passing reference to Golding's translation. Ovid in the passage describes the cyclic process of the four elements, earth, water, air and fire, as they are transmuted from one to the next and then changed back again in reverse order:

> The things, which we call elements ("elementa"), do not endure. Pay attention: I will teach you the changes they undergo. The eternal world contains four generative substances ("corpora"). Two of these, earth and water, are heavy and are carried downwards under their own weight. The other two, air and fire which is purer than air, lack gravity and with nought pressing them down ("nullo premente") strive for height. Although each is distant from the other in space ("spatio distent"), nevertheless everything is made from these four ("omnia fiunt ex ipsis") and everything sinks down into them ("cadunt in ipsa"). The earth when softened is absorbed into flowing waters; moisture ("umor"), made slight ("tenuatus"), departs ("abit") into winds and air; air also, purged of its weight ("pondere dempto"), at its slightest ("tenuissimus"), in the highest regions breaks out as fire. From there they return ("redeunt") back and the same order recurs ("retexitur"). For fire, condensed, changes into denser air, air into water, and the watery wave, made thick, is rendered into earth. [1]

In Sonnets 44 and 45 Shakespeare observes Ovid's elemental distinctions and models the to and fro of his thoughts and desires on the movement of the elements from earth to fire and their return, being prompted to associate the four elements with the four humours by the accepted pun on Ovid's "umor," in classical Latin 'moisture' or 'water,' but in medieval and Renaissance physiology, a 'humour,' a pun also evident *Julius Caesar*.

The "dull substance of my flesh," with which Sonnet 44 opens, is a substance that is not quick or enlivened and is reluctant to move: the flesh is identified later as "earth and water;" "dull" means 'weighed down' as earth and water are, but it was associated with travel and horses, a horse being 'dull' or 'resty,' if it was impervious to the spur and slow (compare the "dull bearer" of Sonnet 51, who in Sonnet 50 "Plods duly on," and whom the "bloody spurre cannot prouoke"). If the "the dull substance" of the poet's flesh were incorporeal "thought," then the "distance" of space that separates him from the friend

(Ovid's "spatio distent") and which is the source of his pain ("Iniurious"), could not prevent his passage back to the friend ("should not stop my way"). The poet would be able to transcend space ("dispight of space") and be transported ("brought") from the furtherest reaches or corners of the earth ("From limits farre remote") to dwell with the friend ("where thou doost stay"). Then it would not matter where he put down his foot, even as an antipode standing at the place most removed from the friend ("the farthest earth remoou'd from thee"), because "nimble thought can iumpe both sea and land," both heavier elements. The qualifier "nimble" suggests light-footed and, unlike a dull horse, agile in the "iumpe." (Florio has under 'agile,' "*easie, nimble, light.*") As soon as the poet thinks where the beloved is, his thought vaults the space between them.

At least that is the way it might be, but the flesh isn't thought: "But ah, thought kills me that I am not thought." The thought that destroys him is that he is not composed of thought and thus unable to "leape large lengths of miles," when separated from the beloved ("when thou art gone"). He is so composed of heavier elements ("so much of earth and water wrought"), that he must mournfully wait on ("attend . . with my mone") the pleasure or convenience of time ("times leasure") for the separation to be overcome. Earth and water are "elements so sloe," sluggish and unlike air and fire which have in Ovid's words, 'nought pressing them down.' They afford the poet no return ("Receiuing naughts") other than "heauie teares," of a heavy heart, the heavy element of water, and the heavy humour identified in Sonnet 45 as "melancholie" which is traditionally "dull." They are "badges of eithers woe," of the poet and the beloved. The image of tears as badges of noughts or nothings is apparent also in Donne's "A Valediction of weeping," where the lovers, separated by the sea, are a nothing, "So thou and I are nothing then, when on a divers shore." [2] Their "teares" are "emblemes" of that nothing.

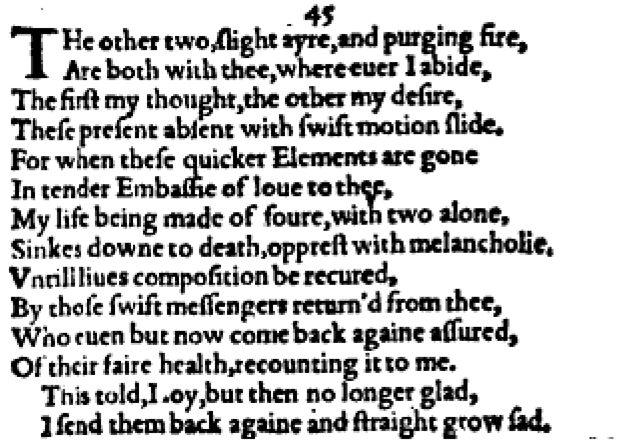
44.1. Ovid, *Met*. 15.237-51:
Haec quoque non perstant, quae nos elementa vocamus,
quasque vices peragant, animos adhibete: docebo.
quattuor aeternus genitalia corpora mundus
continet; ex illis duo sunt onerosa suoque
pondere in inferius, tellus atque unda, feruntur,
et totidem gravitate carent nulloque premente

alta petunt, aer atque aere purior ignis.
quae quamquam spatio distent, tamen omnia fiunt
ex ipsis et in ipsa cadunt: resolutaque tellus
in liquidas rarescit aquas, tenuatus in auras
aeraque umor abit, dempto quoque pondere rursus
in superos aer tenuissimus emicat ignes;
inde retro redeunt, idemque retexitur ordo.
ignis enim densum spissatus in aera transit,
hic in aquas, tellus glomerata cogitur unda.

Compare Golding 15.263-76:
This endlesse world conteynes therin I say
Fowre substances of which all things are gendred. Of theis fower
The Earth and Water for theyr masse and weyght are sunken lower.
The other cowple Aire and Fyre, the purer of the twayne,
Mount up, and nought can keepe them downe. And though there doo remayne
A space betweene eche one of them: yit every thing is made
Of them same fowre, and into them at length ageine doo fade.
The earth resolving leysurely dooth melt to water sheere.
The water fyned turnes to aire. The aire eeke purged cleere
From grossenesse, spyreth up aloft, and there becommeth fyre.
From thence in order contrary they backe ageine retyre.
Fyre thickening passeth into Aire, and Ayer wexing grosse,
Returnes to water: Water eeke congealing into drosse,
Becommeth earth.

44.2. Donne, *Poems* 228.

Sonnet 45



45
THe other two,ſlight ayre,and purging fire,
Are both with thee,where euer I abide,
The firſt my thought,the other my deſire,
Theſe preſent abſent with ſwift motion ſlide.
For when theſe quicker Elements are gone
In tender Embaſſie of loue to thee,
My life being made of foure,with two alone,
Sinkes downe to death,oppreſt with melancholie.
Vntill liues compoſition be recured,
By thoſe ſwift meſſengers return'd from thee,
Who euen but now come back againe aſſured,
Of their faire health,recounting it to me.
This told,I ioy,but then no longer glad,
I ſend them back againe and ſtraight grow ſad.

45
THe other two, ſlight ayre, and purging fire,
Are both with thee, where euer I abide,
The firſt my thought, the other my deſire,
Theſe preſent abſent with ſwift motion ſlide.
For when theſe quicker Elements are gone
In tender Embaſſie of loue to thee,
My life being made of foure, with two alone,
Sinkes downe to death, oppreſt with melancholie.
Vntill liues compoſition be recured,
By thoſe ſwift meſſengers return'd from thee,
Who euen but now come back againe aſſured,
Of their faire health, recounting it to me.
  This told, I ioy, but then no longer glad,
  I ſend them back againe and ſtraight grow ſad.

Sonnet 45 is the second of two sonnets; its movement from poet to beloved and back mimics the forward and return mutations of Ovid's four elements (see Sonnet 44 for more detail). It contains a further subtext, that of a letter sent, "In tender Embassie," with other epistolary echoes in, "This present," "composition," "messengers" and finally "assured" ('yours assured . .' was a common closing in 16th and 17th century letters). [1]

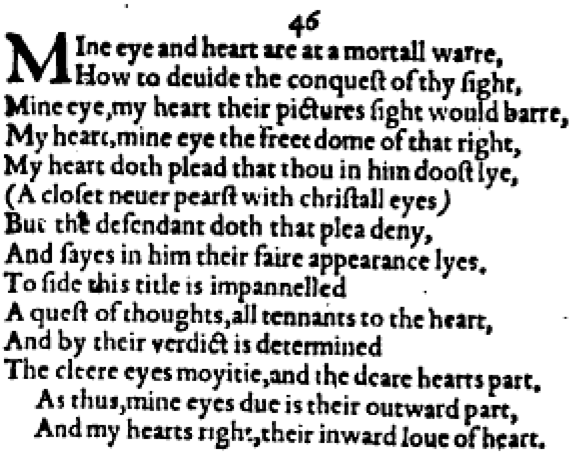
Shakespeare opens with the two lighter elements, "slight ayre" and "purging fire;" "slight" (Ovid's "tenuatus"), because air lacks weight; "purging" (Ovid's "dempto;" in Golding, "purged"), because fire, while aspiring, also refines. Wherever the poet finds himself ("where euer I abide"), his "thought," now identified with "ayre," and his "desire," now identified with "fire," dwell with the beloved. Both move easily and quickly (“with swift motion slide”) between absence and presence, back and forth in time and space (“present absent;” compare Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella*, 60.13, where Astrophil is so “dull” that his “presence absence, absence presence is”). There is also in, “These present,” an echo of ‘these writings at present in hand.’

When air and fire, these “quicker Elements,” more speedy and more vital, have departed (“are gone;” Ovid’s “abit”) and been sent in “tender Embassie,” as a delegation carrying a message of “loue” to the friend, then the poet’s life, normally composed of four elements (“being made of foure;” Ovid’s “fiunt ex ipsis”), is reduced to the duller and heavier two, earth and water. Then his life “sinkes downe to death” (Ovid’s “cadunt;” compare Golding, “Earth and Water for theyr masse and weyght are sunken lower”). He is “opprest” (Ovid’s “premente” or ‘pressing’) or weighed down with “melancholie,” one of the heavy humours, the other humours being phlegm, blood and choler. The line is made heavier by its extra syllable.

The heaviness will remain until the four elements/humours are reconstituted or made whole again (“recured;” Ovid’s “retexitur”) by the return of air and fire, the poet’s thought and desire. The epistolary is sustained in “composition.” On their return from the friend the “messengers” (air/thought and fire/desire) carry letters of good health that bring comfort and reassurance to the poet (“assured, / Of their faire health”). Hearing their report the poet finds “ioy.” But the cycle of the elements is inexorable: once again finding himself distant from the friend (“no longer glad”), he sends them (air and fire / thought and desire) back to the beloved only to fall immediately into a new despondency (“and straight grow sad”).

45.1. Compare Spenser’s pair of epistolary sonnets, *Amoretti* 58-59.

Sonnet 46


46
MIne eye and heart are at a mortall warre,
How to deuide the conqueſt of thy ſight,
Mine eye,my heart their pictures ſight would barre,
My heart,mine eye the freeedome of that right,
My heart doth plead that thou in him dooſt lye,
(A cloſet neuer pearſt with chriſtall eyes)
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And ſayes in him their faire appearance lyes.
To ſide this title is impannelled
A queſt of thoughts,all tennants to the heart,
And by their verdict is determined
The cleere eyes moyitie,and the deare hearts part.
As thus,mine eyes due is their outward part,
And my hearts right,their inward loue of heart.

46
MIne eye and heart are at a mortall warre,
How to deuide the conqueſt of thy ſight,
Mine eye, my heart their pictures ſight would barre,   thy
My heart, mine eye the freeedome of that right,   freedome
My heart doth plead that thou in him dooſt lye,
(A cloſet neuer pearſt with chriſtall eyes)
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And ſayes in him their faire appearance lyes.   thy
To ſide this title is impannelled
A queſt of thoughts, all tennants to the heart,
And by their verdict is determined
The cleere eyes moyitie, and the deare hearts part.
  As thus, mine eyes due is their outward part,   thy
  And my hearts right, their inward loue of heart.   thy

Sonnets 46 and 47, a pair, work the sonneteer's common conceit of the eyes and heart in conflict, leading often to a legal contention. [1] The pair's metronomic and chiastic characteristics suggest routine exercises, an impression supported by Sonnet 46's loose use of "their" and "thy" (possibly a compositor's misreading), and by the sloppy rhyme-scheme of lines 10-14 ("heart," "part," "part," "heart"), found nowhere else in the sequence.

Sonnet 46 opens hyperbolically with the poet's eyes and heart at "mortall warre," a war to the death. Their dispute concerns the division of spoils or "conquest," each laying claim to the "sight" of the beloved; "conquest" (echoed in "quest" later) begins the sonnet's subset of legal terms, being a possession obtained other than by inheritance. [2] The first claimant, the poet's "eye," would close off or prevent ("barre") the "heart" from seeing what the eye pictures. To "barre" a claim was to prevent it from advancing (cf. *Jn*. 2.1.192, "A Will, that barres the title"). As a counter-claim the heart denies the eye the right that conveys "freedome" to look on the youth. The heart argues that the sight of the beloved is contained within it: the heart is a hidden "closet," which not even the sharpest or purest eyes can pierce ("A closet neuer pearst with christall eyes"). Technically the pericardium was the heart's "chamber (*camera*) or closet" or even its "shoppe," in which, in Sonnet 24, paintings are wrought, an image developed also in Sonnet 47. [3] The 'closet of the heart' and 'crystal eyes' were hackneyed Petrarchan phrases. [4] The eye, the defendant in the case, denies the heart's, the plaintiff's, plea and claims that the youth's picture is contained within it ("in him their faire appearance lyes").

The sestet provides the verdict, opening, "To side this title." To "side" intends either to 'assign to one party or another' (the only instance cited in the *OED*), or aphetically to ''cide' or 'decide,' a form not used elsewhere by Shakespeare. To determine the judgement, a "quest" or 'jury' is "impannelled" or enrolled, a "quest" being a body of persons charged with rendering a verdict. But the "quest of thoughts" is a stacked jury, because the thoughts are in service to the heart ("tennants to the heart;" the word's etymon, *quaestus*, was associated with suborning for personal gain, *Thomas*' *Dictionary* defining it as, "*a measure to increase his private profite*"). [5] Since the impanelled thoughts lack the "freedom" denied above by the heart to the eye, the jury determines which share ("moyitie"), not necessarily an equal half, should be assigned to the "cleere eyes" and which share ("part") should be awarded to the "deare" heart. The couplet gives details of the decision: that which is due the poet's eyes is the outer form or "part;" that which is due the heart by right is the beloved's "inward loue of heart."

46.1. Compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 12.1-2,13-14, "One day I sought with her hart-thrilling eies, / to make a truce and termes to entertaine;" "So Ladie now to you I doo complaine, / against your eies that iustice I may gaine."

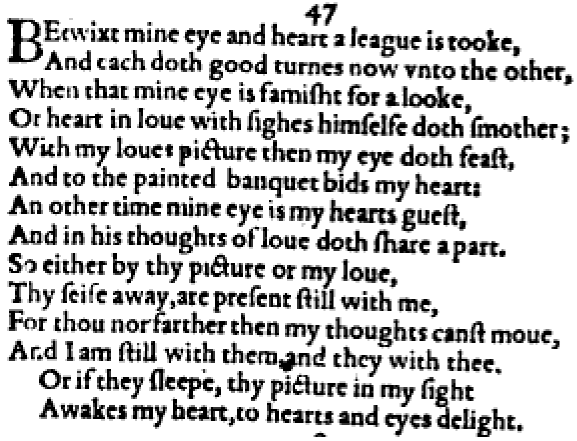
46.2. Compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 29.9, where the Lady, "will the conquest challeng."

46.3. de la Primaudaye, *Academie* (1594) 218 & 222.

46.4. Compare Spenser *Amoretti* 85.9 & 45.5, 11-12, “Deepe in the closet of my parts entyre,” and, “Within my hart . . the goodly ymage of your visnomy, / clearer then christall would therein appere.”

46.5. Thomas Thomas, *Thomae Thomasiii Dictionarium summa fide ac diligentia accuratissime emendatum* (Cambridge: John Legatt, 1594) quaestus.

Sonnet 47


47
BEtwixt mine eye and heart a league is tooke,
And each doth good turnes now vnto the other,
When that mine eye is famiſht for a looke,
Or heart in loue with ſighes himſelfe doth ſmother;
With my loues picture then my eye doth feaſt,
And to the painted banquet bids my heart:
An other time mine eye is my hearts gueſt,
And in his thoughts of loue doth ſhare a part.
So either by thy picture or my loue,
Thy ſeife away,are preſent ſtill with me,
For thou nor farther then my thoughts canſt moue,
And I am ſtill with them,and they with thee.
Or if they ſleepe, thy picture in my ſight
Awakes my heart,to hearts and eyes delight.

47
BEtwixt mine eye and heart a league is tooke,
And each doth good turnes now vnto the other,
When that mine eye is famiſht for a looke,
Or heart in loue with ſighes himſelfe doth ſmother;
With my loues picture then my eye doth feaſt,
And to the painted banquet bids my heart:
An other time mine eye is my hearts gueſt,
And in his thoughts of loue doth ſhare a part.
So either by thy picture or my loue,
Thy ſeife away, are preſent ſtill with me, selfe (*Bodmer*)
For thou nor farther then my thoughts canſt moue, noe
And I am ſtill with them, and they with thee.
Or if they ſleepe, thy picture in my ſight
Awakes my heart, to hearts and eyes delight.

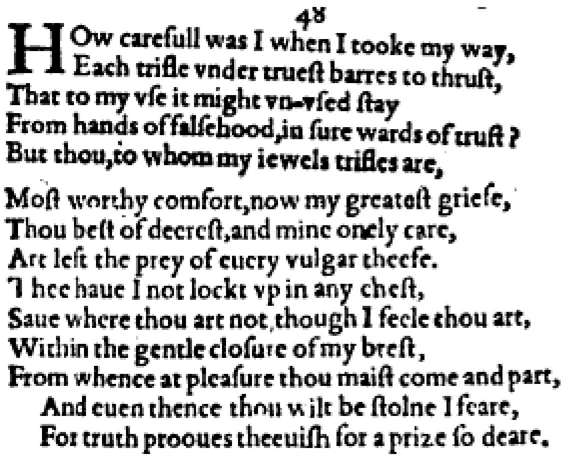
Sonnet 47 follows on from Sonnet 46’s decision in law to apportion the sight of the beloved to both eye and heart. Like Sonnet 24 it draws, though to a lesser degree, on the conceit of the heart as a *camera obscura*, in which paintings are wrought (see Sonnet 24 for further detail). Subsequent to Sonnet 46’s judgement a pact (“league”) has been struck between the contending parties. A “league” customarily ended hostilities, but was used too of a covenant, particularly a marriage covenant, in whose mutual grace partners do each other good turns. Culmann in his *Sententiae pueriles* renders, “Gratia gratiam parit,” (‘A grace begets a grace’) as the proverb, “One good turne deserues another.” [1] Once the league is entered into, the eye and heart do “good turnes now vnto the other” (compare Sonnet 24.9, “Now see what good-turnes eyes for eies haue done”). When the eye is starved of the beloved’s sight (“famisht for a looke”) or when the “heart in loue” suffocates itself ("smother") in tearful sighs, then the eye can look into the heart as into a *camera* or "closet" (Sonnet 46.6), which before the "league" could not be "pearst" by eyes, and "feast" on a picture of the beloved ("my loues picture"). The blinded heart is in turn invited ("bid") by the eye to feast on the "painted banquet," the representation of the youth which the eye has assumed. Conversely the poet's eye can in turn be a guest of the heart and, beholding the beloved's image there, can "share a part" in the heart's "thoughts of loue."

Either way, through the picture of the beloved contained in the eye or the thoughts of love in the heart, the beloved, though absent ("Thy selfe away"), is still present to the poet. (The *quarto* has "are" which Shakespeare on occasion uses for "art" before a consonant; the correct "selfe" is only found in the Bodmer copy.) He is distant from the poet only to the extent that he is distant from the poet's thoughts, which, Sonnets 44 and 45 have already shown, are like "slight air" and not subject to space. [2] The poet remains with his thoughts of love and they, free of place, dwell with the beloved ("And I am still with them and they with thee"). The couplet accommodates a last contingency, "Or if they sleepe:" if the heart's thoughts were to be subject to slumber, then the beloved's representation in the poet's eye would arouse ("Awakes") the heart to the "delight" of both heart and eyes.

47.1. Leonhard Culmann, *Sententiae Pueriles, Translated Grammatically: Leading the Learner, as by the hand, to construe right, parse, and make the same Latine; also to get both matter and phrase, most speedily and surely, without inconuenience* (London: H. L[ownes, 1612) 7.

47.2. Sonnet 44.7-8, "For nimble thought can iumpe both sea and land, / As soone as thinke the place where he would be."

Sonnet 48



48
HOw carefull was I when I tooke my way,
Each trifle vnder trueſt barres to thruſt,
That to my vſe it might vn-vſed ſtay
From hands of falſehood,in ſure wards of truſt?
But thou,to whom my iewels trifles are,
Moſt worthy comfort,now my greateſt griefe,
Thou beſt of deereſt,and mine onely care,
Art left the prey of euery vulgar theefe.
Thee haue I not lockt vp in any cheſt,
Saue where thou art not,though I feele thou art,
Within the gentle cloſure of my breſt,
From whence at pleaſure thou maiſt come and part,
And euen thence thou wilt be ſtolne I feare,
For truth prooues theeuiſh for a prize ſo deare.

48
HOw carefull was I when I tooke my way,
Each trifle vnder trueſt barres to thruſt,
That to my vſe it might vn-vſed ſtay
From hands of falſehood, in ſure wards of truſt?
But thou, to whom my iewels trifles are,
Moſt worthy comfort, now my greateſt griefe,
Thou beſt of deereſt, and mine onely care,
Art left the prey of euery vulgar theefe.
Thee haue I not lockt vp in any cheſt,
Saue where thou art not, though I feele thou art,
Within the gentle cloſure of my breſt,
From whence at pleaſure thou maiſt come and part,
  And euen thence thou wilt be ſtolne I feare,
  For truth prooues theeuiſh for a prize ſo deare.

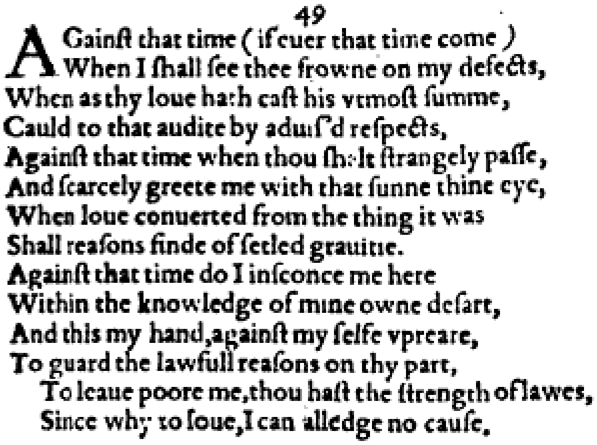
Sonnet 48 treats of absence and trust through the imagery of jewels and baubles; it shares its image of jewels safe under lock and key with Sonnet 52. There persists throughout an undercurrent of the sexual.

The poet's emphasis on his carefulness before departing is undermined immediately by the suggestion of haste and secrecy in the action of thrusting: "Each trifle vnder truest barres to thrust." A "trifle" is a trinket of little value, but its association through its etymon, *truffa,* which Florio translates as, "*a cozening, cheating, conicatching, pilfring,*" was well established; "truest barres" are either 'bars of utmost truth' (hence trust) or 'bars that are straight or truly fitting.' The poet's purpose in placing what is valuable to him under lock and key is his own ‘advantage’ (“to my vse”): that they might remain “vn-vsed” and not be subject to “hands of falsehood,” filching hands to which knickknacks are prey. Locked away, they will be kept in “sure wards of trust” (playing with the homonym, “truest” and “trust”). A “ward” is firstly that part of a key or lock (the cavities of the lock or solid parts of the key), which allow only one right key (compare *Luc*. 302-3, “The lockes . . Ech one by him inforst retires his ward”) or a “ward” is a small place or room under watch or care, where jewels were kept safe, a meaning made explicit in Sonnet 52.10.

The young man, compared with whom the poet’s “iewels” are trifles, is “left” behind, free and unguarded. He is the poet’s “Most worthy comfort,” even if he is “now my greatest griefe,” either through absence or because of the poet’s worries. The youth is “best of deerest,” both ‘most beloved’ and ‘most precious or costly’ as a jewel; he is the poet’s only “care” (the root of “carefull” from *carus* = dear), his only ‘concern’ as well as his only ‘beloved.’ But, given the poet’s absence, he is ready plunder (“prey”) for every common or low filcher (“euery vulgar theefe”).

The poet has not locked up the youth in “any chest,” any ‘strongbox or place where valuables are kept,’ but suggesting also “brest,” other than in the very place where the youth isn’t present, even though the poet feels he is: “Within the gentle closure of my brest.” A “closure” is an ‘enclosed space’ or ‘that which is confined by “barres;” both “closure” and “closet” were used of the pericardium or heart (compare Sonnet 46.6); “gentle” implies ‘tender’ as well as ‘noble’ (contrasting with “vulgar”). Because of the poet’s gentleness the youth is free to come and go (“come and part”) either as he likes or for the purposes of pleasure (“at pleasure”). The poet’s final preoccupation is that the beloved might be stolen even from the safety of his breast, because he is booty so valuable (“a prize so deare”) that even truth might be corrupted and prove “theeuish” (compare the adage in *Ven*. 724, “Rich prayes make true-men theeues”).

Sonnet 49


49
AGainſt that time (if euer that time come)
When I ſhall ſee thee frowne on my defects,
When as thy loue hath caſt his vtmoſt ſumme,
Cauld to that audite by aduiſ'd reſpects,
Againſt that time when thou ſhalt ſtrangely paſſe,
And ſcarcely greete me with that ſunne thine eye,
When loue conuerted from the thing it was
Shall reaſons finde of ſetled grauitie.
Againſt that time do I inſconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine owne deſart,
And this my hand,againſt my ſelfe vpreare,
To guard the lawfull reaſons on thy part,
To leaue poore me,thou haſt the ſtrength of lawes,
Since why to loue,I can alledge no cauſe.

49
AGainſt that time (if ever that time come)
When I ſhall ſee thee frowne on my defects,
When as thy loue hath caſt his vtmoſt ſumme,
Cauld to that audite by aduiſ'd reſpects,
Againſt that time when thou ſhalt ſtrangely paſſe,
And ſcarcely greete me with that ſunne thine eye,
When loue conuerted from the thing it was
Shall reaſons finde of ſetled grauitie.
Againſt that time do I inſconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine owne deſart,
And this my hand, againſt my ſelfe vpreare,
To guard the lawfull reaſons on thy part,
To leaue poore me, thou haſt the ſtrength of lawes,
Since why to loue, I can alledge no cauſe.

Sonnet 49 is a climacteric sonnet, forty nine being the first of the most perilous years in the human lifespan. Thomas Wright in *A Succinct Philosophicall declaration of the nature of Clymactericall yeeres, occasioned by the death of Queene Elizabeth* isolates the forty nine as the foremost:

> The most daungerous of all these passages or steps, are the forty nine, compounded vpon seuen time seauen. [1]

To these he adds sixty three, seventy (Elizabeth I was in her seventieth year when she died), and eighty one (see Introduction). Sonnet 49, like Sonnet 63 which opens "Against my loue," also looks to prepare for a time of reckoning, against which precautions should be taken ("Against that time"). Like Sonnet 126, a climacteric doubling 63, Sonnet 49 is built around the book-keeping motif of an audit ("audite"), on which both sides of a ledger must be balanced. The thrice-repeated, “Against that time,” as well as meaning ‘in preparation for that time’ also means ‘as a counter-balance against that moment.’ The poet, acting providently, prepares for a time, if it were to come, when he shall see the youth “frowne on my defects.” The “defects” are primarily physical blemishes, that accrue with time, as well as moral failings, and the numerical deficiencies discovered when accounts are inspected, anticipating “summe” and “audite.”

“When as” means ‘since at that time’ or ‘seeing that’ the youth’s affection “hath cast his vtmost summe.” To “cast” means ‘tally up’ or ‘calculate’ as might a book-keeper (‘to cast accounts’ or ‘to cast reckonings’ was normal phraseology and often involved counters); but “cast,’ with the earlier “frowne” in mind, also hints at darkened cast-down brows. The poet will take precautions against the youth’s love making a final reckoning (“vtmost summe;” compare Sonnet 4.8, “summe of summes”), having been “Cauld to that audite by aduis’d respects.” An “audite” (from *audire* = to hear) was a judicial hearing, where accounts were officially examined (orally after Matt. 25.19-30) and to which someone was summoned (“Cauld”). The summons are here issued by “aduis’d respects,” a phrase found in *Jn*. 4.2.213-4, where majesty “frowns / More upon humour than advis’d respect.” A “respect” is a ‘looking upon’ or a ‘countenancing:’ the inspecting of accounts has been authorized by the youth’s glancings upon the poet, his frowns, which are weighty and grave (“aduis’d”). Finally “vtmost” and “audite,” as in Sonnets 4 and 126, suggest the final “audit” or last judgement, when Christ will reward those who can say, “I was a stranger, and ye tooke me in vnto you” (Matt. 25.35; *GV*).

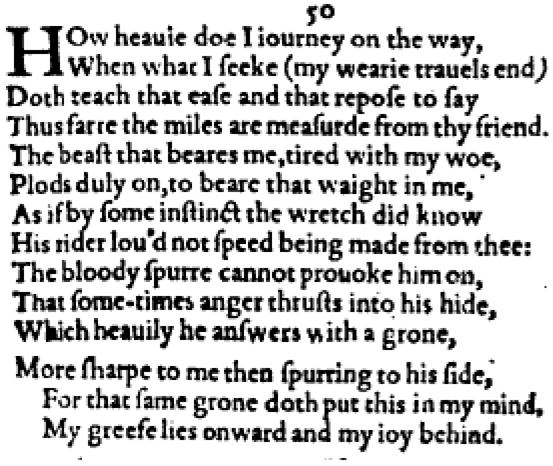
The second quatrain envisages a time when the youth will pass by the poet as a stranger (“strangely”). He will “scarcely,” perfunctorily or in a ‘stingy’ manner, greet the poet or exchange glances, “with that sunne thine eye.” At such a time love, now changed (to the other side of the ledger) or “conuerted from the thing it was,” will search out reasons for a proper balance (“setled grauitie”): “setled” because accounts (and scales) are ‘settled;’ “grauitie” is both the authority approving the accounts and the ‘weight’ which balances the scales, although love will be calculated or balanced against something that is not.

The sestet looks to a time when, as a precaution, the poet will "insconce me here," take refuge (a 'sconce' is a small fort) "Within the knowledge of mine owne desart." The poet is firm in the knowledge of his own merits, although he is prepared to raise his hand either to injure himself or give sworn evidence against himself ("this my hand, against my selfe vpreare") [2] to protect the interests of the beloved: "To guard the lawfull reasons on thy part." He will concede the youth the right ("the strength of lawes") to separate himself from the poet, now affectedly "poore" or unrequited, since he can offer no legal reason ("alledge no cause") why either party should love the other ("why to loue"). Their separation becomes explicit in the next line, Sonnet 50.1.

49.1. Wright, *Clymactericall* 3.

49.2. A favourite coinage of Spenser, see *F.Q.* 4.1.54.8 & 4.3.33.8.

Sonnet 50



50
HOw heauie doe I iourney on the way,
When what I ſeeke (my wearie trauels end)
Doth teach that eaſe and that repoſe to ſay
Thus farre the miles are meaſurde from thy friend.
The beaſt that beares me,tired with my woe,
Plods duly on,to beare that waight in me,
As if by ſome inſtinct the wretch did know
His rider lou'd not ſpeed being made from thee:
The bloody ſpurre cannot prouoke him on,
That ſome-times anger thruſts into his hide,
Which heauily he anſwers with a grone,
More ſharpe to me then ſpurring to his ſide,
For that ſame grone doth put this in my mind,
My greefe lies onward and my ioy behind.

50
HOw heauie doe I iourney on the way,
When what I ſeeke (my wearie trauels end)
Doth teach that eaſe and that repoſe to ſay
Thus farre the miles are meaſurde from thy friend.
The beaſt that beares me, tired with my woe,
Plods duly on, to beare that waight in me,
As if by ſome inſtinct the wretch did know
His rider lou’d not ſpeed being made from thee:
The bloody ſpurre cannot prouoke him on,
That ſome-times anger thruſts into his hide,
Which heauily he anſwers with a grone,
More ſharpe to me then ſpurring to his ſide,
For that ſame grone doth put this in my mind,
My greefe lies onward and my ioy behind.

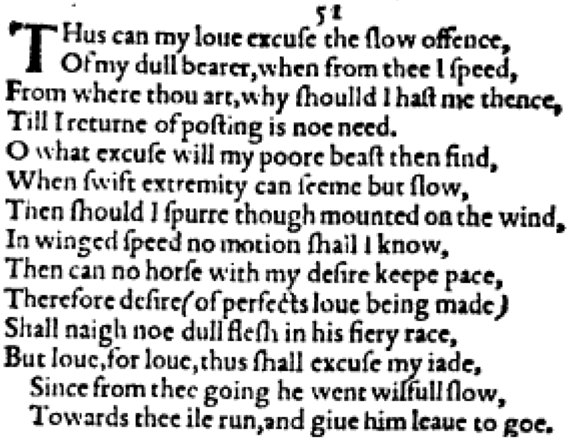
Sonnets 50 and 51 comprise a pair of sonnets, whose principal conceit is that of horsemanship. It was a common and often sexually suggestive exercise: Sidney in *Astrophil and Stella* 49 has Cupid astride Astrophil, astride his horse:

> I on my horse, and Loue on me doth trie
> Our horsmanship, while by strange worke I proue,
> A horsman to my horse, a horse to Loue;

The opening to Sonnet 50 has the poet travelling from the “friend,” with both heavy limbs and heavy heart (“heart”). The “end” of the “wearie” journey, both its purpose and its conclusion, lies ahead of him and will provide “ease,” that is ‘food’ or ‘relief’ (compare Matt. 11.25; *GV*: “Come vnto me all ye that are wearie . . and I will ease you”), and rest (“repose”). But relief and rest serve only to remind (“teach”) him how far distant he is from his friend (“Thus farre the miles are measurde from thy friend”).

The floating phrase, “tired with my woe,” can qualify either “beast” or “me;” “tired” can mean ‘wearied,’ but could aphetically be ‘attired with woe.’ The monotony of “Plods” is carried on by “duly,” either ‘dully’ or ‘without spirit,’ or, as printed, ‘dutifully.’ The nag carries the “waight,” the poet’s physical load or the burden of his heart, as if moved by “some instinct,” by something natively equine, that lets him “know” that the poet does not willingly hasten from his friend. The poet’s spur, though bloodied by frequent use, cannot urge it onward, a “dull” or resty horse being one unresponsive to the spur (”The bloody spurre cannot prouoke him on”). The spurring results from the poet’s fitful anger at being carried from the friend (“some-times anger thrusts into his hide”). The horse responds morosely (“heauily”) with a groan, which goads the poet more painfully (“sharply”) than his raking the horse. The couplet explains why: the horse’s groan reminds him that his travel’s end is one of “greefe,” because his “joy,” his friend, lies behind; “onward” and “behind” are both spatial and temporal referents.

Sonnet 51



51
THus can my loue excuſe the ſlow offence,
Ofmy dull bearer,when from thee I ſpeed,
From where thou art,why ſhoulld I haſt me thence,
Till I returne of poſting is noe need.
O what excuſe will my poore beaſt then find,
When ſwift extremity can ſeeme but ſlow,
Then ſhould I ſpurre though mounted on the wind,
In winged ſpeed no motion ſhall I know,
Then can no horſe with my deſire keepe pace,
Therefore deſire(of perfects loue being made)
Shall naigh noe dull fleſh in his fiery race,
But loue,for loue,thus ſhall excuſe my iade,
Since from thee going he went wilfull ſlow,
Towards thee ile run,and giue him leaue to goe.

51
THus can my loue excuſe the ſlow offence,
Of my dull bearer, when from thee I ſpeed,
From where thou art, why ſhoulld I haſt me thence,   ſhould
Till I returne of poſting is noe need.
O what excuſe will my poore beaſt then find,
When ſwift extremity can ſeeme but ſlow,
Then ſhould I ſpurre though mounted on the wind,
In winged ſpeed no motion ſhall I know,
Then can no horſe with my deſire keepe pace,
Therefore deſire (of perfects loue being made)   perfectſt
Shall naigh noe dull fleſh in his fiery race,
But loue, for loue, thus ſhall excuſe my iade,
  Since from thee going he went wilfull ſlow,
  Towards thee ile run, and giue him leaue to goe.

Sonnet 51 continues Sonnet 50's equine *topos;* its opening, "Thus," is either a reference to the prior sonnet's last line or a conjunction anticipating the explanation of lines 3-4. The "loue" of the first line is the poet's own love. It can excuse the horse's slowness ("slow offence") as it distances him from the friend, because the distance increases only slowly. Speed is not required on the outward leg ("Why should I hast me thence") and only on the return back to the beloved is haste (Posting") needed. The "dull bearer" recalls the "wretch," that "Plods duly" in Sonnet 50 and anticipates line 11's "dull flesh."

On the return leg there can be no excuse for plodding ("O what excuse will my poore beast then find"), when even "swift extremity," the fastest of speeds, will seem slow. Even if the poet were mounted on the wind, he would use his spurs ("Then should I spurre." (Sidney has Astrophil spurring and being spurred by Cupid, "while I spurre / My horse, he spurres with sharpe desires my hart.") [1] The poet will be unaware of movement when mounted on the wings of the wind ("winged speed"), because it is desire that is flying toward the friend.

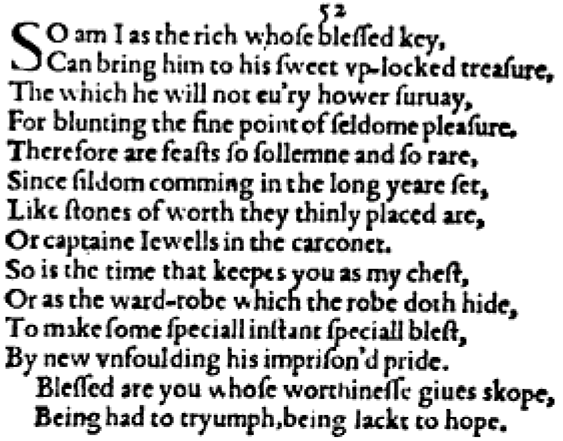
The sestet contains a textual crux at "naigh," which, it is generally argued, should read "waigh." [2] The *quarto*'s text, however, must stand, because of the colourful biblical use of "neigh" and "neighing" at Jeremiah 5.8, "In the desire of vncleanly lust they are become lyke the stoned horse, euery man neyeth at his neighbours wife," and 13.27 where Jeremiah rails against, "Thy adulteries, thy neyghinges, thy shamefull whoredome" (*BB*; the *GV* glosses "neiings:" "He compareth idolaters to horses inflamed after mares." Shakespeare uses the *locus* again in *Ven*. 265, "Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds," and 307, "He looks upon his love and neighs unto her").

During the poet's return, mounted on the wind, no "dull" horse can keep pace with his desire (identified with the element of "fire" in Sonnet 45). "Desire," comprised of the most perfect love ("perfectst"), shall like an "inflamed" horse "naigh" at "noe dull flesh," shall not, therefore, make overtures to or whinny after "dull," unquickened or unaroused, flesh, which would weigh or slow it down. His desire will continue in its "fiery race," in its 'inflamed course' and 'in its fierce breed.' The first "loue" of, "But loue, for loue, thus shall excuse my iade," is 'inflamed love' (even Cupid), who for the sake of "loue" will "excuse," 'dismiss' rather than 'forgive,' the horse as unnecessary. A 'jade,' customarily a carthorse but here a nag reluctant to be ridden, was used jocularly of a young woman or young man - the other *double entendres* in the sonnet, "spurre," "mount," "wilfull," means that the common play on 'horse' and 'whores' cannot be discounted, especially if Jeremiah's "whoredome" is remembered. The couplet has the horse being "wilfull," stubborn but purposeful, in its slow pace from the friend, and has the poet hastening ("run") toward the friend and, like "loue," dispensing of the horse's services ("giue him leaue to goe") because of the "winged speed" of his desire.

51.1. Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 49.10-11.

51.2. See Mac. P. Jackson, "How many horses has Sonnet 51? Textual and literary criticism in Shakespeare's Sonnets," *ELN* 27 (1990): 10-19.

Sonnet 52



52
SO am I as the rich whoſe bleſſed key,
Can bring him to his ſweet vp-locked treaſure,
The which he will not eu'ry hower ſuruay,
For blunting the fine point of ſeldome pleaſure.
Therefore are feaſts ſo ſollemne and ſo rare,
Since ſildom comming in the long yeare ſet,
Like ſtones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captaine Iewells in the carconet.
So is the time that keepes you as my cheſt,
Or as the ward-robe which the robe doth hide,
To make ſome ſpeciall inſtant ſpeciall bleſt,
By new vnfoulding his impriſon'd pride.
Bleſſed are you whoſe worthineſſe giues skope,
Being had to tryumph,being lackt to hope.

52
SO am I as the rich whoſe bleſſed key,
Can bring him to his ſweet vp-locked treaſure,
The which he will not eu'ry hower ſuruay,
For blunting the fine point of ſeldome pleaſure.
Therefore are feaſts ſo ſollemne and ſo rare,
Since ſildom comming in the long yeare ſet,
Like ſtones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captaine Iewells in the carconet.
So is the time that keepes you as my cheſt,
Or as the ward-robe which the robe doth hide,
To make ſome ſpeciall inſtant ſpeciall bleſt,
By new vnfoulding his impriſon'd pride.
  Bleſſed are you whoſe worthineſſe gives skope,
  Being had to tryumph, being lackt to hope.

The positioning of Sonnet 52 is appropriate. Its liturgical metaphor of "feasts so sollemne and so rare" refers to those infrequent feasts, which are classified as double or solemn feasts and which are distinguished from simple feasts. The *Book of Common Prayer,* in which the number of pre-reformation solemn feasts had been reduced, continued to record in its calendar as the first tier of solemn feasts, "All Sundayes in the yeare," of which there are 52, the dominical number.

Sonnet 52 takes up the lock and key conceit found in Sonnet 48, but to different purpose. Such a man is the poet ("So am I") that he can compare himself to a "rich" man, who can approach with "blessed key" his locked-up treasure, but who, unlike the miser, refuses to look upon it hourly ("suruay" from *super* + *videre* = to look upon), for, otherwise, the pleasure he might take would be blunted through familiarity. Shakespeare for the moral has drawn on a family of proverbs, for example, Culmann's, "More rare vse (sidenote: "A more seldom vse") doth commend pleasures," a rendering of "Voluptates commendat rarior usus." [1] The quatrain can also be read suggestively, the poet possessing the "key" to the youth's "sweet vp-locked treasure" which he will use only infrequently lest his "point" or 'prick' become blunted. (For the bawdy use of the 'prick' or 'point of addition' see Sonnet 20, where it is to be used for a woman's "treasure" and compare *Cym*. 2.2.41-2, "I haue pick'd the lock, and t'ane / The treasure of her Honour" with its allusion to the Song of Solomon's spouse as "a garden well locked" [4.12; *BB*].) The refusal of the rich man to look on his treasure "eu'ry hower" begins a series of temporal allusions: "point," "yeare," "time," "instant." The "fine point of seldome pleasure," is the sharp edge of infrequent pleasure or the very instant of pleasure as in 'the point of death.' The point of an instrument, whether a quill or stylus, also becomes blunt through use, as does a diamond when engraving, thus anticipating the coming image of jewels. [2]

Occasions of pleasure should be like solemn feasts that occur infrequently but regularly through the year (solemn is from *solus* = whole + *annus* = year): "sildom coming in the long year set." To "set" was a liturgical term meaning to appoint a feast to be observed, while an allusion to jewels that are "set" in a necklace is also present. The regularity but rarity of such feasts is illustrated by the metaphor of "stones of worth" that are "thinly placed" or of "captaine Iewells," principal or chief jewels (from *caput* = head or chief), that can be found in a "carconet," a necklace or headband with jewellery inset.

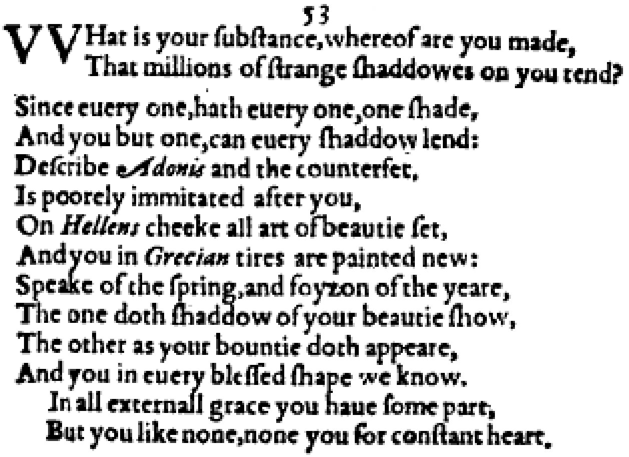
Such is the nature of the occasions ("So is the time"), rare but precious, that keeps the young man as a treasure in the poet's "chest," a coffer where valuables are kept and visited seldom, but with a hint of the poet's breast, in which the youth is kept. A "ward-robe" was a small space, often curtained off from a bedroom, where armour or valuables were stored and guarded ("ward" recalls the wards of a key in Sonnet 48; a wardrobe as a piece of furniture is of 18th century origin, although a "chest" in Shakespeare's day could be like a modern wardrobe). The poet sees the youth as a treasure hidden behind the robe which, being newly folded back ("new vnfoulding"), makes a special moment ("speciall instant") especially ("speciall," an adverb) blessed by revealing the splendour enclosed within it ("imprison'd pride").

The couplet recasts the earlier "blessed key" and "blest" in the image of the "Blessed" of the Beatitudes, "Blessed are ye . . ." The youth is blessed because his preciousness or his station in life ("worthinesse") allows him to be looked upon or desired ("giues skope") or he is blessed because his worthiness gives freedom ("skope"). The final line, "Being had to tryumph, being lackt to hope" is concise to the point of speculation: 'the scope to triumph when you are being possessed and the hope of being possessed when you are absent;' or "to tryumph" and "to hope" are datives of purpose: 'being possessed for the purpose of triumph, being absent for the purpose of hope.'

52.1. Culmann, *Sententiae* (1612) 19; cf. *Sententiae Pueriles pro primis Latinae Linguae tyronibus, ex diversis Scriptoribus collectae* (London: Eliz[abeth] P[urslowe], 1639) 17; cf. Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950) P417.

52.2. Compare Jer. 17.1 (*GV*), "written . . with the poynt of a diamonde, *and* grauen vpon the table of their heart."

Sonnet 53



53
VVHat is your ſubſtance,whereof are you made,
That millions of ſtrange ſhaddowes on you tend?
Since euery one,hath euery one,one ſhade,
And you but one,can euery ſhaddow lend:
Deſcribe *Adonis* and the counterfet,
Is poorely immitated after you,
On *Hellens* cheeke all art of beautie ſet,
And you in *Grecian* tires are painted new:
Speake of the ſpring,and foyzon of the yeare,
The one doth ſhaddow of your beautie ſhow,
The other as your bountie doth appeare,
And you in euery bleſſed ſhape we know.
In all externall grace you haue ſome part,
But you like none,none you for conſtant heart.

53
VVHat is your ſubstance, whereof are you made,
That millions of ſtrange ſhaddowes on you tend?
Since euery one, hath euery one, one ſhade,
And you but one, can euery ſhaddow lend:
Deſcribe *Adonis* and the counterfet,
Is poorely immitated after you,
On *Hellens* cheeke all art of beautie ſet,
And you in *Grecian* tires are painted new:
Speake of the ſpring, and foyzon of the yeare,
The one doth ſhaddow of your beautie ſhow,
The other as your bountie doth appeare,
And you in euery bleſſed ſhape we know.
  In all externall grace you haue ſome part,
  But you like none, none you for conſtant heart.

Sonnet 53 comes the closest of any of the first 126 sonnets to being a Platonic sonnet, although Shakespeare plays with the convention rather than accepts its principles. Fundamental to Platonism was the distinction between substance and shadow. Substance (οὐςία) was used generally of the true nature or essence of things; it was associated with ἰδέαι, the ideal forms or patterns of which all created things were the imperfect representations or shadows (ϵἰκών or ϵἴδωλον). The ideal forms were eternal and unchanging, while their material and sense-perceptible shadows were transient. The youth, like many sonneteers’ mistresses, is the universal ‘Idea’ or substance, in which all other beings in nature have their source and of which they are shadows or images. His beauty is thus timeless and his substance ever-constant, the sonnet’s conclusion.

The sonnet opens by enquirying of the youth’s substance, “whereof are you made,” such that “millions,” an indeterminately large number, of “strange shaddowes on you tend?” The shadows are “strange,” both ‘foreign,’ the word’s original meaning, and ‘distorted’ or ‘atypical:’ the shadow-figures on the wall of Plato’s cave in *The Republic* were famously “strange” (ἆτοπον ϵἰκόνα = strange shadows). [1] The shadows “tend” upon him as substance, ‘attend’ as they might in service, but also, as shadows do, lean and lead toward that which is their source. The reason for their tending is the general axiom that “euery one, hath euery one, one shade.” The repetition of “euery one” intensifies both ‘ones:’ ‘every one has, every one, one shadow’ or ‘every creature has one, and only one, shadow.’ Conversely the youth, while unique (“but one”), has a unique function: as “substance” he can make of every thing a shadow. All things are shadowy projections of his beauty.

As in Sonnet 20 the poet gives two examples, one male and one female. If one were to depict (“describe”) Adonis, beloved of Venus and archetype of male beauty, then the copy (“counterfet,” from *contra* + *facere* = made in contrast, without a necessary sense of forgery) would only be a pale imitation (“poorely immitated”) of the youth. In choosing Helen of Troy as his female exemplar of beauty Shakespeare is following Plato, who uses the distinction between the real and painted Helen to illustrate the difference between a substance and things less substantial, which

> are shadows and pictures of truth, painted in light and shade, so that each merely highlights the other . . They are strived for in the same way that Stesichorus says the shadow of Helen (τὸ τῆς ῾Ελένας ϵἴδωλον) was fought over at Troy, in ignorance of the truth. [2]

If one were to represent beauty as Helen’s face (“*Hellens* cheeke”) using every painterly or cosmetic skill (“art”), it would merely adumbrate again in “*Grecian* tires,” in Grecian dress (attire) or in Grecian headdress (tire), the beauty embodied in the youth.

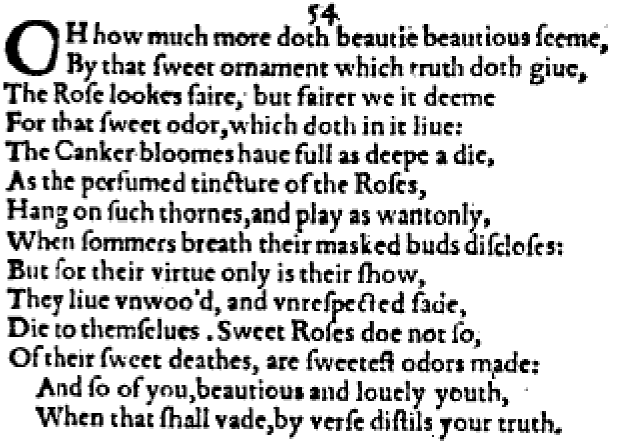
One might cite spring as an example of beauty, says the poet, yet its beauty shows forth as a mere “shaddow” of the youth’s; instance the year’s rich harvest (“foyson of the yeare”), yet its abundance (“bountie”) only manifests the generosity of its source, the youth. [3] Every shadow ("shape") is blessed, because within it can be discerned the ideal figure of the youth. In the external world of shadows and in the external display of manners ("In externall grace") the youth plays "some part," but in the realm of the ideal he is unique and his substance, his heart, is ever-constant: he is like no other and no other like him: "But you like none, none you for constant heart."

53.1. Plato, *The Republic* 7.515a.

53.2. Plato, *Republic* 9.586b-c.

53.3. Compare *Ant*. 5.2.86-7, "For his Bounty, / There was no winter in't. An *Anthony* [autumn?] it was, / That grew the more by reaping."

Sonnet 54



54
OH how much more doth beautie beautious ſeeme,
By that ſweet ornament which truth doth giue,
The Roſe lookes faire, but fairer we it deeme
For that ſweet odor,which doth in it liue:
The Canker bloomes haue full as deepe a die,
As the perfumed tincture of the Roſes,
Hang on ſuch thornes,and play as wantonly,
When ſommers breath their masked buds diſcloſes:
But for their virtue only is their ſhow,
They liue vnwoo'd, and vnreſpected fade,
Die to themſelues . Sweet Roſes doe not ſo,
Of their ſweet deathes, are ſweeteſt odors made:
And ſo of you,beautious and louely youth,
When that ſhall vade,by verſe diſtils your truth.

54
OH how much more doth beautie beautious ſeeme,
By that ſweet ornament which truth doth giue,
The Roſe lookes faire, but fairer we it deeme
For that ſweet odor, which doth in it liue:
The Canker bloomes haue full as deepe a die,
As the perfumed tincture of the Roſes,
Hang on ſuch thornes, and play as wantonly,
When ſommers breath their masked buds diſcloſes:
But for their virtue only is their ſhow,
They liue vnwoo'd, and vnreſpected fade,
Die to themſelues. Sweet Roſes doe not ſo,
Of their ſweet deathes, are ſweeteſt odors made:
  And ſo of you, beautious and louely youth,
  When that ſhall vade, by verse diſtils your truth.

Sonnet 54 uses the difference between the domestic and the wild rose to illustrate how the poet's verse might distil the young man's truth. The "Rose" that "lookes faire" and has a "sweet odor" is the redolent and sweet-smelling domestic rose. The identity of Shakespeare's "Canker bloomes" is less clear. The Canker Rose is the dog-rose, a rose of lesser quality and so common that Gerard declines to describe it, while Shakespeare rates it lowly in *Ado* 1.3.27-28, "I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rose in his grace." [1] It grows on hedgerows where its trailing branches can be seen swaying above them. It comes in two varieties and Shakespeare has either confused or conflated the two: the *rosa canina* has pale-red flowers, but is sweetly scented, unlike Shakespeare's canker bloom which has no "sweet odor." The other variety of dog-rose is the *rosa arvensis* or white dog-rose, which has no scent, but is totally white. It cannot then be said to have "full as deepe a die” as other roses. Both varieties are thorny with large hooks on the main stem and close to the flowers. The white rose has single flowers, “borne solitary;” the ovaries are masked in the calyx that change later into “hips,” which give the dog-rose its name, “Hep Tree,” according to Gerard, who also gives instructions on distilling rose water and its purpose, “The distilled water of Roses is good for the strengthening of the hart, and refreshing of the spirits.” [2] If Shakespeare has conflated the two kinds of dog-rose, the red and the white, then “masked” in line 8 can also be read as an aphetic ‘damasked,’ where red and white are mixed to yield a “pale red colour” as in the damask rose (see Sonnet 130.4, “I haue seene Roses damaskt, red and white”).

The sonnet opens with an axiom: beauty is made to appear (“seeme”) more beautiful by the “sweet ornament” or lustre that truth adds to it. The poet gives the example of the rose (“The Rose lookes faire”), which unlike Sonnet 109.14, “thou my Rose,” is here not identified as the youth. When the perfume that comes from within the rose is added to its appearance, its beauty is the more esteemed. “Canker bloomes” have the same deep colouring (“as deepe a die”) as the roses’ “perfumed tincture;” “perfumed” intends fragrant, but its etymology (*per* + *fumare* = through + to burn) points to the result of a distillation. Likewise “tincture” is a dye, even one used in cosmetics, but was used specifically in distilling where it is the colour transferred in the distillation; Gerard writes of rose-water, “though the Roses haue lost their colour, the water hath gotten the tincture thereof.” [3] The thorns of “Canker bloomes” are the equal of thorns on domestic roses and “play as wantonly,” as their stems dance above the hedgerows, moved by the breezes of summer (“sommers breath;” compare Sonnet 65.5, “summers hunny breath”), which cause them to open (“discloses”). To ‘disclose’ is the technical term for the opening of a bud, which “discloseth it selfe and spreadeth abrode,” [4] while “masked” buds are those still hidden in the calyx, with a hint of ‘damasked’ (compare *LLL* 5.2.295-97, “Faire Ladies maskt, are Roses in their bud: / Dismaskt, their damaske sweet commixture showne, / Are Angels vailing clouds, or Roses blowne”).

All plants have “vertues” or powers that affect human health, which Gerard and his fellow herbalists list in detail. The canker-rose, however, has little virtue and less than that of standard roses which means that it should "not [be] vsed in Physicke where the other may be had." [5] With no medicinal virtue its only worth is its appearance. It lives solitarily and singly ("vnwoo'd;" see above) and its display fades ("vnrespected fade"), either because it is not esteemed since it is common or because it is not noticed (*re* + *spicere* = to look on). In their singleness canker roses die alone ("Die to themselues"). By contrast "Sweet Roses doe not so." Roses that are sweet-smelling and valued do not die without issue, because "Of their sweet deathes, are sweetest odors made." The distilled solution of the rose continues on after its death as an essence or as rose-water, whose medicinal virtues were manifold. Rose leaves were "put .. to boyle in faire water," which yielded a "sirupe of Roses solutiue, which must be made of the infusion, in which a great number of the leaues of these fresh Roses are diuers and sundrie times steeped." [6]

Only in the couplet is the youth addressed. He is "beautious and louely," beautiful and loving like the true not the canker rose. His outward form will "vade," either 'fade' or 'disappear.' [7] The poet's creative effort ("verse") will distil the youth's essence or inner truth, so that it will outlast death, a conclusion different from those of Sonnets 5 and 6, where "flowers distil'd" may lose their "show," but "their substance still liues sweet," as the youth is urged to procreate or "make sweet some vial," some woman's womb.

54.1. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 1087-88, "The Brier Bush or Hep tree, is also called *Rosa Canina*, which is a plant so common and well knowne, that it were to small purpose to vse many words in the description thereof."

54.2. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 1082.

54.3. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 1083.

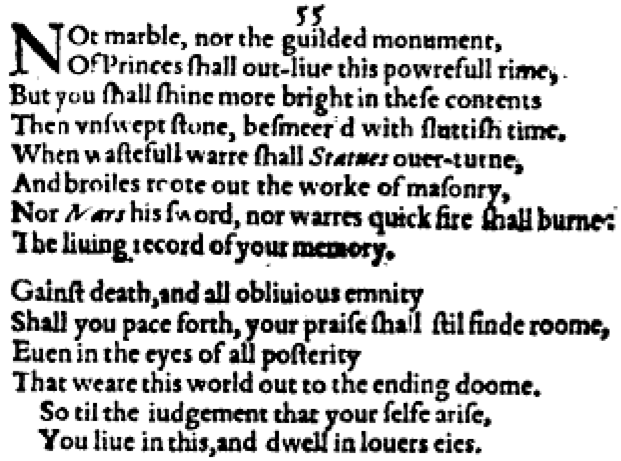
54.4. Conrad Heresbach, *Foure Bookes of Husbandry, collected by M. Conradus Heresbachius . . Newely Englished, and increased, by Barnabe Googe* (London: Richard Watkins, 1577) 66^{v}.

54.5. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 1089.

54.6. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 1082.

54.7. 'Vade' is from *vadere* = depart; see Ps. 109.23, "passe away like a vading shadowe" (*BB*), which Coverdale rendered as "like the shadow that departeth" (*BCP*).

Sonnet 55



55
NOt marble, nor the guilded monument,
Of Princes ſhall out-liue this powrefull rime,
But you ſhall ſhine more bright in theſe contents
Then vnſwept ſtone, beſmeer'd with ſluttiſh time.
When waſtefull warre ſhall *Statues* ouer-turne,
And broiles roote out the worke of maſonry,
Nor *Mars* his ſword, nor warres quick fire ſhall burne:
The liuing record of your memory.

Gainſt death,and all obliuious emnity
Shall you pace forth, your praiſe ſhall ſtil finde roome,
Euen in the eyes of all poſterity
That weare this world out to the ending doome.
So til the iudgement that your ſelfe ariſe,
You liue in this,and dwell in louers eies.

55
NOt marble, nor the guilded monument,
Of Princes ſhall out-liue this powrefull rime,
But you ſhall ſhine more bright in theſe contents
Then vnſwept ſtone, beſmeer'd with ſluttiſh time.
When waſtefull warre ſhall *Statues* ouer-turne,
And broiles roote out the worke of maſonry,
Nor *Mars* his ſword, nor warres quick fire ſhall burne:
The liuing record of your memory.
Gainſt death, and all obliuious emnity   enmity
Shall you pace forth, your praiſe ſhall ſtil finde roome,
Euen in the eyes of all poſterity
That weare this world out to the ending doome.
So til the iudgement that your ſelfe ariſe,
You liue in this, and dwell in louers eies.

Sonnet 55 is the first of the sonnets (Sonnets 55, 60 and 63-65) explicitly concerned with the fragility of poetry and beauty and their ability to withstand the ravages of time. Each draws on classical *loci*, Ovid and Horace in particular, sometimes directly, sometimes mediated through Golding's translation of the *Metamorphoses* (15.871-9) or the mottos Whitney attaches to his emblems, specifically, *Intestinae Simultates*, ("Ciuill Broyles" in Shakespeare's translation at *1H6* 1.1.53), *Pennae gloria perennis*, ('The everlasting glory of the pen') and *Scripta manent* ('Writings remain'). [1]

The Horatian passage is found in his *Odes*, 3.30.1-9:

> I have built a monument more enduring than bronze and higher than the pyramids' regal structure, that neither the biting rain nor the strong north wind can destroy, nor

> even the numberless passing of the years, nor the flight of ages. I shall not completely die and a large part of me will cheat the goddess of death. Even as the High Priest with the silent Vestal virgin ascends the Capitol, I will shine forth, by praise made new, for all posterity. [2]

The Ovidian passage comprises the final words to the *Metamorphoses*:

> I have now brought to completion a work which neither Jove's anger, nor fire, nor the sword, nor the maw of ages can destroy. When that day arrives, to which is due nothing but this body, let it bring to an end the uncertain time allotted to me. I will be carried with the everlasting better part of me above the high stars and my name will be a name incapable of destruction; and wherever Roman power shows itself to lands it has vanquished, I will be read in the mouths of men; and, if the prophecies of poets contain any truth, through all centuries I will live by fame. [3]

Golding's rendering of the piece was, in Shakespeare's day, the standard one,

> Now have I brought a woork to end which neither Joves feerce wrath,
> Nor swoord, nor fyre, or freating age with all the force it hath
> Are able to abolish quyght. Let comme that fatall howre
> Which (saving of this brittle flesh) hath over mee no powre,
> And at his pleasure make an end of myne uncerteyne tyme.
> Yit shall the better part of mee assured bee to clyme
> Aloft above the starrye skye. And all the world shall never
> Be able for to quench my name. For looke how farre so ever
> The Romane Empyre by the ryght of conquest shall extend,
> So farre shall all folke reade this woork. And tyme without all end
> (If Poets as by prophesie about the truth may ame)
> My lyfe shall everlastingly bee lengthened still by fame. [4]

Whitney's emblems provide another, filtered source of the *topos*. Pertinently associated with their mottos are the marginalia, in which Whitney provides classical precedents for the verses. In the case of *Scripta manent,* these cite Vergil, *On the Death of Maecenas*, 37-8, 'the writings of Homer are more powerful than marble monuments: they live by genius, all others are of death.' [5] The lines, in fact not by Vergil and hence not in modern editions, were thought in the 16th century to be by him and are contained in early editions. Maecenas was a friend of Augustus and patron of Vergil and Ovid. His name became a byword for both literary patronage and homosexual love. (The elegy describes him as "praecinctus," which the 16th century commentary glosses, 'it shows Maecenas to have been of a tender and effeminate body' ("Ostendit Mecaenatem molli, ac effeminato fuisse corpore") and condemns his evil acts ("molicie"). His effeminacy was recorded by Seneca who calls him 'discinctus" or effeminate, while Holland in his translation of

Suetonius’ *Caesars* says he was “wont in trimming and tricking up himselfe to be somewhat womannish.”) [6] The classical precedents, with which Whitney provides his mottos and which celebrate the power of writing to conquer time, give an intimate subtext to these sonnets of Shakespeare. The parallels between Whitney’s *Scripta manent* and Shakespeare’s working of the trope – verses to a young man and a love that will outlast time – allow them to accrue to themselves the same classical referents. They thus implicitly acknowledge the friend as a patron and celebrate their love prevailing against time after the manner of Vergil and Maecenas. [7]

Sonnet 55 opens with an inverted assertion: “Not . . nor;” “marble” was renowned from antiquity for its hardness and durability, while a “guilded monument” is one covered with a thin plating of gold, although “guilded” meaning ‘smeared,’ will be taken up later in “besmeer’d.” The opening echoes the verses to Whitney’s *Scripta manent*:

> Since that wee see, theise monumentes are gone:
> Nothinge at all, but time doth ouer reache,
> It eates the steele, and weares the marble stone:
> But writinges laste. (131.8-11)

The poet claims that his “powrefull rime” will “out-liue” attempts at monumental immortality, since the beloved will be blazoned in these “contents,” either this ‘rhyme’ or in this ‘book of rhymes.’ He will be preserved more brightly than in “vnswept stone” (an ‘in’ is required before “vnswept”), a stone that has not been attended to or cleansed, inset in a church floor as a memorial stone, which feet tread on and make dirty; “besmeer’d” suggests ‘besmirched,’ even ‘greasy,’ while “sluttish time” casts time as a greasy and dissolute servant or, since “besmeer’d” was used when cosmetic oils and unguents were excessively applied by a ‘slut’ (and by Seneca of Maecenas [“delibutus”]), time is cast in a whorish role. The “with” adds to the line’s complexity: ‘stone covered over with sluttish time (not gold)’ or ‘stone dirtied by sluttish time’ (compare *Cor*. 2.3.115, “The Dust on antique Time would lye vnswept”).

The second quatrain again echoes verses accompanying one of Whitney’s emblems, *Intestinae Simultates*:

> When ciuill sworde is drawn out of the sheathe,

> And bluddie broiles, at home are set a broache,
> Then furious Mars with sworde doth rage beneathe,
> And to the Toppe, deuowring flames incroache (7.1-4)

The sonnet's "wastefull warre" is both war that 'lays waste' and is 'full of waste,' in the process overturning the memorial statues of princes; "broiles" are civil wars (Whitney's "at home"), not wars with foreign powers. Such internal conflicts will "roote out the worke of masonry," monuments or edifices built by masons; "roote out" keeps its etymological sense of 'tear away the foundations of' (*e* + *radicare* = to root out) and was used of both monuments and kingdoms, as in Jeremiah's mandate to rail "against a kingdome to plucke it vp, and to roote it out and to destroy it" (18.7; *GV*).

"Nor *Mars* his sword, nor warres quick fire shall burne" is dense and zeugmatic, because a sword doesn't customarily burn. "*Mars* his sword" is an archaic genitive, 'the sword of Mars.' Both sword and fire are found in Whitney's motto. The "quick fire" of war intends both 'war that spreads quickly as fire' as well as 'the quickly spreading flames that mark war.' The sense of 'lively' in "quick," something not normally associated with war, anticipates the next line's "liuing record of your memory." The poet's "rime" will remain, a living document incorporating the friend's memory as it has in the past and will continue to do, as in Whitney's prayer for Sir Philip Sidney, "Wherefore, proceede I praye, vnto your lasting fame; / For writinges last when wee bee gonne, and doe preserue our name." [8]

The sestet begins with a further inversion which adds emphasis to the poet's voice with each of the first four syllables of the next line being equally weighted: "Sháll yóu páce fórth." He will stride out to battle death and all "obliuious enmity," either 'enmity that totally disregards,' 'enmity that forgets all,' or 'enmity that causes all to be forgotten;' this last is the normal meaning of 'enmity' as in Isaiah's words, "the enmyte of Iuda shalbe cleane rooted out" (11.13; *BB*). The praise that the poet ascribes to the young man ("your praise") will nevertheless continue to "finde roome, / Euen in the eyes of all posterity." The line is Shakespeare's rendering of Horace's line above, "usque ego postera crescam laude recens" ('I will shine forth, by praise made new, for all posterity').

The use of "roome" continues the earlier concern with "contents" and alludes to the *camera* or "roome," which is the space in the mind containing the image received from the eye's lens (see Sonnet 24). Praise of the youth will be remembered as a memory-image in the eyes of all readers ("posterity"), who will wear time out reading the poem until the judgement day that ends time ("ending doome"). The tables are thus turned on time's power to "weare out." [9] The couplet concludes: 'until the final day of judgement, which will summon the youth to rise again from the grave, he will live in "this" sonnet, because successive generations of readers will also be lovers and able to behold the youth embodied in the sonnet, since he will "dwell in louers eies." A like thought concludes Whitney's emblem, "Then fauour them that learne within their youthe: / But loue them beste, that learne, and write the truthe." [10]

55.1. Whitney 7, 196-7, 131.

55.2. Horace, *Odes* 3.30.1-9:
Exegi monumentum aere perennius
regalique situ pyramidum altius,
quod non imber edax, non Aquilo inpotens
possit diruere aut innumerabilis
annorum series et fuga temporum.
Non omnis moriar multaque pars mei
uitabit Libitinam; usque ego postera
crescam laude recens, dum Capitolium
scandet cum tacita uirgine pontifex.

55.3. Ovid, *Met*. 15.871-9:
Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis
nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.
cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi:
parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum,
quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,
siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam.

55.4. Golding 15. 983-95.

55.5. Vergil, *In Maecenatis obitu* 37-8, "Mormora Maeonii vincunt monumenta libelli: Vivuntur ingenio, caetera mortis erunt."

55.6. Seneca, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* 114.4; Suetonius, *The Historie of Tvvelve Cæsars Emperours of Rome: Written in Latine by C. Suetonius Tranquillus, and newly translated into English, by Philemon Holland* (London: Humphrey Lownes and G. Snowdon, 1606). Annotations (on Octavius Caesar Augustus) 18.

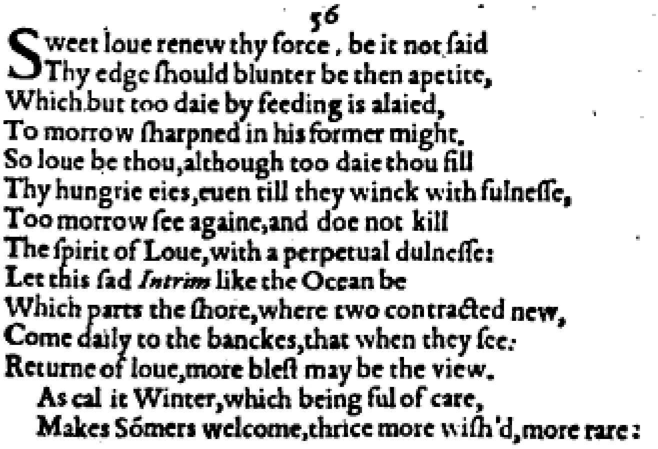
55.7. Acknowledging patrons as Maecenas was frequent in dedicatory epistles, epicedes and the public writing of Shakespeare's England. His name was especially invoked when addressing royalty and nobility, but was also common among literary hacks. In 1607 William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, and his brother are addressed as "bountifull MECAENATES" by Richard Carew in his "Epistle Dedicatorie" to his translation of Henri Estienne's *A World of Wonders* (Carew ¶3^r), while the Earl of Southampton, Henry Wriothesley, in a book of epitaphs on his death in 1624 is identified with Maecenas and poets are instructed to follow Vergil's example and "peruse / His Globe or Worth, and eke his Vertues braue / Like learned Maroes at Mecenas graue" (Jones 28). Francis Bacon is addressed as "Magnificentissimo literarum ac literatorum Maecaenati" in a sermon entitled, *The Arriereban*, and preached in 1610 by John Everard and John Florio is asked to act as a Maecenas to an Augustus ("as his *Mecenas* you would write to *Augustus*") at the outset of John Healey's translation of Epictetus (John Everard, *The Arriereban* (London: E[dward] G[riffin], 1618) A2^r; Healey, *Epictetus* (1610) A3^r).

55.8. Whitney, *Pennae gloria perennis* 196-97, 37-38.

55.9. See Whitney, *Scripta manent* 131.2, "Bee worne awaie, with tracte of stealinge time," & 10, "weares."

55.10. Whitney, *Scripta manent* 131.23-4.

Sonnet 56



56
Sweet loue renew thy force, be it not ſaid
Thy edge ſhould blunter be then apetite,
Which but too daie by feeding is alaied,
To morrow ſharpned in his former might.
So loue be thou,although too daie thou fill
Thy hungrie eies,euen till they winck with fulneſſe,
Too morrow ſee againe,and doe not kill
The ſpirit of Loue,with a perpetual dulneſſe:
Let this ſad *Intrim* like the Ocean be
Which parts the ſhore,where two contracted new,
Come daily to the banckes,that when they ſee:
Returne of loue,more bleſt may be the view.
As cal it Winter,which being ful of care,
Makes Sõmers welcome,thrice more wiſh'd,more rare:

56
Sweet loue renew thy force, be it not ſaid
Thy edge ſhould blunter be then apetite,
Which but too daie by feeding is alaied,
To morrow ſharpned in his former might.
So loue be thou, although too daie thou fill
Thy hungry eies, euen till they winck with fulneſſe,
Too morrow ſee againe, and doe not kill
The ſpirit of Loue, with a perpetual dulneſſe:
Let this ſad *Intrim* like the Ocean be
Which parts the ſhore, where two contracted new,
Come daily to the banckes, that when they ſee:
Returne of loue, more bleſt may be the view.
As cal it Winter, which being ful of care,
Makes Sõmers welcome, thrice more wiſh’d, more rare:

Sonnet 56 is the first of three sonnets that address “loue,” initially in the general vocative and subsequently as Cupid. Later the address to Cupid as love is overlaid and conflated with an address to the youth as love.

The sonnet’s opening invocation, “Sweet loue,” is directed not at a person (as in Sonnets 76.9 and 79.5) but at the poet’s own capacity for physical love. “Sweet loue” was a frequent appellation for Cupid, [1] while instructing desire to “renew thy force” was commmonplace (see Spenser’s *Amoretti* 14.1, “Retourne agayne my forces”). The poet contrasts the gap between the abatement and renewal of physical hunger with the interval between the satisfaction (with the sadness of its aftermath) and renewal of sexual hunger:” “loue” must not allow it to be claimed that, “Thy edge should blunter be then apetite.” To ‘blunt’ or ‘take the edge off something’ was proverbial, while to ‘sharpen’ the appetite or ‘make it keener’ is found elsewhere in the sequence (see Sonnet 118.1, “Like as to make our appetites more keene”). The interval between “too daie,” when physical hunger (“apetite”) is satisfied by being fed, and “To morrow,” when it is whetted (“sharpned”) to its former strength, should also obtain for desire (“So loue be thou” means ‘love be yourself like that’). Although love might today “fill thy hungry eyes” to the extent that drowsiness overwhelms them and they shut with satiety (“wink with fulness”), tomorrow they must be sharp-eyed again (playing with the common Latin pun, *acies* = ‘edge’ and ‘sharp-eyed’). “The spirit of loue” must not be killed by a “perpetuall dulnesse,” both a lack of edge or sharpness and a droopy melancholy. Iconically lechery was identified with gluttony through the eyes: Spenser has lechery with “whally eyes” and depicts Gluttony as, “with fatnesse swollen were his eyne” (*FQ* 4.24.3 & 4.21.4). In *Amoretti*, adapting Golding’s ascription to Narcissus of “greedie eyes,” he sees himself with “hungry eyes.” [2]

The sestet focusses on the passage between today’s spending and tomorrow’s reinvigorating, which it defines as “this sad *Intrim*.” An ‘interim’ is an intervening period of time, place or season, and was used specifically of a passage or journey which turns dullness into a lively spirit. The ‘interim of journey’ and the ‘interim of travail’ were stock expressions for separation of time and place when touring. Thomas Palmer in *An Essay of . . trauailes* argues that the ‘interim of journey’ overcomes dullness of spirit: youths, he states, should be

> well guided & instructed, in the interim of their iourny (for trauell to some bodies are as new birthes; that beare them, of dull mindes and sowre, good quicke and sweete conuersing spirits. [3]

Let this sad interstice, the poet argues, between expense and revitalizing, but now also between himself and the friend, not be a separation where an everlasting (“perpetual”) dullness kills the “spirit of Loue.” Rather let the distance between them be like the Ocean, a breach with two shores where two newly betrothed lovers or where two lovers recently contracted into each other’s eyes (“two contracted new”) come daily. [4] Because the return of love has been eagerly awaited, when it does occur, it will be treasured the more (“more blest may be the view”). The couplet picks up a pun on “*Intrim*,” meaning 'season,' and "sad *Intrim*," intending 'sad season' or winter. The "sad *Intrim*" might just as easily be called winter ("As cal it Winter") which, full of worry and discontent ("care"), makes the welcome that summer receives three times more desired or precious ("thrice more wish'd, more rare").

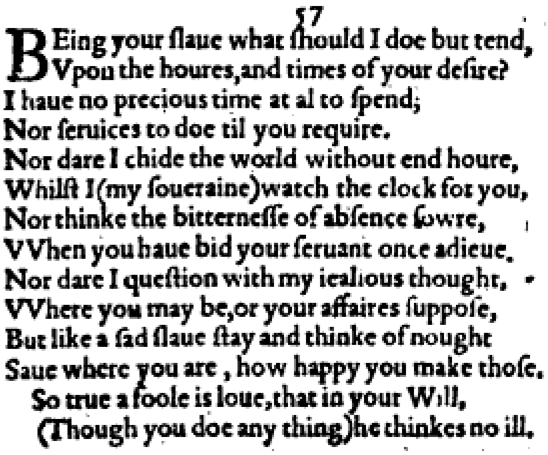
56.1. See Griffin, *Fidessa* 10.1 & 43.1.

56.2. Spenser, *Amoretti* 35.1-4; Golding 3.546.

56.3. Thomas Palmer, *An Essay of the Meanes how to make our Trauailes, into forraine Countries, the more profitable and honourable* (London: Humphrey Lownes 1606) 16.

56.4. Compare *TN* 1.1.9-11, where the "spirit of Loue" is called upon to be "quicke and fresh . . That notwithstanding thy capacitie / Receiueth as the Sea."

Sonnet 57


57
BEing your ſlaue what ſhould I doe but tend,
Vpon the houres,and times of your deſire?
I haue no precious time at al to ſpend;
Nor ſeruices to doe til you require.
Nor dare I chide the world without end houre,
Whilſt I(my ſoueraine)watch the clock for you,
Nor thinke the bitterneſſe of abſence ſowre,
VVhen you haue bid your ſeruant once adieue.
Nor dare I queſtion with my iealious thought,
VVhere you may be,or your affaires ſuppoſe,
But like a ſad ſlaue ſtay and thinke of nought
Saue where you are , how happy you make thoſe.
So true a foole is loue,that in your Will,
(Though you doe any thing)he thinkes no ill.

57
BEing your ſlaue what ſhould I doe but tend,
Vpon the houres, and times of your deſire?
I haue no precious time at al to ſpend;
Nor ſeruices to doe til you require.
Nor dare I chide the world without end houre,
Whilſt I (my ſoueraine) watch the clock for you,
Nor thinke the bitterneſſe of abſence ſowre,
VVhen you haue bid your ſeruant once adieue.
Nor dare I question with my iealious thought,
VVhere you may be, or your affaires ſuppoſe,
But like a ſad ſlaue ſtay and thinke of nought
Saue where you are, how happy you make thoſe.
So true a fool is loue, that in your Will,
(Though you doe any thing) he thinkes no ill.

Sonnet 57 conflates the poet's role as slave to Cupid with his role as a slave in service to the youth. The sonnet's addressee is only disclosed in the couplet, where three identities are found, the poet, the friend ("your"), and love as fool, "he." The identification of Cupid as slave and slave-master, who held lovers and sonneteers in thrall, was a long-standing one, originating in the *Ars Amatoria* 1-30, where Ovid, with the warrant of Venus, vows that he will tame Love, who is untamed ("Ille [Amor] quidem ferus est"), because he is of tender years and ripe to be ruled ("Sed puer est, aetas mollis, et apta regi"). Ovid, reversing roles with Cupid, will become his master or sovereign ("Ego sum praeceptor Amoris"). [1] The tradition of Cupid as master, even schoolmaster, is evident in English from Chaucer's "dan cupido" to Sidney's "O Doctor Cupid" and Shakespeare's

"Don *Cupid*," a title awarded him in *Love's Labour's Lost* together with the further ascription, "Th'annointed soueraigne of sighes and groanes." [2]

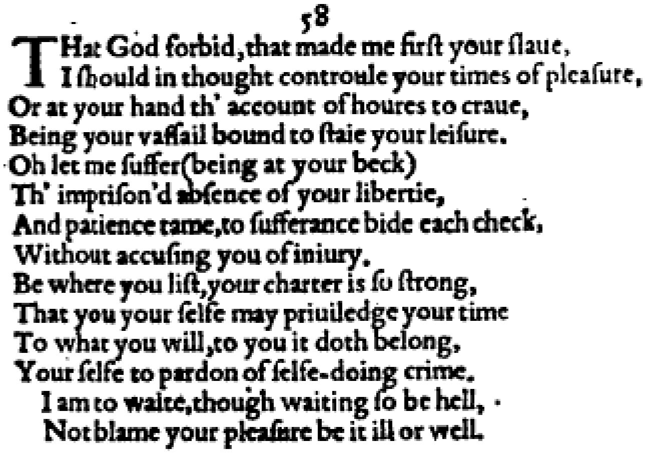
Given the poet's status ("Being your slaue"), he has no other purpose than to "tend, / Vpon the houres, and times of your desire." To 'tend upon' is to 'wait upon' as a slave does on a master, or, as here, 'wait for' the moments of time ("houres, and times"), when he will be summoned: that on which he waits, "your desire," is either the youth's whim or Cupid's lust. It is only upon being called ("til you require") that time becomes of value ("precious") and service active. While waiting the poet dares not scold ("chide") the "world without end houre." The qualifier echoes the formula, "world without end," found at the end of the Lesser Doxology, the *Gloria Patri,* and a translation of "in saecula saeculorum." It was used everywhere in the liturgical services and here intends the end of an hour that seems never to arrive (compare *LLL* 5.2.775-77, where "the latest minute of the houre" is a "time . . too short, To make a world-without-end bargaine"). Time passes interminably as he watches the clock for his "soueraine" Lord, either his beloved or Cupid as an "annointed soueraigne." Neither does the poet account the master's absence "sour" (the sullen or sour demeanour of servants was proverbial), when he bids his servant, the poet, farewell ("adieu," with a play on '[I commend you] to God').

Though absent from the master, the poet "dare" not be tempted by feelings of jealousy or let the unknown prey on is mind: he will not question where the master might be nor speculate in what "affaires" he might be engaged. He will fill his role as a melancholic ("sad slaue") remaining at his station ("stay") and thinking of nothing other than where the master might be and how his presence there makes those about him "happy." Either Cupid ("he") or the poet himself as "sad slaue" ("he") is such a foole ("So true a foole") that he can find no malice ("thinkes no ill") in the beloved's "Will," despite anything that the beloved might do ("Though you doe any thing"). Although "Will" is capitalized, its first meaning is desire and its second, in combination with "nought," sexually charged lust. Any reference to a William, either Shakespeare or the youth, though attractive, seems unlikely.

57.1. Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.10 & 17.

57.2. Chaucer, *The House of Fame* 1.137; Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 61.12; *LLL* 3.1.170-72; cf. Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (London: William Ponsonby, 1596) 3.11.46.5 & 7.7.46.7, “*Dan Cupid*.”

Sonnet 58


58
THat God forbid,that made me firſt your ſlaue,
I ſhould in thought controule your times of pleaſure,
Or at your hand th' account of houres to craue,
Being your vaſſail bound to ſtaie your leiſure.
Oh let me ſuffer(being at your beck)
Th' impriſon'd abſence of your libertie,
And patience tame,to ſufferance bide each check,
Without accuſing you of iniury.
Be where you liſt,your charter is ſo ſtrong,
That you your ſelfe may priuiledge your time
To what you will,to you it doth belong,
Your ſelfe to pardon of ſelfe-doing crime.
I am to waite,though waiting ſo be hell,
Not blame your pleaſure be it ill or well.

58
THat God forbid, that made me firſt your ſlaue,
I ſhould in thought controule your times of pleaſure,
Or at your hand th’ account of houres to craue,
Being your vaſſail, bound to ſtaie your leiſure.
Oh let me ſuffer (being at your beck)
Th’ impriſon’d abſence of your libertie,
And patience tame, to ſufferance bide each check,
Without accuſing you of iniury.
Be where you liſt, your charter is ſo ſtrong,
That you your ſelfe may priuiledge your time
To what you will, to you it doth belong,
Your ſelfe to pardon of ſelfe-doing crime.
I am to waite, though waiting ſo be hell,
Not blame your pleaſure be it ill or well.

The conflation in Sonnet 58 (as in Sonnet 57) of the poem’s addressees, the youth and Cupid, gives it cohesion. Its opening, “That God forbid,” initially looks like an exclamation and can be read as such: ‘That, God forbid, that [which] made me first your slave.’ The more plausible reading, however, is that “God” is Cupid: ‘let that God [Cupid], that made me first your slave, forbid that I . . ’ That which the poet is forbidden, even in thought, is to regulate (“controule” with a hint of its accounting etymon, ‘counter-roll’ or double-register) the “times of pleasure” either of the youth or Cupid (whose offspring of Psyche was ‘Voluptas’ or ‘Pleasure’). Nor must the poet seek (“craue,” but suggesting the ‘craven’ role of a slave) an account of times spent (“at your hand th’account of houres”); “at your hand” firstly intends ‘close by you’ or ‘in attendance upon you;’ secondly it means ‘from your hand’ (as in ‘to receive at the Lord’s hand’);

thirdly 'at hand' was an accounting term meaning 'at this price,' hence 'at your cost.' The prohibitions occur, because as a slave or lowly servant ("vassail") he is indentured or obliged ("bound") to wait upon the lord's desire ("to staie your leisure;" compare the invocation to Cupid in Sonnet 26.1-2, "Lord of my loue, to whome in vassalage . . my dutie strongly knit").

Since he is at his lord's "beck" (a 'beckoning' with the "hand," although a "beck" was also a servant's bow or act of obeisance), he prays that he might bear ("suffer") the separation ("absence") that the master's freedom ("libertie") causes to be felt as an imprisonment ("imprison'd"); "libertie" also implies sexual licence as in *As You Like It* below. The punctuation of line 7 is problematic even if its meaning is clear: the poet asks that his forbearance ("patience"), now 'trained' or 'reduced' ("tame," compare Sonnet 57 where Cupid is "ferus" or 'untamed') to submissiveness ("sufferance"), await or find acceptable ("bide") each 'slight' or 'injury' ("check") without attributing fault ("iniury") to his lord. While servants customarily received checks or were rebuked, the most famous checks were that given by the master to the idle servant in the parable of the talents at Matthew 25.24 [1] and that suffered by Christ, who was without fault or "iniury," from those crucified with him who "checked hym also" (Mark 15.32; *BB*).

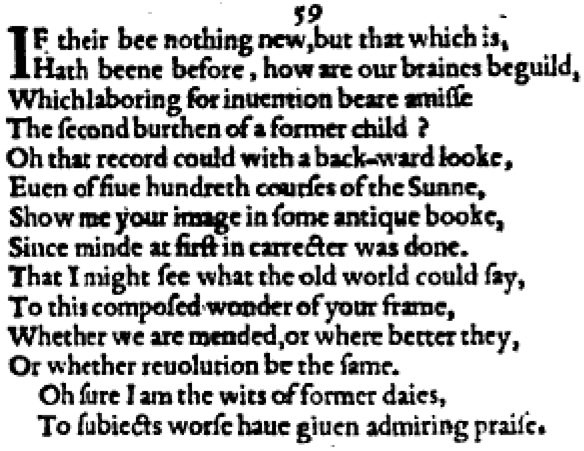
"Be where you list" is a shift of focus: 'be wherever you please.' The instruction echoes Jacques' requirement in *As You Like It* that, "I must haue liberty / Withall, as large a Charter as the winde, / To blow on whom I please, for so fooles haue" (2.7.47-9). A "charter" is a legal document assuring personal rights and privileges, hence the lord possesses a "charter" powerful enough to "priuiledge" his time or to take any advantage he desires ("To what you will"). It belongs to him to exonerate himself of any crime he might commit: his "charter" has become a 'charter of pardon,' a document allowing him to excuse himself ('to have one's charter' meant to obtain pardon).

The rationale of the poet's existence is to wait or serve ("I am to waite"). But serving is now a hell ("though waiting so be hell"), ironically similar to the hell where Lucifer was cast for having proclaimed, "Non serviam," 'I will not serve.' It remains the poet's purpose not to judge the lord's pleasure, whether good or evil ("ill or well"). The couplet works a traditional trope, compare Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 86.8-14:

> O ease your hand, treat not so hard your slaue,
> In Iustice, paines come not till faults do call:
> Of if I needs (sweet Iudge) must torments haue,
> Vse something else to chasten mee withall,
> Than those blest eyes where all my hopes do dwell,
> No doome shall make ones Heauen become his Hell.

58.1. Thomas Elyot, *The Image of Governance Compiled of the Actes and Sentences notable of the moste noble Emperour Alexander Seuerus, late translated out of Greke into Englyshe, by syr Thomas Eliot knight, in the fauour of Nobylitie* (London: Thomas Berthelette, 1541) A3^r, "the terrible checke that the good maister in the gospell gaue to his ydel seruaunte, for hidinge his money in a clowte, and not disposinge it for his maisters aduantage."

Sonnet 59



59
IF their bee nothing new,but that which is,
Hath beene before , how are our braines beguild,
Whichlaboring for inuention beare amiſſe
The ſecond burthen of a former child ?
Oh that record could with a back-ward looke,
Euen of fiue hundreth courſes of the Sunne,
Show me your image in ſome antique booke,
Since minde at firſt in carrecter was done.
That I might ſee what the old world could ſay,
To this compoſed wonder of your frame,
Whether we are mended,or where better they,
Or whether reuolution be the ſame.
Oh ſure I am the wits of former daies,
To ſubiects worſe haue giuen admiring praiſe.

59
IF their bee nothing new, but that which is,
Hath beene before, how are our braines beguild,
Which laboring for inuention beare amiſſe
The ſecond burthen of a former child?
Oh that record could with a back-ward looke,
Euen of fiue hundreth courſes of the Sunne,
Show me your image in ſome antique booke,
Since minde at firſt in carrecter was done.
That I might ſee what the old world could ſay,
To this compoſed wonder of your frame,
Whether we are mended, or where better they,
Or whether reuolution be the ſame.
  Oh ſure I am the wits of former daies,
  To ſubiects worſe haue giuen admiring praiſe.

Sonnets built on reckonings of time were common in sequences and their placement often deliberate: Spenser's *Amoretti* 60, for example, cites "Mars [that] in three score yeares doth run his spheare" as an example of a planet's revolution or "the sundry yeare: / in which her circles voyage is fulfild." Sonnet 59 works the conceit of ages rising and dying, an idea awarded to Pythagoras by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* in a section preceded by his account of the phoenix' lifespan of "full fyve hundred yeeres" ("quinque suae complevit saecula vitae"). [1] Five hundred years was thought the limit of an age or kingdom, after which it survived only in records. William Covell in *Polimanteia,* for example, gives numerous examples of 500 year spans to support the argument that

> The histories of all times doe teach vs . . that the most parte of the greatest kingdomes, haue not endured *fiue hundred yeares*. (Sidenote: 500. *yeares the common period of a Kingdome in former time*.) Many haue light short of that full

> time: none or very few haue passed it, but haue fallen either at that period, or not long before it. [2]

Sonnet 59's opening adage, "If their bee nothing new, but that which is, / Hath beene before," however, echoes most strongly the idea's *locus biblicus*:

> All things are full of labour . . (Sidenote: He speaketh of times and seasons, and things done in them, which as they haue bene in times past, so come they to passe againe.) What is it that hath bene? that that shalbe: and what is it that hath bene done? that which shalbe done: and there *is* no newe thing vnder the sunne. Is there any thing, whereof one may say, Beholde this, it is newe? it hath bene already in the olde time that was before vs. There is no memorie of the former, neither shall there be a remembrance of the latter that shalbe, with them that shall come after. (Eccles. 1.8-11; *GV*)

'There is nothing new under the sun' became an Elizabethan proverb.

If, the poet asks, nothing new ever exists and if everything that exists has been before ("but" acts as an intensifier introducing an expansion), then our brains have been cheated ("beguild"), because they strive ("labour," echoing Ecclesiasties, "all things are full of labour") to discover new things ("inuention," but hinting at 'invention' as the first part of rhetoric), only to find that they "beare amisse," they mistakenly bring to birth a conception they think newly borne, which in fact has already been born ("the second burthen of a former child"); "burthen" intends 'burden,' a *secunda gravida*, but puns on 'birthin'' and sustains the conceit of poetic childbirth, "labouring," "beare," "child."

If there were nothing new, then a more recent "record" or 'writing out' could look backwards over "fiue hundredth courses of the Sunne." "Euen" suggests the largest of spans, while "courses" are not five hundred daily spans but five hundred yearly ones, the accepted length of an age (see above). Such a retrospective exercise would uncover the friend's image in an "antique book" at a time close to when the remembrance of things was first written down in characters ("in carrecter").

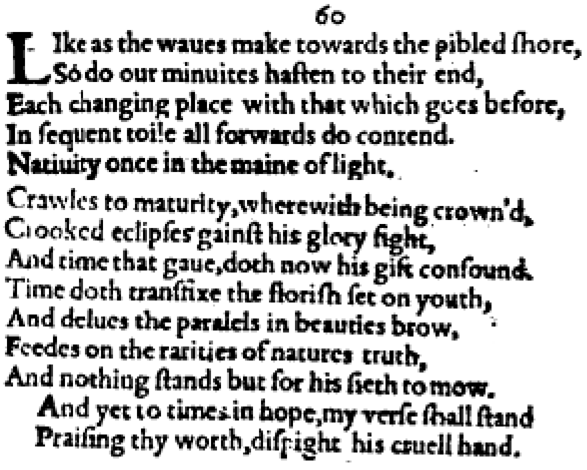
The leaping of time would enable the poet to see what the old world would write in response to the "composed wonder of your frame;" "frame" is the youth's shape or form, while "composed" intends 'well-proportioned,' but hints at poetic composition (compare

TGV 3.2.69, "walefull Sonnets, whose composed Rimes"). He could determine whether the modern age has improved ("Whether we are mended") or whether ("where" = whe'er) the older age was better, or whether the "reuolution be the same," whether the cycle returning to its same position produces the same result. A "reuolution" is the time taken by the heavenly bodies to complete a full orbit or "course." Whatever he might uncover, he remains certain ("Oh sure I am") that poets of earlier times ("former daies") have written poems of admiration (contrasting with the "wonder" of the poet's subject) to lesser "subiects" discovered by "inuention."

59.1. Golding 15.436 & 463ff; Ovid, *Met*. 15.395 & 431-48.

59.2. William Covell, *Polimanteia, or, The meanes lawfull and vnlawfull, to Iudge of the Fall of a Common-wealth, Against the friuolous and foolish coniectures of this age* (London: John Legatt, 1595) D3^r.

Sonnet 60



60
LIke as the waues make towards the pibled ſhore,
Só do our minuites haſten to their end,
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In ſequent toile all forwards do contend.
Natiuity once in the maine of light,
Crawles to maturity,wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipſes gainſt his glory fight,
And time that gaue,doth now his gift confound.
Time doth tranſfixe the floriſh ſet on youth,
And delues the paralels in beauties brow,
Feedes on the rarities of natures truth,
And nothing ſtands but for his ſieth to mow.
  And yet to times in hope,my verſe ſhall ſtand
  Praiſing thy worth,diſpight his cruell hand.

60
LIke as the waues make towards the pibled ſhore,
So do our minuites haſten to their end,
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In ſequent toile all forwards do contend.
Natiuity once in the maine of light,
Crawles to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipſes gainſt his glory fight,
And time that gaue, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth tranſfixe the floriſh ſet on youth,
And delues the paralels in beauties brow,
Feedes on the rarities of natures truth,
And nothing ſtands but for his ſieth to mow.
  And yet to times in hope, my verſe ſhall ſtand
  Praiſing thy worth, diſpight his cruell hand.

It has been often pointed out that Sonnet 60, dealing with time and minutes, is appropriately placed at number sixty. As elsewhere in the sequence Shakespeare here shows a working knowledge of Ovid's original *Metamorphoses* greater than Golding's translation could have afforded him. He has drawn upon two adjoining passages in the "Pythagorean" section of Book 15. The first treats of time and change:

> All things flow and every image is formed as passing; the times themselves also slide by with continuous movement, no differently than a river, for neither a river nor the fleeting hour can stop. But as ("sic") a wave is pushed ("inpellitur") by a wave, and as the first wave ("prior") is pushed ("urgetur") by the one following and itself pushes ("urget") the one ahead ("prior"), so ("ut") times flee in equal measure and are sequent ("sequuntur") in equal measure and are always new. For what was

> earlier is now left behind, and what once hadn't been comes to be, and every minute ("momenta") is made anew. . . [1]

Shakespeare's opening "Like as . . So" imitates Ovid's metaphoric construction, "ut . . sic." The single-minded determination of "make towards" anticipates line 2's "hasten," while "pibled" intends 'pebbled' or 'shingly.' The "minuites" of "our minuites hasten to their end" translates Ovid's "momenta," instants of time, which Golding, expanding the Pauline, "in momento, in ictu oculi" ("In a moment, in the twynklyng of an eye;" 1 Cor. 15.52; *BB*), renders as "Eche twinkling of an eye / Dooth change." [2] Shakespeare's minutes "hasten" toward their doom, because they are purposed always to run out. The next two lines are a succinct but accurate rendering of Ovid's image of time as a sequence of waves. Each wave's urgency repeats Ovid's double "urgetur"/"urget." A wave does roll over the one that "goes before," pushed by that which is sequent ("sequuntur"); Shakespeare's "toile" is similarly "sequent" or in a sequence, while his "contend," recalls Ovid's "inpellitur" and anticipates the idea of conflict in "fight" and "paralels."

The second Ovidian section deals with human ages:

> An infant, brought forth into light ("editus in lucem . . infans"), lies devoid of strength; soon, becoming four-footed ("mox quadrupes"), he uses his limbs as wild beasts do. A little later, hesitantly and with wobbling legs, with some effort he stands with the aid of his sinews; from there, strong and swift, he crosses ("transit") into the time of youth ("spatium iuventae") and, with the years of middle age complete, slides downward through a journey into failing ("occiduae," setting as in the sun) old age. He has ruined the things of ages and breaks down former strengths. [3]

Shakespeare uses Ovid's "editus in lucem . . infans" ('An infant, brought forth into light') for his "Natiuity once in the maine of light." "Natiuity" means 'new born child,' the abstract often being substituted for the actual (compare Salkeld's definition, "Natiuitie, or first instant of our coming to light"). [4] The astrological significance of "Natiuity" meaning 'horoscope' cannot be dismissed. A "maine of light" is a 'broad expanse of light,' and, since it is used of the ocean, it links this quatrain back to the first. "Crawles to maturity" evokes Ovid's infant not yet standing upright and on all fours ("quadrupes" or four-footed) and suggests the slow passing of time that marks childhood. The child thus arrives at “maturity wherewith being crown’d;” ‘crowned’ can be used of perfection, of an infant, who is ‘crowned’ when emerging into “light,” and of a flower, which is also technically “crowned,” thus anticipating “florish.” “Crooked eclipses” are partial eclipses in the shape of a crook (looking forward to the shape of the “sieth” that time’s hand will wield), which occur when light is obscured and glory begins to fade. “Crooked” evokes the image of ‘bowed’ old men and, as ‘bent’ or ‘perverse,’ suggests the astrological forces, which strive against man’s glory. The battle image of “contend” is picked up in “fight.” The octet’s final aphorism is balanced on the caesura: “time that gaue, doth now his gift confound:” ‘time that brought forth life now brings that gift to ruin.’

The sestet expands the actions of time: it “doth transfix the florish set on youth.” To “transfix” retained in the 16th century its Latinate meaning ‘to bring to an end’ (see Cooper, “transfigo [transfixum] to make an ende; to finish”). [5] A “florish” (from *flos* = a flower, with its heraldic suggestion of the fleury or armorial fleur de luce) is either the highest degree of perfection, hence the flower of youth that time cuts down, or it is the extra bloom that only youth possesses, to which time makes an end. (The sense of a flowery handwriting is probably also present and, if so, time’s transfixing is a crossing out of a florish.) [6] The choice of “set” suggests ‘set’ as a flower might be, ‘set’ as might occur when attaching armorial insignia or regalia to a body, or ‘set’ as in ‘fixed fast.’ Finally, since battle-lines are “set,” it anticipates the coming “paralels.”

Time digs or etches wrinkles in the brow of beauty (“delues the paralels in beauties brow”); “paralels” are the shape of paired wrinkles but are also military trenches, continuing the martial motif (see Sonnet 2.2, “digge deep trenches in thy beauties field,” and Sonnet 22.3, “times forrwes”). Time “Feedes on the rarities of natures truth,” an expansion of Ovid’s “tempus edax rerum,” which occurs in his Pythagorean section on time and which Shakespeare renders as “Deuouring time” in Sonnet 19; [7] “rarities” are things ‘seldom occurring’ and thus ‘precious treasures,’ which the truth of nature provides. The conclusion is that “nothing stands but for his sieth to mow.” The sole purpose for a thing’s existence, or for its standing upright in “glory,” is so that time, the reaper, can cut it down with his scythe. The indiscriminate nature of the cutting is suggested by "mow" (compare Sonnet 12.13, "And nothing gainst Times sieth can make defence"). The couplet contains the first reference to the youth and holds out only a slim hope: "And yet to times in hope." It might just be possible that, in times future, his verse extolling the youth's worth "shall stand," despite the operation of time's "cruell hand."

60.1. Ovid, *Met*. 15.178-185:
cuncta fluunt, omnisque vagans formatur imago;
ipsa quoque adsiduo labuntur tempora motu,
non secus ac flumen; neque enim consistere flumen
nec levis hora potest: sed ut unda inpellitur unda
urgeturque prior veniente urgetque priorem,
tempora sic fugiunt pariter pariterque sequuntur
et nova sunt semper; nam quod fuit ante, relictum est,
fitque, quod haut fuerat, momentaque cuncta novantur. . .

60.2. Golding 15.205-06.

60.3. Ovid, *Met*. 15.221-229:
editus in lucem iacuit sine viribus infans;
mox quadrupes rituque tulit sua membra ferarum,
paulatimque tremens et nondum poplite firmo
constitit adiutis aliquo conamine nervis.
inde valens veloxque fuit spatiumque iuventae
transit et emeritis medii quoque temporis annis
labitur occiduae per iter declive senectae.
subruit haec aevi demoliturque prioris
robora.

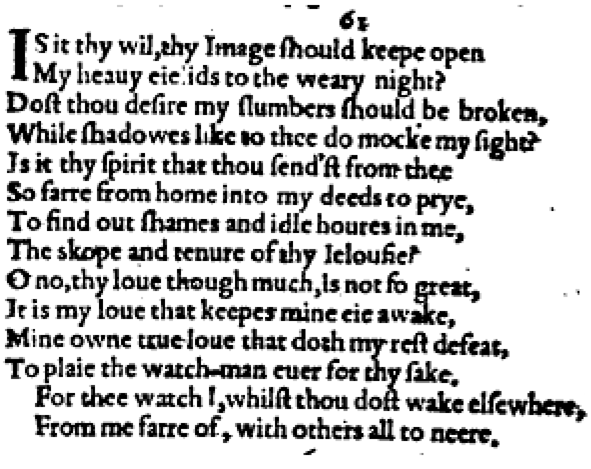
60.4. John Salkeld, *A Treatise of Angels. Of the Nature, Essence, Place, Power, Science, Will, Apparitions, Grace, Sinne, and all other Proprieties of Angels* (London: T[homas] S[nodham], 1613) 276.

60.5. Cooper, *Thesaurus* transfigo.

60.6. See Florio, "Traffiggere . . *to transfix* . . *or strike quite through*." For an early use of a calligraphical flourish see Thomas Lodge's comment: "The schoolman that with heedlesse florish writes, / Refines his fault, if thou direct his eie: / And then againe with wonder he endites / Such sweete sententious lines, as neuer die." (Thomas Lodge, *Scillaes Metamorphosis: Enterlaced with the vnfortunate loue of Glaucus, Whereunto is annexed the delectable discourse of the discontented Satyre: with sundrie other most absolute Poems and Sonnets* (London: Richard Jones, 1589) D3^r).

60.7. Ovid, *Met*. 15.234.

Sonnet 61



61
IS it thy wil,thy Image ſhould keepe open
My heauy eielids to the weary night?
Doſt thou deſire my ſlumbers ſhould be broken,
While ſhadowes like to thee do mocke my ſight?
Is it thy ſpirit that thou ſend'ſt from thee
So farre from home into my deeds to prye,
To find out ſhames and idle houres in me,
The skope and tenure of thy Ielouſie?
O no,thy loue though much,is not ſo great,
It is my loue that keepes mine eie awake,
Mine owne true-loue that doth my reſt defeat,
To plaie the watch-man euer for thy ſake,
For thee watch I,whilſt thou doſt wake elſewhere,
From me farre of,with others all to neere.

61
IS it thy wil, thy Image ſhould keepe open
My heauy eielids to the weary night?
Doſt thou deſire my ſlumbers ſhould be broken,
While ſhadowes like to thee do mocke my ſight?
Is it thy ſpirit that thou ſend'ſt from thee
So farre from home into my deeds to prye,
To find out ſhames and idle houres in me,
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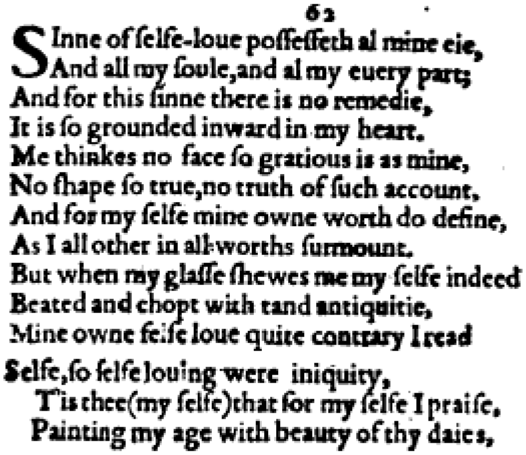
O no, thy loue though much, is not ſo great,
It is my loue that keepes mine eie awake,
Mine owne true loue that doth my reſt defeat,
To plaie the watch-man euer for thy ſake.
  For thee watch I, whilſt thou doſt wake elſewhere,
  From me farre of, with others all to neere.

Sonnet 61 shares its theme and vocabulary with Sonnets 27, 28 and 43, in which the poet is also deprived of sleep. [1] It opens by asking if it is the friend's intent ("wil") that his image should keep open the poet's "heauy eielids" as he seeks sleep. By transference the night is "weary" or brings weariness. Is it his desire that the poet's sleep should be disturbed ("broken") as spectres ("shadows") bearing his likeness taunt the poet's sight ("mocke my sight")? Has the friend, while far from home, sent forth his "spirit" to spy on the poet's actions ("prye;" compare Isaiah's question, "watchman what hast thou espied by nyght?" (21.11; *BB*) and try to uncover his "shames and idle houres," actions that bring shame and wasted times that yield no return. Is that the "skope and tenure" of the youth's "Ielousie"? 'Scope and tenor' ("tenure" being its variant spelling) was a common duplicative phrase of legal origin (both words mean the same), intending the substance or purpose of an argument or the like (compare William Perkins who, writing of God's promises, cautions, "we must know the scope and tenour of them, that we be not deceiued." [2] The friend's jealousy is either his suspiciousness or his solicitous watching over the poet.

The poet's response to the questions is negative, "O no." The youth's love, though strong ("much"), is not strong enough ("great"). It is the poet's love for him that keeps the poet "awake" and stops his sleep ("doth my rest defeat"), so that he can "plaie the watch-man euer for thy sake." A 'watchman' stayed awake at night, while keeping guard, a role the poet will play always ("euer") for the youth's sake. He exclaims, "For thee watch I," where "watch" intends 'remain awake because of you,' or 'look out for you,' or 'keep a vigil for you as might a servant.' On the other hand the youth "dost wake elsewhere," either 'wakes up elsewhere,' or 'keeps a wake or vigil elsewhere,' or even 'stays up at night to revel elsewhere.' He remains remote from the poet ("From me farre of"), and, in a suspicious and worried epithet, all too close to other wakers ("with others all to neere").

61.1. Compare "weary night" (61.2), "Weary with toyle" (27.1); "So farre from home" (61.6), "from far" (27.5), "How far . . farther off from thee" (28.8); "heauy eyelids" (61.2), "drooping eye-lids" (27.7), "heauy sleepe" (43.12); "shadowes like to thee" (61.4), "their shaddoe" (27.10), "whose shadow shaddowes doth make bright" (43.5), "thy shadowes forme" (43.6), "thy shade . . imperfect shade" (43.8/11); "rest defeat" (61.11), "benifit of rest" (28.2).

61.2. William Perkins, *A Commentarie or Exposition, vpon the fiue first Chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians* (Cambridge: John Legatt, 1604) 178, "First, we must haue knowledge of the maine and principall promise, touching the blessing of God in Christ, and of all other promises depending on the principall: and we must know the scope and tenour of them, that we be not deceiued."



62
SInne of ſelfe-loue poſſeſſeth al mine eie,
And all my ſoule,and al my euery part;
And for this ſinne there is no remedie,
It is ſo grounded inward in my heart.
Me thinkes no face ſo gratious is as mine,
No ſhape ſo true,no truth of ſuch account,
And for my ſelfe mine owne worth do define,
As I all other in all-worths ſurmount.
But when my glaſſe ſhewes me my ſelfe indeed
Beated and chopt with tand antiquitie,
Mine owne ſelfe loue quite contrary I read
Selfe,ſo ſelfe louing were iniquity,
T'is thee(my ſelfe)that for my ſelfe I praiſe,
Painting my age with beauty of thy daies,

62
SInne of ſelfe-loue poſſeſſeth al mine eie,
And all my ſoule, and al my euery part;
And for this ſinne there is no remedie,
It is ſo grounded inward in my heart.
Me thinkes no face ſo gratious is as mine,
No ſhape ſo true, no truth of ſuch account,
And for my ſelfe mine owne worth do define,
As I all other in all worths ſurmount.
But when my glaſſe ſhewes me my ſelfe indeed
Beated and chopt with tand antiquitie,
Mine owne ſelfe loue quite contrary I read
Selfe, ſo ſelfe louing were iniquity,
  T’is thee (my ſelfe) that for my ſelfe I praiſe,
  Painting my age with beauty of thy daies,

The “Sinne of selfe-loue,” with whose nature Sonnet 62 opens and which possesses the poet’s every part, was a sin of frequent censure and the root of much else. Thomas Wright gives a typical analysis in *The Passions of the minde* of 1604:

> Selfe-love then may bee defined, an inordinate inclination of the soule, affecting too much the pleasures of the body against the prescript of right reason: this may well be called φιλαυτία, olde *Adam*, the law of the flesh, sensualitie, the enemie of God, the spring of vice, the roote of impietie, the bane of godly conversation, the obiect of mortification, the sincke of sinne, ever craving, never content tyrannizing over the greatest, and overthrowing the least. [1]

Self-love was also a mortal sin. William Perkins, the popularist Cambridge Calvinist, illustrates its nature in detail: “this must be held and remembred for a Ground, That euery sinne, in what degree so euer it is, is *mortall* of it selfe: and no sinne is *veniall* in it owne nature" [2] Such sin infects every part of the soul and body: Perkins in his *Catechism* describes it,

> Q. In what part of man is it?
> A. In euery part both of body & soule, like as a leprosie that runneth from the crowne of the head to the sole of the foote.
> Q. Shew me how euery part of man is corrupted with sinne?
> A. First in the mind there is nothing but ignorance and blindnesse . . . the members of the body are the instruments and tools of the mind for the execution of sinne. [3]

In Sonnet 62, likewise, the sin possesses all the poet's "soule" and his "euery part." For a sin of such "degree" no "remedie" is possible, since it is so firmly "grounded" in his heart, the proper technical term for sin's indwelling (see Perkins above).

Philautia, manifest firstly in the poet's "eie," as it was in its archetype, Narcissus, was a favourite of emblem books. Shakespeare has drawn on Whitney's emblem, "Amor sui," whose device is an exact copy of Alciato's *pictura* for "Philautia," which featured Narcissus gazing at his face in the water. [4] More particularly the sonnet reflects the *marginalia* to Whitney's text: "Ovid.Metam.lib.3," which contains Narcissus' exclamation, 'I burn with love of myself' ("uror amore mei"), [5] and "Anulus in pict. poës.," a reference to Bartolomaeus Anulus (Barthélemy Aneau), whose book of emblems, *Picta Poesis*. *Vt Pictvra Poesis Erit* ('Poetry Painted. As a Painting so Poetry will be'), was published in Lyon in 1552. Its echo of Horace ("Ut pictura poesis," or 'poetry is as a picture') accounts for Sonnet 62's final "Painting" non-sequitur. [6]

The poet, gazing upon himself, deceives himself: he thinks "no face so gratious is as mine." Like Narcissus, who in Whitney's words "loude, and liked so his shape," so the poet reflects, "No shape so true [as mine]," where "true" means straight or properly proportioned. He considers it of highest value ("of such account") and for his own sake adjudges ("define") his worth to surpass that of all others in every respect ("I in all other in all worths surmount"). Such distorted judgements are typical of self-love: Whitney cautions that it "makes vs iudge too well of our desertes" and appends Terence's adage in *Andria*, "omnes sibi malle melius, quam alteri" ('every man prefers his own worth to another's'). [7] A further result of self-love possessing all the eye is a "blindness most extreme" in Whitney's words; in Narcissus' case it "doth . . blinde his eyes." [8]

The sestet changes the focus of the poet's gazing. When his reflection ("glasse") shows his actual self ("my selfe indeede"), it is a self that is "Beated," either 'weather-beaten' or 'beaten' by age as a fell is in tanning. It is a self that is "chopt with tand antiquity;" "chopt" means 'struck' as in the tanning process or 'cracked' and 'chapped' by age which renders the skin leathery; "tand" is 'browned' or 'made leathery' by the effects of age. When the poet truly looks on such a self, he interprets ("read") his self-love quite differently ("contrary"): to love such a battered self would constitute a sin ("iniquity"). He asserts finally that he is in fact praising the youth, who is his other self ("my selfe"), to his own advantage ("for my selfe"), by depicting ("Painting") his aged state in words celebrating the youth's beauty: the "ut pictura poesis" motif allows him to claim that, as with painting, his verses depict or cover over cosmetically his age through lines which give praise to the youth.

62.1. Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the minde in generall* (London: Valentine Sims [for Thomas Thorpe], 1604) 14-15.

62.2 William Perkins, *The First Part of The Cases of Conscience, Wherein specially, three maine Questions concerning Man, simply considered in himselfe, are propounded and resolued* (Cambridge: John Legatt, 1604) 33.

62.3. William Perkins, *The Foundation of Christian Religion*: *Gathered into Sixe Principles* (London: John Porter, 1597) 7.

62.4. Whitney 149; Andrea Alciato, *Emblemata* (Lugdunii: Mathias Bonhomme, 1550) 77.

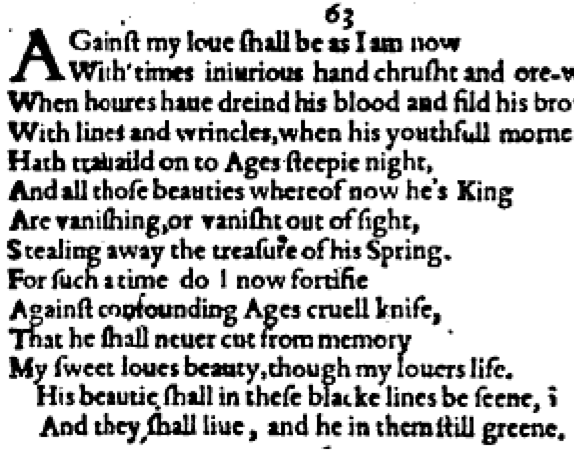
62.5. Ovid, *Met*. 3.464; cf. Golding 3.533, "he is enamoured of himselfe."

62.6. Whitney cites two lines from Aneau's Emblem, ΦΙΛΑϒΤΙΑ (Philautia = love of self), "Narcissus liquidis formam speculatus in undis, Contemnens alios, arsit amore sui &c." (Narcissus, having looked at himself in the limpid waters, spurning others, burnt with love of self etc.'). Cf. Bartolomaeus Anulus, *Picta Poesis. Vt Pictvra Poesis Erit*, (Lugdunii: Mathias Bonhomme, 1552) 51. Aneau uses only an approximation of Alciato's *pictura* for his emblem on self-love and reserves it for another more explicit emblem entlitled, "Libido effoeminans." Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica* 361.

62.7. Terence, *Andria* 427; Whitney’s final marginal entry, Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* 5.21.63, makes the same point: ‘Everything is beautiful to itself. I have as yet known no poet, who did not think himself the best. Things are like that: my things delight me, your things delight you’ (“Suum cuique pulchrum est; adhuc neminem cognoui poëtam, qui sibi non optimus videretur; sic res habet, me delectant mea, te tua”).

62.8. Golding 3.542.

Sonnet 63


63
AGainſt my loue ſhall be as I am now
With'times iniurious hand chruſht and ore-worne,
When houres haue dreind his blood and fild his brow
With lines and wrincles,when his youthfull morne
Hath trauaild on to Ages ſteepie night,
And all thoſe beauties whereof now he's King
Are vaniſhing,or vaniſht out of ſight,
Stealing away the treaſure of his Spring.
For ſuch a time do I now fortifie
Againſt confounding Ages cruell knife,
That he ſhall neuer cut from memory
My ſweet loues beauty,though my louers life.
  His beautie ſhall in theſe blacke lines be ſeene,
  And they ſhall liue, and he in them ſtill greene.

63
AGainſt my loue ſhall be as I am now
With times iniurious hand chruſht and ore-worne,
When houres haue dreind his blood and fild his brow
With lines and wrincles, when his youthfull morne
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  His beautie ſhall in theſe blacke lines be ſeene,
  And they ſhall liue, and he in them ſtill greene.

Sonnet 63 lies at the mid-point of the 126 sonnets directed to the youth; since 63 was also the number of the ‘great climacteric,’ the product of seven and nine, the section of sonnets to the youth comprises a double climacteric. The ‘great climacteric’ was an especially pivotal moment in life, often portending death. Cotgrave’s *Dictionarie* defines it, “The Climatericall yeare; euerie seuenth, or ninth, or the 63 yeare of a mans life; all very dangerous, but the last most,” and, “The Climatericall, or dangerous, yeare of 63, at which age diuers worthie men haue died.” [1] Its observance was forbidden by Puritan divines such as William Perkins who condemned those who “obserue Planetarie houres, and Climactericall yeares.” [2]

Sonnet 63, by comparison with Sonnet 60, is indebted to Golding's translation of Book 15 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* rather than the original. The sonnet foresees a time when the beloved, no longer youthful, will have arrived at the poet's aged state. Golding's rendering of Ovid's passage treating of the youthful and late stages of life runs,

> From that tyme growing strong and swift, he passeth foorth the space
> Of youth: and also wearing out his middle age apace,
> Through drooping ages steepye path he ronneth out his race.
> This age dooth undermyne the strength of former yeares, and throwes
> It downe.

As an example of old age looking back, Helen is cited,

> And Helen when shee saw her aged wrincles in
> A glasse wept also: musing in herself what men had seene,
> That by two noble princes sonnes shee twyce had ravisht beene.

The section concludes with the description of time,

> Thou tyme the eater up of things, and age of spyghtfull teene,
> Destroy all things.[3]

Sonnet 63's opening prudential caution ("Against my loue") parallels the opening to the earlier climacteric sonnet, Sonnet 49 ("Against that time") with its stock-taking motif and its "audite." Here the poet will prepare against a time when the youth ("my loue") will be as the poet now is. It is a time when he will be "With times iniurious hand chrusht and ore-worne;" "iniurious" is a hand that inflicts injury willfully and unjustly (from *iniuriosus* = *in* + *ius* = unjust); "chrusht and ore-worne" suggests clothing that is creased and worn out or skin that is wrinkled and the worse for wear. (Shakespeare may have had Spenser's *Ruines of Rome*: *by Bellay* in mind, "The which iniurious time hath quite outworne.")[4] Time's instruments are its "houres," including the classical 'Horae,' normally beneficent guardians of the seasons, but here pictured as succubi drawing out the life force, for they have "dreind his blood," leaving the skin pallid and wizened. The hours have "fild his brow / With lines and wrincles." The "wrincles" copy Golding's "aged wrincles" (Ovid's "rugas . . aniles"), while "fild" can be read as 'filled' in opposition to "dreind," or as 'filed' or 'engraved' (see Sonnets 17.2 and 85.4), or aphetically as '’filed' or 'defiled' as a succubus does.

The poet takes precautions against a time, "when his youthfull morne / Hath trauaild on to Ages steepie night," a parallel to Ovid's passage, which 'slides downward through a journey into failing ("occiduae," setting as in the sun) old age' ("labitur occiduae per iter declive senectae"). Golding's "steepye path" keeps the integrity of the Ovidian metaphor. In Shakespeare's "Ages steepie night" the "steepie," removed from the "iter," makes less immediate sense, although he does take the notion of night from "occidaue," the sun's setting into night, and will pick up the image of journey in "trauaild." While everything in Ovid is gradual, Shakespeare's "steepie" suggests 'precipitate,' the 'darkness of age that falls suddenly on all as does the sun;' "steepie," as well, retains the secondary sense of night that 'steeps' or 'soaks' all things in itself – in opposition to "dreind" - while "trauaild" carries both senses of 'journeyed' and 'toiled.' All the beauties, of which the young man is now master ("king"), will then be either in the process of disappearing or will have already disappeared. "Stealing away" intends 'burgling' the youth's present beauty ("treasure of his Spring"), although 'stealing away from a crime' is an initial reading.

The sestet recapitulates the opening preparedness: "For such a time" or 'as a precaution against such a time' the poet now builds a defence ("do I now fortifie;" compare Sonnet 16.3-4, where the youth is urged to "fortifie your selfe" against "this bloudie tirant time"). The poet's action is "Against confounding Ages cruell knife," an instrument akin to time's scythe, both being "cruell;" "confounding" age is age that brings all to nought or that corrupts innocence. The poet's purpose is to forestall age's knife from excising from memory ("cut from memory") the beauty of the beloved ("sweet loues beautie"), even though he ("Age") will cut out or cut from memory the beloved's life. Rather, he claims, the youth's beauty will be seen inscribed and engraven (compare above "fild" and "cut") in these inked "blacke lines" (compare "lines and wrincles"). The lines themselves will continue to "liue" and the friend will "liue" in them, ever "greene," fresh as in "Spring," or 'innocent' as in youth.

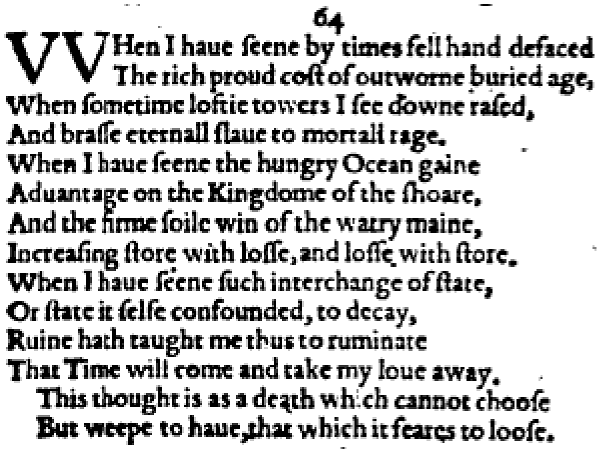
63.1. Randle Cotgrave, *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (London: Adam Islip, 1611).

63.2. Perkins, *Galatians* 600.

63.3. Golding 15.247-59 *passim*. For Ovid, *Met*. 15.225-29 see Sonnet 60 notes; lines 232-5 are:
flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,
Tyndaris et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit.
tempus edax rerum, tuque, invidiosa vetustas,
omnia destruitis . .
(And [Helen,] the daughter of Tindarus, wept also as she looked upon her old woman's wrinkles in the mirror as she thought about herself who had been twice ravished. And you, Time, the devourer of things, spiteful old man, you destroy all things.)

63.4. Edmund Spenser, *Ruines of Rome*: *by Bellay*, 370 in *Complaints. Containing sundrie small Poemes of the Worlds Vanitie* (London: William Ponsonby, 1591); compare *Ven*. 133-5, "wrinckled old . . Ore-worne, despised, reumatique, and cold."

Sonnet 64



64
VVHen I haue ſeene by times fell hand defaced
The rich proud coſt of outworne buried age,
When ſometime loftie towers I ſee downe raſed,
And braſſe eternall ſlaue to mortall rage.
When I haue ſeene the hungry Ocean gaine
Aduantage on the Kingdome of the ſhoare,
And the firme ſoile win of the watry maine,
Increaſing ſtore with loſſe,and loſſe with ſtore.
When I haue ſeene ſuch interchange of ſtate,
Or ſtate it ſelfe confounded, to decay,
Ruine hath taught me thus to ruminate
That Time will come and take my loue away.
  This thought is as a death which cannot chooſe
  But weepe to haue,that which it feares to looſe.

64
WHen I haue ſeene by times fell hand defaced
The rich proud coſt of outworne buried age,
When ſometime loftie towers I ſee downe raſed,
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Ruine hath taught me thus to ruminate
That Time will come and take my loue away.
  This thought is as a death which cannot chooſe
  But weepe to haue, that which it feares to looſe.

To “ruminate” on antiquities (“ruminari antiquitates”) and on ruins was an established literary convention from classical times. [1] In the 16th century the practice reached its peak with Du Bellay’s *Les Antiquités de Rome* of 1558, translated by Edmund Spenser as *Ruines of Rome*: *by Bellay* in 1591. The same volume of Spenser’s *Complaints* also contained his *The Ruines of Time*.

The structure of Sonnet 64 is marked by the triple, “When I haue seene,” which introduces each quatrain. The sonnet comprises a meditation of three *puncta* or points on the power of time. The first object on which the poet focusses is “times fell hand,” where “fell” means firstly ‘cruel’ or ‘indiscriminately ruthless’ and secondly ‘hairy’ or ‘rough’ (fell = hair). As in Sonnet 6.1, "Then let not winters wragged hand deface," so here time's hand is one that has "defaced," either 'disfigured' or 'rendered anonymous by eroding any distinguishing features.' The object of its action has been "The rich proud cost of outworne buried age," the buildings of former times that were 'costly' or 'splendid" ("rich") and full of 'glory' and 'vaingloriousness' ("proud"). The edifices are of an age now "buried," literally in the earth, figuratively in the past. They are of an age "outworne:" 'worn down,' 'worn away,' even 'worn out.' The lines imitate the motto to Whitney's *Scripta manent* ('Writings remain'), which are relevant also to Sonnet 65:

> If mightie Troie, with gates of steele, and brasse,
> Bee worne awaie, with tracte of stealinge time:
> If Carthage, raste: if Thebes be growne with grasse . .
> If Athens, and Numantia suffered spoile:
> If Aegypt spires, be euened with soile. [2]

Whitney's sidenotes cite as precedents Propertius, 'Thebes has stood and lofty ("alta") Troy once was,' and Demosthenes, 'Cities, once most famous, are now nothing; those now lofty will sometime experience the same fortune.' [3] The poet muses on these "sometime loftie towers," for which Troy was famous; "loftie" intends 'high' as well as 'proud,' intended to defy time. He contemplates them as "down rased," similar to Whitney's Carthage which is "raste;" where in Whitney, "brasse, / Bee worne awaie," in Shakespeare "brasse" is pictured as an "eternall slaue" to a destructive force ("rage") that brings only death ("mortall"). In Sonnet 65 the "rage" of "sad mortallity" is featured.

The meditation's third *punctum* treats of the never-ending struggle and constant "interchange" between the land and sea. A parallel image is found in Whitney's adjacent emblem, *Constanter*:

> The raging Sea, that roares, with fearefull sounde,
> And threatneth all the worlde to ouerflowe:
> The shore sometimes, his billowes doth rebounde,
> Though ofte it winnes, and giues the earthe a blowe
> Sometimes, where shippes did saile: it makes a lande.
> Sometimes againe they saile: where townes did stande. [4]

The image's classical source is Ovid's explanation of the "enterchaunging course" of things in the Pythagorean section of *Metamorphoses*, 'Often the state of places is interchanged: I have seen what was once the most firm soil ("solidissima tellus") become the hungry ocean ("fretum"); I have seen lands made from the watery main ("aequor").' [6] (Whitney's "raging Sea" and Shakespeare's "rage" and "hungry Ocean" have picked up the pun in Ovid's "fretum," which can mean both the ocean and "raging" or "hungry.")

For Shakespeare the "hungry Ocean" may "gaine Aduantage" on the land, but only for the "firme soile" to win it back from the "watry maine." The interchange is encapsulated in an equivalent adage, "Increasing store with losse, and losse with store." The poet ponders "such interchange of state," or more fundamentally the very state of things being 'undermined' or 'brought to nought' ("confounded, to decay"). (Both "confounded" (from *cum* + *fundere* = to pour together) and "Ruine" (from *ruere* = to flow down) continue the water image.) The downfall of all things ("Ruine") teaches him to "ruminate" on a dreadful thought: "That Time will come and take my loue away." The thought comes "as a death" might come and is a thought over which the poet can only grieve ("which cannot choose / But weepe"). The poet's deep fear is that the beloved might one day be lost to him.

64.1. Nonius Marcellus, *De Compendiosa Doctrina*, 480.24. Nonius Marcellus, a late Latin Latin antiquarian and lexicographer, was considered the convention's founder.

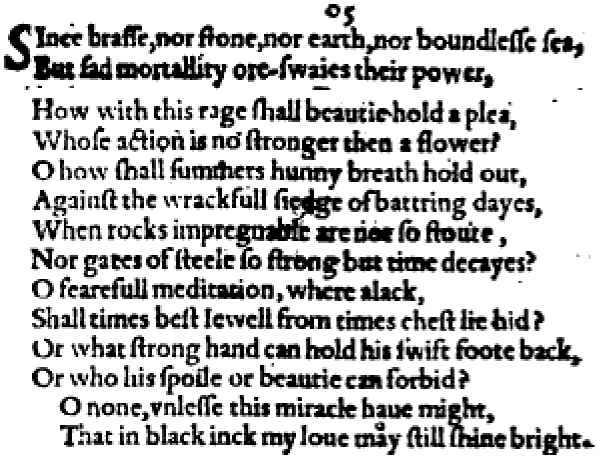
64.2. Whitney 131.

64.3. Whitney 131, "Propertius. [*Elegies* 2.8.10] "*Et Thebae steterant, altaque Troia fuit*." "Demosthenes, *In Arg*. Liber 1. "Clarissimae olim vrbes, nunc nihil sunt, Quae maxime nunc superbiunt, eandem aliquando fortunam experientur."

64.5. Whitney 129.1-6.

64.6. Ovid, *Met*. 15.261-3:
sic totiens versa est fortuna locorum.
vidi ego, quod fuerat quondam solidissima tellus,
esse fretum, vidi factas ex aequore terras.
Compare Golding 15. 287-9:
Even so have places oftentymes exchaunged theyr estate.
For I have seene it sea which was substanciall ground alate,
Ageine where sea was, I have seene the same become dry lond.

Sonnet 65



65

SInce braſſe,nor ſtone,nor earth,nor boundleſſe ſea,
But ſad mortallity ore-ſwaies their power,
How with this rage ſhall beautie hold a plea,
Whoſe action is no ſtronger then a flower?
O how ſhall ſummers hunny breath hold out,
Againſt the wrackfull ſiedge of battring dayes,
When rocks impregnable are not ſo ſtoute,
Nor gates of ſteele ſo ſtrong but time decayes?
O fearefull meditation,where alack,
Shall times beſt Iewell from times cheſt lie hid?
Or what ſtrong hand can hold his ſwift foote back,
Or who his ſpoile or beautie can forbid?
  O none,vnleſſe this miracle haue might,
  That in black inck my loue may ſtill ſhine bright.

65
SInce braſſe, nor ſtone, nor earth, nor boundleſſe ſea,
But ſad mortallity ore-ſwaies their power,
How with this rage ſhall beautie hold a plea,
Whoſe action is no ſtronger then a flower*?*
O how ſhall ſummers hunny breath hold out,
Againſt the wrackfull ſiedge of battring dayes,
When rocks impregnable are not ſo ſtoute,
Nor gates of ſteele ſo ſtrong but time decayes?
O fearfull meditation, where alack,
Shall times beſt Iewell from times cheſt lie hid?
Or what ſtrong hand can hold his ſwift foote back,
Or who his ſpoile or beautie can forbid? of
  O none, vnleſſe this miracle haue might,
  That in black inck my loue may ſtill ſhine bright.

Sonnet 65, like Sonnet 64, is indebted to the verses accompanying Whitney's emblem, *Scripta manent*, and develops Sonnet 64's theme that the state of anything, whether land or sea, is "confounded, to decay." Its first lines are condensed: 'since it is the case that brass, stone, earth and sea exist only so that sad mortality might over-sway their power.' Their very existence is purposed to be overthrown; "brasse" evokes both Horace's classical trope of a "monumentum aere perennius" ('a monument more enduring than bronze;' "aes" could be either bronze or brass) and Whitney's "brasse," that is "worne awaie" (see Sonnet 55 and 64 commentaries); "stone" is the marble in which memorials are set, while "earth" (Ovid's "tellus") and "boundlesse sea" (Ovid's "aequor") are interchanging states in Sonnet 64.[1] The mightier force is "sad mortallity," a deadliness that brings only sorrow. To 'hold sway over' is to 'have power over,' although 'sway' is also the authority prevailing in a court of law. Normally it is fire and sea that act violently or with "rage," but here it is their conqueror, "sad mortallity," whose action is a "rage" (as a passion excessive sadness could also be a "rage"). How, the poet asks, "shall beautie hold a plea"? Technically, 'to hold a plea' (*tenere placitum* = to hold a plea) was 'to try an action' or 'to have jurisdiction' in a court of law. On first reading the question asks, 'how shall beauty sue or be heard in a court of law?' But, if so, then "with this rage" must be read as 'against this rage.' A more complex reading is intended: 'in a court, where the sway of mortality's rage is so sovereign that any fair hearing or judgement is precluded, how can there be a place for beauty or its power?' This is also the meaning of Whitney's question, "what maye laste, which time dothe not impeache"? [2] The reason is the lack of strength in beauty's "action," the weakness of its legal suit, hinting also at a military action as the forthcoming siege metaphor. The fragility of the flower's beauty before the breath of the Lord, whose word however was immortal, was a biblical trope: "the floure falleth away, for the breath of the Lord bloweth vpon them . . yet the worde of our God endureth for euer" (Isa. 40.7; *BB*).

The poet asks, how shall "summers hunny breath hold out"? With its origin in a flower and its lightness "hunny" suggests 'sweet;' "hold out" is 'withstand,' as a city does under siege, against which days 'batter' like blows of a battering ram; "wrackfull" is a siege 'full of enmity' or, as in 'wrack and ruin,' a siege 'that lays ruin to.' How can beauty hold out, when rocks, which like a fortress cannot normally be crushed ("impregnable"), aren't mighty enough ("stout") to counteract time, or, in Whitney's phrase, "gates of steele" are not sufficiently strong to resist time's action ("but time decayes")? [3]

The thoughts constitute a "meditation," whose points induce only fear ("O fearfull meditation"), recalling the "ruminate" of Sonnet 64; "alack" is an expression of regret. The "best Iewell" of time is beauty, of which time is origin and owner: how can such a jewel be hid away or kept safe from the "chest" of time: the 'coffin' in which time shuts up such a treasure, or time's 'bosom' to which it clutches and smothers beauty. (Jewels are normally kept safe in a casket or chest.) Time's "strong hand" links with the 'sway' of line 2, but the image is one of reining in an uncontrolled horse: “hold his swift foote back.” [4]

Finally, the poet asks, who can “forbid,” ‘restrain’ or legally ‘prohibit’ time’s “spoil” or ‘pillage’ of beauty (the *quarto* reads “or”). His conclusion is succinct: “O none,” yet he holds out an escape clause, “unless this miracle haue might:” unless this poem have the power to do so. Miracles by definition operate outside the laws of time and nature and Shakespeare is playing with a common etymological pun, “miracle” being the normal translation of the *koiné*’s δύναμις or “might.” The beloved (“my loue”), although secondarily the poet’s own love, will continue to “shine bright” in the “black inck” of his writing. Its darkness shining brightly runs counter to the order of nature.

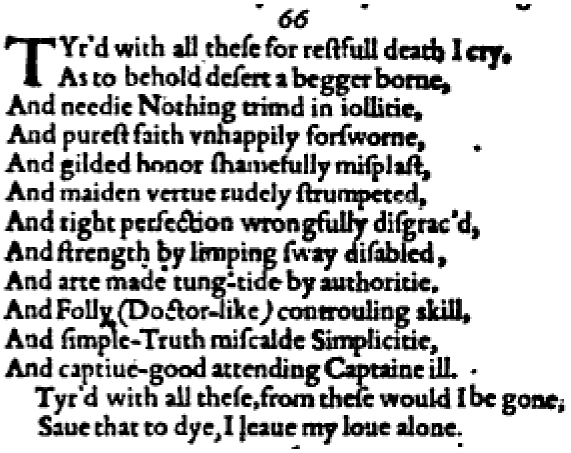
65.1. Horace, *Odes* 3.30.1; Ovid, *Met*. 15.262-63.

65.2. Whitney 131.7.

65.3. Whitney 131.1, “gates of steele.”

65.4. Compare Sonnet 19.6, “swift-footed time.”

Sonnet 66



66
TYr'd with all theſe for reſtfull death I cry,
As to behold deſert a begger borne,
And needie Nothing trimd in iollitie,
And pureſt faith vnhappily forſworne,
And gilded honor ſhamefully miſplaſt,
And maiden vertue rudely ſtrumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully diſgrac'd,
And ſtrength by limping ſway diſabled,
And arte made tung-tide by authoritie,
And Folly (Doctor-like) controuling skill,
And ſimple-Truth miſcalde Simplicitie,
And captiue-good attending Captaine ill.
Tyr'd with all theſe, from theſe would I be gone,
Saue that to dye, I leaue my loue alone.

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Tyr'd with all theſe for reſtfull death I cry,
As to behold deſert a begger borne,
And needie Nothing trimd in iollitie,
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And ſtrength by limping ſway diſabled,
And arte made tung-tide by authoritie,
And Folly (Doctor-like) controuling skill,
And ſimple-Truth miſcalde Simplicitie,
And captive-good attending Captaine ill.
Tyr'd with all theſe, from theſe would I be gone;
Saue that to dye, I leaue my loue alone.

Taedium vitae (tiredness of life) or the condition of world weariness, often accompanied by profound depression, was first described in the classical period. Seneca and Pliny both provide analyses and examples of the malaise which could lead to the taking of one's life. (Roman Law allowed *taedium vitae* as one of the few justifiable motives for suicide.) Seneca in *De Tranquillitate* describes the symptoms: "tedium and desultoriness of self and turmoil of the mind which is never at rest . . hopes are so constricted and without escape as to choke themselves." The mind is forced to lament the age in which it lives ("de saeculo querens") and "those afflicted are driven to death, because they find themselves in a vicious circle, able to seek nothing new. Life and the world itself become so tedious that they experience but dwindling pleasures; they ask, 'How long can we keeping doing the same thing?'" [1] In his *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* Seneca takes issue with Epicurus who claims, 'It is nonsense to pursue death because of *taedium vitae*' ("ridiculum est currere ad mortem taedio vitae"), replying that the condition is one of contraries and of interminable but negative balance. He exclaims again, "To what end these things?" ("Quousque eadem?"), and continues, "Will I wake or will I sleep? Will I eat or will I go hungry? Will I shiver or will I sweat? There is no end to anything, but everything is connected in a circle . . I do nothing new; I see nothing new; finally one tires of it all. There are many who think that to live isn't bitter, just superfluous. Farewell." [2]

The classical precedents of the disease were well known in Shakespeare's England. Robert Burton in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* quotes Seneca among others and cites Suetonius' account of Claudius who had "a spice of this disease, for when hee was tormented with the paine of his stomacke, he had a conceipt to make away himselfe." Burton's is the most extensive contemporary account of the condition, typified by a vacillating between opposites, the disconsolate being the dominant, and by a weariness that finds its only relief in death.

> *Taedium vitae*. Hence it proceeds many times, that they are weary of their liues, and ferall thoughts to offer violence to their owne persons, come into their mindes, *taedium vitae* is a common symptome . . they are soone tired with all things; they will now tarry, now be gone; now pleased, then againe displeased, now they like, by and by dislike all, weary of all . . discontent, disquieted, perplexed vpon every light, or no occasion, obiect: often tempted, I say, to make away themselues; *Viuere nolunt, mors nesciunt* [Seneca]; they cannot dye, they will not liue: they complaine, weepe, lament and thinke they lead a most miserable life, every poore man they see is most fortunate in respect of them, every begger that comes to the doore is happier then they are, they could be contented to change liues with them . . And so they continue, till with some fresh discontent they be molested againe, and then they are weary of their lives, weary of all, they will die. [3]

From the classical period onwards there existed also the convention of writing out a balance sheet of the conditions of one's life – or of the world, especially the political – before taking one's life. Tabular lines of contrariety would be balanced across each other, often weighted towards the negative, a practice Shakespeare has observed exactly in Sonnet 66 by allowing its equipoised lines to preempt the way he normally divides a sonnet's argument. Also relevant to the sonnet is the sense found with *taedium vitae* of being inextricably trapped in a circle: as Seneca notes, "There is no end to anything, but everything is connected in a circle" ("Nullius rei finis est, sed in orbem nexa sunt omnia"). The *taediosus*' customary circularity is imitated by the rhetorical circularity and repetition of sonnet's opening and closing, "Tyr'd with all these."

Sonnet 66's rhetorical figures are those of Repetition and Obsecration. Each line opens with "And" and the lines' insistent repetition causes the customary division between octet and sestet to be elided. The poet's obsecration ("I cry") is for "restfull death," death that brings the fullness of rest and peace. The reason for the prayer is that the poet is "Tyr'd with all these." A list of "these" elements follows, introduced by "As to behold," meaning 'these things such as one can behold.' The first factor inducing *taedium* is "desert a begger borne;" in this world turned on itself anything deserving merit is 'born a beggar,' either receives no recompense or is shabbily treated or clothed as a beggar. (A beggar on a *taediosus*' list was common, see Burton above, "euery beggar.") The poet complains that "needie Nothing [is] trimd in iollitie." "Nothing" is utter deprivation, totally in need; but in this age it is dressed up ("trimd") in finery ("iollitie") or it is decorated over ("trimd") by revelry and laughter ("iollitie"). In this world religion or loyalty or even troth-vows ("faith"), that are simple and undefiled ("purest"), are sadly ("vnhappily") denied or dishonoured or broken ("forsworne"). Rank or decency ("honor") of the highest quality ("gilded" intends 'golden' rather than 'gilded over') is put to wrong purpose or placed in wrong hands ("misplast"); "virtue" that is unsullied and intact ("maiden") is commonly ("rudely") prostituted abroad or sold cheaply ("strumpeted"); "perfection" that is upright and unfallen ("right" with a hint of 'correct') is by contrast "wrongfully" ('unjustly' rather than 'mistakenly') sullied or made to fall ("disgraced"); power, even political power ("strength") is made impotent ("disabled") by hesitant authority and lame rule ("limping sway"). Cleverly the line with only 4½ feet itself limps.

In the poet's world "arte" of any kind, artistic, scientific or even political, is rendered silent and ineffectual, even censored ("made tong-tide") by "authoritie," by misapplied power. "Folly," traditionally the subject of misrule, is here like a master ("Doctor-like"), who rules over true knowledge ("skill"). Here "simple-Truth," undivided and unadulterated truth (compare Sonnet 138.8, "simple truth suppres t") is defamed or wrongly titled ("miscalde") "Simplicitie," of the realm of the simpleton or fool. The list's final item is "captiue-good attending Captaine ill:" goodness is held inextricably in the service of or is unable to escape from the clutches of dominant evil ("Captaine" can intend both dominant and Captain), the traditional symptom of *taedium vitae*.

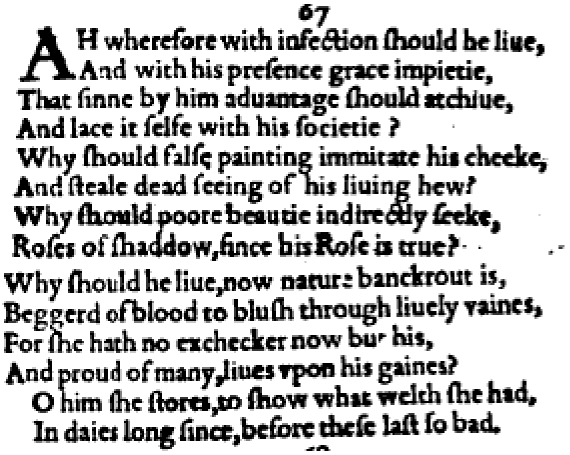
The concluding couplet returns to the opening imprecation with the poet classically resolving to be quit of such burdens through death, "Tyr'd with all these, from these would I be gone," but is prevented from so doing by the thought that, if he were to do so, he would leave his beloved forsaken: "Save that to dye, I leaue my loue alone." On the *tabula* or balance-sheet the beloved outweighs all the factors that induced world-weariness in the poet.

66.1. Seneca, *De Tranquillitate Animi* 2.10, "taedium et displicentia sui et nusquam residentis animi volutatio . . in angusto inclusae cupiditates sine exitu se ipsae strangulant;" 2.15: "Hoc quosdam egit ad mortem: quod proposita saepe mutando in eadem revolvebantur et non reliquerant novitati locum, fastidio esse illis coepit uita et ipse mundus, et subiit illud tabidarum deliciarum: 'Quousque eadem?'"

66.2. Seneca, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* 3.26, " nempe ex pergiscar dormiam, edam esuriam, algebo aestuabo. Nullius rei finis est, sed in orbem nexa sunt omnia . . 'Nihil novi facio, nihil novi video: fit aliquando et huius rei nausia.' Multi sunt qui non acerbum iudicent vivere sed supervacuum. Vale."

66.3. Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy. What it is, with all the kinds causes, symptomes, prognostickes, & seuerall cures of it. In three partitions, with their severall Sections, members & subsections. Philosophically, Medicinally, Historically, opened & cut vp. By. Democritus Iunior* (Oxford: John Lichfield, 1628) 175-6.

Sonnet 67


67
AH wherefore with infection ſhould he liue,
And with his preſence grace impietie,
That ſinne by him aduantage ſhould atchiue,
And lace it ſelfe with his ſocietie ?
Why ſhould falſe painting immitate his cheeke,
And ſteale dead ſeeing of his liuing hew?
Why ſhould poore beautie indirectly ſeeke,
Roſes of ſhaddow,ſince his Roſe is true?
Why ſhould he liue,now nature banckrout is,
Beggerd of blood to bluſh through liuely vaines,
For ſhe hath no exchecker now but his,
And proud of many,liues vpon his gaines?
O him ſhe ſtores,to ſhow what welth ſhe had,
In daies long ſince,before theſe laſt ſo bad.

67
AH wherefore with infection ſhould he liue,
And with his preſence grace impietie,
That ſinne by him aduantage ſhould atchiue,
And lace it ſelfe with his ſocietie?
Why ſhould ſalſe painting immitate his cheeke,
And ſteale dead ſeeing of his liuing hew?
Why ſhoulde poore beautie indirectly ſeeke,
Roſes of ſhaddow, ſince his Roſe is true?
Why ſhould he liue, now nature banckrout is,
Beggerd of blood to bluſh through liuely vaines,
For ſhe hath no exchecker now but his,
And proud of many, liues vpon his gaines?
O him ſhe ſtores, to ſhow what welth ſhe had,
In daies long ſince, before theſe laſt so bad.

Sonnet 67 exploits discrete meanings of “infection,” opening, “Ah wherefore with infection should he liue.” The original meaning of ‘infect’ was to ‘dye’ or ‘colour’ (compare Sonnet 111 with its “Dyers hand,” “strong infection,” and allusion to dyer’s madder). All contemporary dictionaries contain entries for *inficere*, the root of infection, similar to Thomas Thomas: “*To die cloath, to staine, to colour*: *to corrupt . . infect, or poison*;” [1] “infection,” then, introduces the idea of cosmetic colouring, but also retains throughout the sonnet the sense of “poison” or ‘disease.’ Elizabethan cosmetic compounds, particularly fuci made from mercury sublimate or mercuric sulphide, were notoriously poisonous and the generational effects of mercury sublimate were well known, drawing the inevitable comparison with the physical transmission of original sin:

Thomas Tuke lists among "the infamous inconueniencies which result from the Mercurie Sublimate" the fact that it

> is like to original sinne, and goes from generation to generation, when as the child borne of them, before it be able to goe, doth shed his teeth one after another, as being corrupted and rotten, not through his fault, but by reason of the vitiousnesse and taint of the mother that painted her selfe. [2]

The legacy of original sin, with which sublimates are identified, is the sinful infection of humankind. The Geneva Bible in its note to Rom. 5.19 defines fallen nature and loss of grace as "that disease which all men were infected withall by being defiled with one mans sinne." In the sonnet the youth's grace is identified with the grace nature once had but has lost. Fallen nature may seek to exploit the youth's presence by association, but the grace nature possesses, for now, can only be a false and cosmetic grace.

Why, asks the poet ("wherefore"), but resignedly ("Ah"), should the youth live or be associated with artificial colouring, with poison and disease, or with sin? Why should his presence lay beauty over ugliness, give dignity to lack of respect, or grace to sinfulness ("grace impietie"), so that sinful nature might through him gain an advantage ("That sinne by him aduantage should atchiue")? If he were to be associated with "infection" as cosmetics, then physical "sinne," would be transmitted beyond him and thus prevail. If he were to be associated with "infection" as sin and lack of grace, then the fallen state of nature would gain an advantage. The implication of the poet's questions is that the youth should remain unstained by "infection," so that nature can retain one unfallen reserve on which she might draw (compare Sonnet 20.9-14). Finally why should sin be allowed to intertwine itself ("lace it selfe") with his presence ("society") or, more pertinently, why should sin be able to colour itself over with his society? To "lace," drawing on the courtly practice of lacing the hair with gold filets, means to streak with a colour such as gold (compare *Mac*. 2.3.118 with Duncan's body, "Siluer skinne, lac'd with his Golden Blood;" normally something is laced with poison, here poison is lacing itself).

Why asks the poet "should false painting immitate his cheeke?" The "false painting" is the infection of various fuci or the infection that is sinful nature: such painting is a pale imitation of the youth’s pure colouring. Why should false painting “steale dead seeing of his liuing hew?” As in Sonnet 24.1 (“steeld”), “steale” intends ‘inscribed with a stylus’ or ‘depicted.’ (A reading of “steale” as ‘steal’ has forced some commentators to change “seeing” to “seeming.”) Why should “false painting” take the youth’s “liuing hew,” his lively complexion or form, and render it in portraiture as “dead seeing,” as empty eyes, glazed over? Elizabethans called mercury sublimate, “dead fier.” [3] They also used drops of belladonna to give a cosmetically bright sparkle to the eyes, an infective practice that also gave a them a lifelessness (see Sonnet 20.5, note). Why should impoverished beauty (“poore beautie”) seek, not the true “Rose” of the youth’s cheek, but seek at first remove (“indirectly”) the artificial or painted roses formed by blusher placed under the cheek bone to create a red shadow (“Roses of shadow”)? Or why should infected nature pursue mere surface beauty, “Roses of shadow,” and not follow the unfallen rose, which is the youth? The claim was commonplace, Tuke also complaining that fuci produced, “Not truthes but shadowes of truths.” [4]

The sestet is underwritten by a commercial subtext to which “aduantage,” “bankrout,” “Beggerd,” “exchecker,” “proud,” “gaines,” “stores” and “welth” all contribute. Its opening question is confused because the antecedent of “Beggerd” can be either “he” or “nature.” If it belongs to “he,” then the question is, ‘Since nature is now void of richness or grace (“banckrout”), why should the youth continue to live, drained of blood (“Beggerd of blood”) that might redden his otherwise enlivened veins (“to blush through liuely vaines”), so that nature might draw on his “gaines”?’ If “Beggerd” belongs to “nature,” then ‘Since nature now lacks richness or grace and is so drained of blood that it can’t provide blood to course through living veins, why should the youth continue to live only because nature “hath no exchecker now but his, / And proud of many, liues vpon his gaines.”’ Since the fall, nature’s treasury (“exchecker”) is empty and the only resource on which she can draw is the youth’s grace. The empty treasury has been “proud of many,” ‘prov’d’ or experienced by many (‘proved,’ a reading that pertains also at Sonnet 75.5, “proud” and 129.11 “proud a[nd] very wo,” is the only viable reading, and not, as variously glossed, ‘proud,’ or the implausible ‘’prived’ or ‘deprived’). Nature now lives off the interest that the friend’s beauty, untainted by infection or sin, continues to earn ("gaines"). Indeed nature keeps or preserves the friend as her 'store,' so that she might demonstrate to this present destitute age the "welth" she once possessed in "daies long since," the golden age of grace before original sin and before nature had fallen on bad times ("daies . . last so bad").

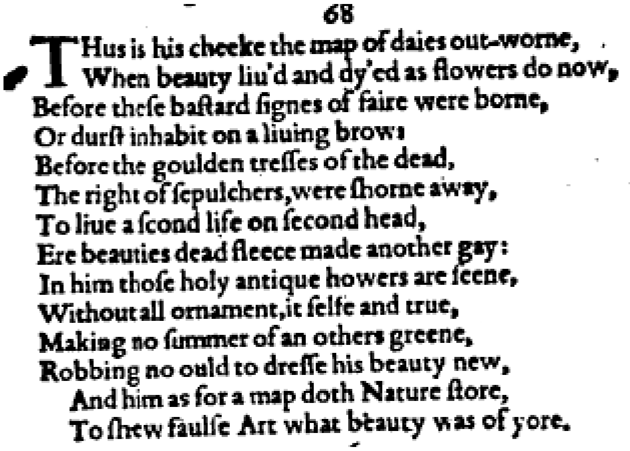
67.1. Thomas, *Dictionarium* inficere.

67.2. Tuke B4^{v}.

67.3. Haydock 130.

67.4. Tuke 61.

Sonnet 68


68
THus is his cheeke the map of daies out-worne,
When beauty liu'd and dy'ed as flowers do now,
Before theſe baſtard ſignes of faire were borne,
Or durſt inhabit on a liuing brow:
Before the goulden treſſes of the dead,
The right of ſepulchers,were ſhorne away,
To liue a ſcond life on ſecond head,
Ere beauties dead fleece made another gay:
In him thoſe holy antique howers are ſeene,
Without all ornament,it ſelfe and true,
Making no ſummer of an others greene,
Robbing no ould to dreſſe his beauty new,
And him as for a map doth Nature ſtore,
To ſhew faulſe Art what beauty was of yore.

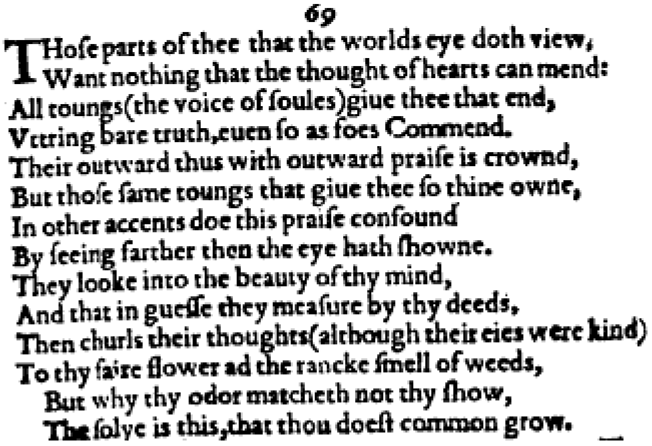
68
THus is his cheeke the map of daies out-worne,
When beauty liu'd and dy'ed as flowers do now,
Before these baſtard ſignes of faire were borne,
Or durſt inhabit on a liuing brow:
Before the goulden treſſes of the dead,
The right of ſepulchers, were ſhorne away,
To liue a ſcond life on ſecond head, second
Ere beauties dead fleece made another gay:
In him thoſe holy antique howers are ſeene,
Without all ornament, it ſelfe and true,
Making no ſummer of an others greene,
Robbing no ould to dreſſe his beauty new,
   And him as for a map doth Nature ſtore,
   To ſhew faulſe Art what beauty was of yore.

Sonnet 68 is closely tied to Sonnet 67 and develops its couplet, where nature preserves the unfallen beauty of the friend only to show "what welth she had, / In daies long since." The sonnets are linked by the initial, "Thus." The youth's cheek, untainted by "infection," is "the map of daies out-worne." A first reading of "map" suggests a face with lines traced on it (Mercator's map was of very recent origin), a metaphor Shakespeare uses, for example, of Malvolio, "He does smile his face into more lynes, then is in the new Mappe" (*TN* 3.2.76). But since the youth is unlined, "map" here intends, figuratively, the embodiment or epitome of "daies out-worne," those days, with Sonnet 67's argument in mind, that are well past, even those before the fall. In the garden beauty was naturally cyclic, just as flowers now are. The youth's cheek incarnates the golden age before "these bastard signes of faire were borne," where "borne" can be read either as ‘born,’ and thus associated with “bastard,” or as ‘borne,’ carried on “a liuing brow.” The “bastard signes” are unnatural and shadows of the true (“faire”), just as Perdita’s “streak’d Gilly-vors” are “Natures bastards” (*WT* 4.4.82-3). In paradise spurious beauty did not dare (“durst”) dwell on a “liuing brow” or face.

The friend’s cheek is of a time, “Before the goulden tresses of the dead, / The right of sepulchers, were shorne away, / To liue a s[e]cond life on second head.” The practice of shaving the head and covering it with a gregorian or periwig of golden hair – the most fashionable colour in imitation of Elizabeth I’s own colouring – was frequent at court. The friend personifies a time before the hair of the dead, to which the tomb is the rightful claimant, was “shorne away” by dressers and trimmers to be used again, not as living hair, but as a “dead fleece” making the courtier, either male or female, “gay.” Shakespeare uses “gay” to mean both ‘resplendent’ and, of a common stale, ‘alluring’ or ‘false’ (compare *Err*. 2.1.94.)

In the youth are seen “those holy antique howers,” those earlier, untainted prelapsarian times, which existed, “Without all ornament,” because decoration is the product of a later, degenerate age. The “it selfe and true” refers to “howers” (plural nouns presented as singular were not uncommon), a paradisial age when simplicity and truth prevailed. At that time nothing took the “greene,” the colour of spring’s freshness and innocence, and used it as gloss or finery (“summer”) for something else; nothing stole from ancient perfection to adorn with newness (“Robbing no ould to dresse his beauty new”). The action of ‘dressing’ looks back to the dressers who robbed corpses of their hair. The couplet reiterates that of Sonnet 67: nature preserves the youth (“store”), so that he might be an epitome (“as for a map”) that makes manifest to “faulse Art” what pristine beauty once was (“what beauty was of yore”).

Sonnet 69



69
THoſe parts of thee that the worlds eye doth view,
Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend:
All toungs(the voice of ſoules)giue thee that end,
Vttring bare truth,euen ſo as foes Commend.
Their outward thus with outward praiſe is crownd,
But thoſe ſame toungs that giue thee ſo thine owne,
In other accents doe this praiſe confound
By ſeeing farther then the eye hath ſhowne.
They looke into the beauty of thy mind,
And that in gueſſe they meaſure by thy deeds,
Then churls their thoughts(although their eies were kind)
To thy faire flower ad the rancke ſmell of weeds,
But why thy odor matcheth not thy ſhow,
The ſolye is this,that thou doeſt common grow.

69
THoſe parts of thee that the worlds eye doth view,
Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend:
All toungs (the voice of ſoules) giue thee that end, ?due
Vttring bare truth, euen ſo as foes Commend.
Their outward thus with outward praiſe is crownd, Thy
But thoſe ſame toungs that giue thee ſo thine owne,
In other accents doe this praiſe confound
By ſeeing farther then the eye hath ſhowne.
They looke into the beauty of thy mind,
And that in gueſſe they meaſure by thy deeds,
Then churls their thoughts (although their eies were kind)
To thy faire flower ad the rancke ſmell of weeds,
  But why thy odor matcheth not thy ſhow,
  The ſolye is this, that thou doeſt common grow. ſoyle

Sonnet 69 works the distinction, found often in the sequence, between the external which the eye sees and the internal which the heart discerns. The distinction can be observed in Sonnet 46's conclusion, "mine eyes due is their outward part, / And my hearts right, their inward loue of heart." (The use of "due" there supports the emendation of "end" to "due" in line 3 here, "due" in secretary hand being easily mistaken for "end.") The friend's features that are available to the public gaze ("Those parts of thee that the worlds eye doth view") don't require any remedying ("mend") that deeply felt thought could provide. The phrase, "the thought of heart" was epithetic and, associated with "tongue," was available to Shakespeare both in Harrington's *Orlando Furioso*, "By thought of heart the speech of tongue is carid," and as an anthologized entry under "heart" in Robert Albott's *Englands Parnassus*. [1] Every tongue that gives voice to inner reason ("the voice of soules”) awards the friend what is his due: the simple (“bare”) truth about his outward appearance. They praise him in the way that his enemies must praise him (“euen so as foes Commend”). What he displays outwardly is thus celebrated (“crowned”) publicly and gracefully, not boorishly like a churl.

But the same tongues, which render what is owed the youth in the public arena (“giue thee so thine owne”), either ‘undercut’ or ‘confuse’ (“confound”) that praise in other voices (“other accents;” to “confounde . . language” was the standard translation of Babel’s punishment [Genesis 11.7; *BB*]). They can penetrate beyond public display, discern the “beauty” of the youth’s mind, and, using his actions as a gauge (“by thy deeds”), estimate the beauty’s extent (“measure”), even if only approximately (“in guess”). Such tongues, by synecdoche men, the poet terms “churles,” of common birth but also surly and lacking fluency or grace. (The mark of the churl, according to Wilson, is not language but the grunt: “churles [are said] to grunt.”) [2] Even though they looked smilingly on the youth (“their eies were kind”), their “thoughts” add to his “faire flower,” his outward perfection, the “rancke smell of weeds,” a fetid stench.

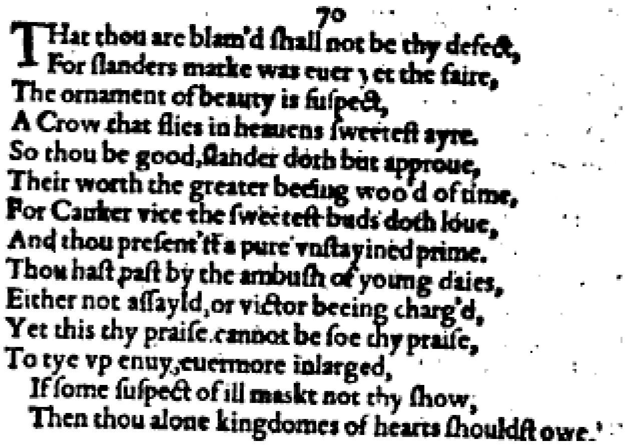
The couplet explains why his offensive inner (“odor”) isn’t matched by his outer display (“show” is technically a flower’s display): “solye” is a mis-composed “soyle,” or ‘soil,’ which in its verb form means ‘to solve’ (Cooper’s *Thesaurus* translates, “Quaestionem persoluere,” as “To soile a question”). [3] Shakespeare has used the word as a noun meaning the ‘ground’ or ‘reason’ for a claim; his choice would have been reinforced by the suggestion of ‘soil,’ in which flowers and weeds grow, of ‘soil’ as an ‘offence’ or ‘rankness,’ and of ‘soil’ as sexual intercourse (compare *MM* 5.1.141-42, “Who is as free from touch, or soyle with her / As she from one vngot”). The disparity between the inner and outer is caused by the youth’s having grown “common:” either he has become like a commoner or churl, or has demeaned himself like a weed on a common, or, finally, has been publicly, familiarly or much used.

69.1. Ariosto 27.107; Robert Albott, *Englands Parnassus: Or the Choysest Flowers of our Moderne Poets* (London: N[icholas] Ling, 1600) 129, “By thought of heart, the speech of tongue is carried. *S. I. Harr. Tran.*” Harrington’s line is his own and corresponds to nothing in Ariosto.

69.2. Wilson 152.

69.3. Cooper, *Thesaurus* persolvere. Just possibly ‘soyle’ or ‘soil’ could be an aphetic ‘assoil,’ meaning a ‘solving,’ compare Puttenham 157, “riddle (Enigma) of which the sence can hardly be picked out, but by the parties owne assoile.”

Sonnet 70



70
THat thou are blam'd ſhall not be thy defect,
For ſlanders marke was euer yet the faire,
The ornament of beauty is ſuſpect,
A Crow that flies in heauens ſweeteſt ayre.
So thou be good,ſlander doth but approue,
Their worth the greater beeing woo'd of time,
For Canker vice the ſweeteſt buds doth loue,
And thou preſent'ſt a pure vnſtayined prime.
Thou haſt paſt by the ambuſh of young daies,
Either not aſſayld,or victor beeing charg'd,
Yet this thy praiſe.cannot be ſoe thy praiſe,
To tye vp enuy,euermore inlarged,
If ſome ſuſpect of ill maskt not thy ſhow;
Then thou alone kingdomes of hearts ſhouldſt owe.

70
THat thou are blam'd ſhall not be thy defect,   art
For ſlanders marke was euer yet the faire,
The ornament of beauty is ſuſpect,
A Crow that flies in heauens ſweeteſt ayre.
So thou be good, ſlander doth but approue,
Their worth the greater beeing woo'd of time,   Thy
For Canker vice the ſweeteſt buds doth loue,
And thou preſent'ſt a pure vnſtayined prime.   vnſtayned
Thou haſt paſt by the ambuſh of young daies,
Either not aſſayld, or victor beeing charg'd,
Yet this thy praiſe cannot be ſoe thy praiſe,
To tie vp enuy, euermore inlarged,
  If ſome ſuſpect of ill maskt not thy ſhow,
  Then thou alone kingdomes of hearts ſhouldſt owe.

The number 70 was a climacteric number of particular significance, because it was the number allotted by the psalmist to the human life-span ("The dayes of our age are threescore yeeres and ten" (Ps. 90.10; *BCP*) and also the year, her seventieth, in which Elizabeth I died, which gave rise to Thomas Wright's apologia, *A Succinct Philosophicall declaration of the nature of Clymactericall yeeres, occasioned by the death of Queene Elizabeth* of 1604. [1] The 70th sonnet is followed by a pair of epitaphial sonnets.

Sonnet 70 contines with the insinuations of the previous sonnet, although it opens with the poet absolving the youth of personal blemish ("That thou art blam'd shall not be thy defect"), because the target ("marke") at which slander aims has always been and still is ("euen yet") the "faire." Slander thus always shoots wide of the mark whose inner, that at which bowmen aim, was a black surrounded by a fair outer. (Compare Thomas Adams' metaphor, "*Sin is the* white (*or rather the blacke marke*) *my arrow flies at. I trust, he that gaue ayme to my tongue, will also direct, leuell, and keepe my Penne from swaruing*.")[2] Slander maliciously construes "the faire" as dark or the good as bad. Fairness, by apposition "the ornament of beauty" or that which adds to beauty, is made "suspect" or to fall under false suspicion ("suspect," which retains its Latinate sense of 'look upwards' as at a crow).[3] It is likened to "A Crow that flies in heauens sweetest ayre." The allusion is to both the corvine *locus biblicus*, Jeremiah's claim that the Babylonians have less right judgement than "a crowe that fleeth betwixt heauen and earth" (Bar. 6.53; *BB*), and to the common proverb of the crow who mistakenly thinks her young fair or white, "the Crow thinketh her owne birde the fairest."[4] Provided that the youth remains good ("So thou be good," compare Sonnet 112.4), slander can only prove or enhance ("approue") his worth more largely ("the greater"). He or his worth is "woo'd of time," either his youth is beloved of time or sought out by this present age. A further proverb, "The canker soonest eats the fairest rose,"[5] is the basis for "Canker vice the sweetest buds do loue" (compare Sonnet 35.5, "And loathsome canker liues in sweetest bud" and Sonnet 95.2-3, "like a canker in the fragrant Rose, / Doth spot the beautie of thy budding name"). As the canker worm attacks most often the white or fairest rose causing a stain within, so does vice which is particularly attracted by the youth who presents himself ("present'st;" flowers as they bloomed were said to 'present') as a "pure, vnstayned prime," where "pure" intends chaste, "vnstayned" without spot or immaculate, and "prime" the peak or springtime of youth. He has survived unscathed the hidden snares that lie in wait for youth ("past by the ambush of young daies"). He has remained either unattacked ("not assayld") or, if attacked ("charged"), has emerged as "victor" ("charged" may also carry the legal sense of an accusation).

Yet any praising of the friend by the the poet ("this thy praise") cannot be sufficient praise ("cannot be soe thy praise") to constrain envy ("To tye vp enuy"), which ranges freely and is always set at large ("euermore inlarged"). Envy is a frequent motive for slander and linked to it through the further proverb, "Envy shoots at the fairest mark (or flower)." [6] If it were the case that the suspicion of evil ("suspect of ill") didn't mask the youth's appearance ("show" as in floral display), then he would own ("owe") by himself "kingdomes of hearts."

70.1. See Wright, *Clymactericall* 3, "The dayes of our yeeres are seauentie yeeres."

70.2. Thomas Adams, *The Deuills Banket. Described in foure Sermons. . . Together with Phisicke from Heauen* (London: Thomas Snodham, 1614) S4^r (135).

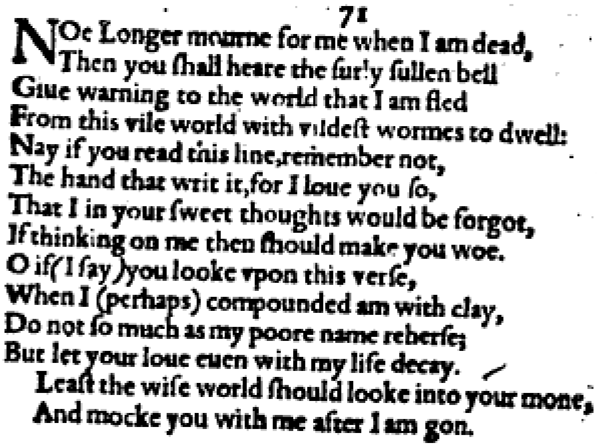
70.3. Cooper, *Thesaurus* "Suspectus . . A looking or beholding vpward."

70.4. Richard Bancroft, *A Suruay of the Pretended Holy Discipline* (London: John Wolfe, 1593) 63, "We haue a saying, that the Crow thinketh her owne birde the fairest;" see Tilley C851.

70.5. Tilley C56.

70.6. Tilley E175.

Sonnet 71



71
NOe Longer mourne for me when I am dead,
Then you ſhall heare the ſurly ſullen bell
Giue warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world with vildeſt wormes to dwell:
Nay if you read this line,remember not,
The hand that writ it,for I loue you ſo,
That I in your ſweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then ſhould make you woe.
O if (I ſay) you looke vpon this verſe,
When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay,
Do not ſo much as my poore name reherſe;
But let your loue euen with my life decay.
Leaſt the wiſe world ſhould looke into your mone,
And mocke you with me after I am gon.

71
NOe Longer mourne for me when I am dead,
Then you ſhall heare the ſurly ſullen bell
Giue warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world with vildeſt wormes to dwell:
Nay if you read this line, remember not,
The hand that writ it, for I loue you ſo,
That I in your ſweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then ſhould make you woe.
O if (I ſay) you looke vpon this verſe,
When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay,
Do not ſo much as my poore name reherſe;
But let your loue euen with my life decay.
  Leaſt the wiſe world ſhould looke into your mone,
  And mocke you with me after I am gon.

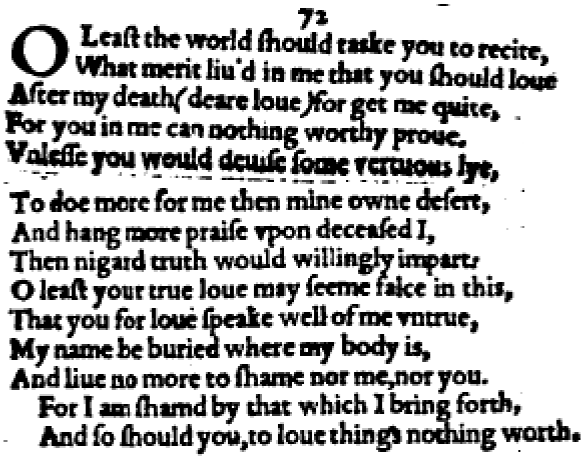
Sonnets 71 and 72 comprise the sequence's second pair of epitaphial sonnets (after Sonnets 31 and 32, see Sonnet 31 commentary), placed here seemingly because the poet has completed his climacteric threescore sonnets and ten and now presents to the youth appropriate obsequial verses. Sonnet 71 draws on familiar phrases from the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Order for the Burial of the Dead" and on passages from the Book of Job, which the "Order" uses, particularly those recited as a versicle during the funeral procession, "For I am sure that my redeemer saueth, and he shall rayse vp at the latter day them that lye in the dust. And though after my skinne the [wormes] destroy this body, yet shall I see God in my fleshe" (19.23-6; *BB*).

A negative imperative opens the sonnet: when the poet is dead, the youth is ordered not to mourn for him any longer than ("Then") he will hear tolling the "surly sullen bell." (An initial reading might suggest, wrongly, a temporal contrast, "when I am dead, / Then you shall heare.") The tone of "surly" is one of arrogant summons ("surly" meaning 'morose' is a later usage), while "sullen" suggests a gloomy note or tone (compare *2H4* 1.1.101-3, "and his Tongue, / Sounds euer after as a sullen Bell / Remembred, knolling a departing Friend"). Since the passing bell was tolled only briefly – its strikes corresponded to the departed's age – a very short period is indicated. As well, the bell's function differs from the customary, because it is a "warning" bell to the world that the poet has "fled / From this vile world with vildest wormes to dwell;" "vildest," a variant of 'vilest,' is an occasional Shakespearean spelling and recalls the prayer in the "Order for the Burial of the Dead" asking Christ to "change our vile body," when "earth shalbe cast vpon the body." To dwell with worms was man's proper lot, in Job's words, "How much more man, a worme, euen the sonne of man, *which is but* a worme?" (25.6; *GV*).

If the friend were to read this verse ("this line") after the poet's death, then he is instructed to "remember not, / The hand that writ it," to dismiss all thought of the poet and his writing. The line throws weight on "for I loue you so," each individual syllable requiring a single stress. Given the strength of his love he would not have the friend moved to sadness: he would prefer to be removed from the friend's "sweet thoughts," if the youth were to be afflicted ("make you woe") by remembering the poet ("thinking on me then"). Again he envisages the friend looking on his lines ("O if (I say) you looke vpon this verse") after his death ("When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay"); "perhaps" implies a lesser possibility; "compounded am with clay," drawing on Job's definition of bodies as "houses of clay . . whose foundation is but dust" (4.19; *BB*), pictures the poet's "house of clay" mixed with the clay of the earth. The poet requires that the youth not allow the poet's "poore name" (in Elizabethan times also a 'recently deceased name') to pass his lips ("reherse," with its allusion to the funeral edifice, to which titles and verses were attached). He seeks to spare the friend the lot of the psalmist, who is but a worm and subject to mockery, "I am a worme and no man: a very scorne of men" (Ps. 22.6-7; *BB*), or that of Job whom the "wise men" famously derided (cf. Job

5.13 & 34.2) and who complains, “the graue is readie for me. There are none but mockers with me” (17.1-2; *GV*). The friend's sorrow must die lest it be seen by the world (“looke into your mone”). He will then avoid being mocked either together with or because of the poet after his departure (“And mocke you with me after I am gon”).

Sonnet 72



72
O Leaſt the world ſhould taske you to recite,
What merit liu'd in me that you ſhould loue
After my death(deare loue)for get me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy proue.
Vnleſſe you would deuiſe ſome vertuous lye,
To doe more for me then mine owne deſert,
And hang more praiſe vpon deceaſed I,
Then nigard truth would willingly impart:
O leaſt your true loue may ſeeme falce in this,
That you for loue ſpeake well of me vntrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And liue no more to ſhame nor me,nor you.
For I am ſhamd by that which I bring forth,
And ſo ſhould you,to loue things nothing worth.

72
O Leaſt the world ſhould taske you to recite,
What merit liu'd in me that you ſhould loue
After my death (deare loue) for get me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy proue.
Vnleſſe you would deuiſe ſome vertuous lye,
To doe more for me then mine owne deſert,
And hang more praiſe vpon deceaſed I,
Then nigard truth would willingly impart:
O leaſt your true loue may ſeeme falce in this,
That you for loue ſpeake well of me vntrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And liue no more to ſhame nor me, nor you.
  For I am ſhamd by that which I bring forth,
  And ſo ſhould you, to loue things nothing worth.

Sonnet 72 continues the epicedial *topos* of Sonnet 71 and repeats its argument, although here the poet assigns himself a common grave, disowning the right to a catafalque on which verses might be hung; praises of his name will be hung on his dead body and buried with him.

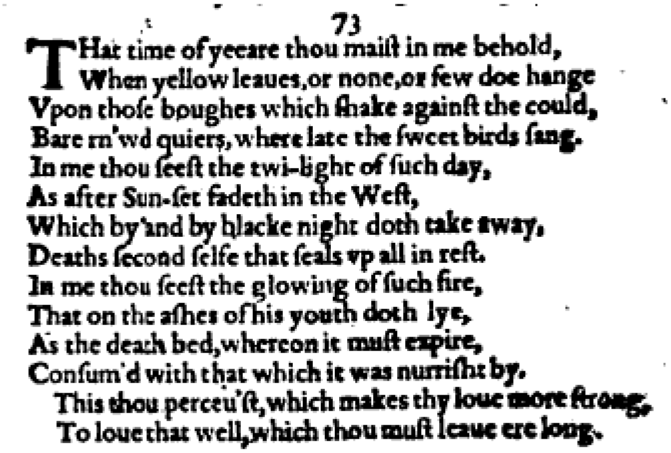
The sonnet's opening "O Least the world" takes up from Sonnet 71's concluding "Least the wise world." To prevent the world from requiring the friend ("taske you") to "recite / What merit liu'd in me," the poet asks that he be forgotten. To "recite" intends 'to pronounce aloud,' 'to rehearse,' or even 'to put into writing.' The "merit" is that which the youth loves in the poet or that which causes him to love the poet. He must "forget" the poet, because he can neither find nor attest to anything of worth in him.

Unless, the poet admits, the friend should "deuise some vertuous lye;" "deuise" means 'invent,' but strongly suggests both a 'device' as a short ingenious verse and a 'device' or impresa beraring heraldic arms, both of which were attached to hearses (compare Taylor's description of a "Hearse richly behung with Scutcheons, Deuices, Mottoes, and Impresses." [1] The friend might, then, compose an epitaph for the poet, but it would be "some vertuous lye," a lie that implies virtue or appears strongly credible. The "lye" would exaggerate the poet's standing more than he deserves ("doe more for me then mine owne desert"). Attached to the "deceased" poet, the device of the friend's lies would afford more praise than truth, sparingly spoken, would allow ("nigard truth would willingly impart"). Niggardliness, associated with "that churle death" in Sonnet 32, suggests 'grudgingly' in opposition to 'willingly.'

To avoid the friend's "true loue" becoming subverted by devising a lie ("in this"), namely that he should for the sake of their love ("for loue") speak favourably but untruly ("vntrue") of the poet, the friend must let the poet's name be interred with his body ("My name be buried where my body is"). With the poet's name now resting anonymously in the grave, the friend will bring "shame" neither to himself nor the poet ("nor me, nor you"). The couplet points to the poet's modesty: "For I am shamd by that which I bring forth:" either the actions to which his argument gives rise or, with poetic childbirth and not death in mind, by his own devices. So ought the friend also be ashamed, for loving someone in whom "nothing worthy" is found and for loving the unworthy poems that issue forth from him.

72.1. John Taylor, *All the Workes of Iohn Taylor The Water Poet. Being 63 in number. Collected into One Volum by the Author* (London: I[ohn] B[eale] *et al*., 1630) 89.

Sonnet 73



73
THat time of yeeare thou maiſt in me behold,
When yellow leaues,or none,or few doe hange
Vpon thoſe boughes which ſhake againſt the could,
Bare rn'wd quiers,where late the ſweet birds ſang.
In me thou ſeeſt the twi-light of ſuch day,
As after Sun-ſet fadeth in the Weſt,
Which by and by blacke night doth take away,
Deaths ſecond ſelfe that ſeals vp all in reſt.
In me thou ſeeſt the glowing of ſuch fire,
That on the aſhes of his youth doth lye,
As the death bed,whereon it muſt expire,
Conſum'd with that which it was nurriſht by.
This thou perceu'ſt,which makes thy loue more ſtrong,
To loue that well,which thou muſt leaue ere long.

73
THat time of yeeare thou maiſt in me behold,
When yellow leaues, or none, or fewe doe hange
Vpon thoſe boughes which ſhake againſt the could,
Bare rn'wd quiers, where late the ſweet birds ſang. ruin'd
In me thou ſeeſt the twi-light of ſuch day,
As after Sun-ſet fadeth in the Weſt,
Which by and by blacke night doth take away,
Deaths ſecond ſelfe that ſeals vp all in reſt.
In me thou ſeeſt the glowing of ſuch fire,
That on the aſhes of his youth doth lye,
As the death bed, whereon it muſt expire,
Conſum'd with that which it was nurriſht by.
  This thou perceu'ſt, which makes thy loue more ſtrong,
  To loue that well, which thou muſt leaue ere long.

Sonnet 73 is one of the more rhetorically exact of the sequence: each quatrain advances its argument a stage and each quatrain's "In me" is balanced against the couplet's "thou." Its first metaphor, identifying a stage of life with a time of year, recalls Ovid's correlating a human lifespan with the year's seasons, in Golding's words: "Seest thou not how that the yeere as representing playne / The age of man, departes itself in quarters fowre." [1] The poet sees himself, not beyond death as in the preceding and subsequent sonnets, but on the cusp of old age. The "behold" of the inverted opening line is sustained in "seest" (lines 4 and 9) and "perceu'st" (line 13). "When yellow leaues, or none, or few" is a series of refining qualifiers; "yellow leaues" are those of autumn or of mature years (compare *Mac*. 5.3.22-3, "I had liu'd long enough: my way of life / Is falne into the Seare, the yellow leafe"); "or none" implies winter and, "or few," the moment between autumn and winter. They "hang / Vpon those boughes," an enjambment where "hang" hangs before the voice picks up "Vpon." The boughs "shake against the cold," quiver in the wind as a human might shiver. "Bare rn'wd quiers" might initially call to mind a group of choristers singing ('quier' and 'quire' were the original spellings of 'choir'), [2] but more precisely pictures the branches as broken-down choir stalls. (Delapidated churches, unrepaired since the Reformation, were a concern of Shakespeare's day and their reedification and dedication much debated.) Finally "quiers" or 'quires' were bundles of leaves collected into a book, evoking the earlier "yellow leaues." The "boughes" are "Bare," vacant and voiceless now, although once ("late") sweet-sounding birds sang there.

The second quatrain focusses the first: the poet's age is identified as the moment after evening and before night ("In me thou seest the twi-light of such day"), after the sun has sunk "in the West, / Which by and by blacke night doth take away." The moment is sudden ("by and by"), while "black night" is both dark and malevolent. Night is "Deaths second selfe," a standard identification as in Hamlet's "To dye, to sleepe" and "sleepe of death" (3.1.59 & 66). Night "seals vp all in rest;" "seals" conjures up the sealing of a casket, or a last will and testament being sealed, or homonymically 'seeled,' meaning 'blinded' or 'darkened' from the practice of stitching together the eyelids of a hawk to hoodwink and train it (compare *Mac*. 3.2.46, "Come, seeling Night").

The final conceit of fire ("In me thou seest the glowing of such fire") describes the top ashes, the product of that which once fueled the fire, covering and starving the underlying fire of oxygen, so that they extinguish or 'consume' it. Applied to the poet, the years expended in his youth, which produced his present state, now threaten to suppress and extinguish his life. The bed of ashes is like a death bed; the fire of youth must go out ("must expire") or breath out its last (*ex* + *spiro* = breath + out). The paradoxical, "Consum'd with that which it was nurrisht by," conflates two Ovidian echoes: the image of time that devours "all things" and does "leysurely by lingring death consume them" and the paradox, evident also in Sonnet 1.6, "Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fewell," which is a rendering of Ovid's description of the youth Narcissus' character, that he 'burns, fueled by what he sees,' in Golding, "He is the flame that settes on fire, and thing that burneth tooe." [3]

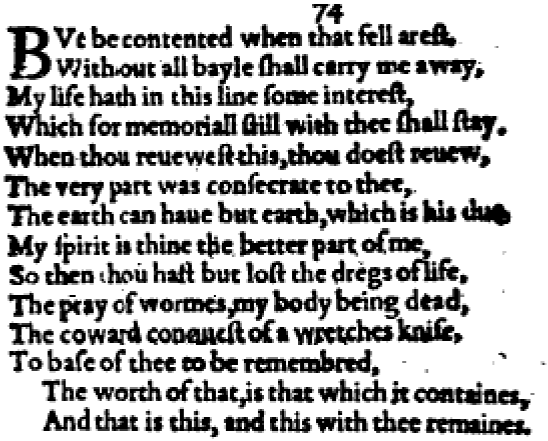
The couplet directs the poet's self-preoccupation outward: "This thou perceu'st;" "this" is either the sonnet itself or its argument, the poet's ageing. Looking upon it, the youth will find his love strengthened ("makes thy loue more strong"), so that he may "loue that well," where "that" is either the poet's life, or his love for the youth, or even the friend's youthfulness. Any of the three the friend "must leaue ere long," must soon forsake (with a quibbling echo of line 2's departed "leaues").

73.1. Golding 15.221-22; see Ovid, *Met*. 15.199-200, "Quid? non in species succedere quattuor annum / adspicis, aetatis peragentem imitamina nostrae?"

73.2. Compare *Ven*. 840, "still the quier of ecchoes answer so." The spelling 'choir' was a late 17th century affectation.

73.3. Golding 15.260; see Ovid, *Met*. 15.236, "paulatim lenta consumitis omnia morte." Golding 3.430; see Ovid, *Met*. 3.536, "quod videt, uritur illo."

Sonnet 74



74
BVt be contented when that fell areſt,
With out all bayle ſhall carry me away,
My life hath in this line ſome intereſt,
Which for memoriall ſtill with thee ſhall ſtay.
When thou reueweſt this, thou doeſt reuew,
The very part was conſecrate to thee,
The earth can haue but earth, which is his due,
My ſpirit is thine the better part of me,
So then thou haſt but loſt the dregs of life,
The pray of wormes, my body being dead,
The coward conqueſt of a wretches knife,
To baſe of thee to be remembred,
  The worth of that, is that which it containes,
  And that is this, and this with thee remaines.

Sonnet 74 continues the memorial *topos* of Sonnets 71 and 72 before the intervention of Sonnet 73. Its conclusion that, "The worth of that, is that which it containes," modifies Sonnet 72's claim that the youth will in the poet "nothing worthy proue." The sonnet draws on Ovid's celebrated claim to ongoing fame at the end of *Metamorphoses*: 'When that day arrives, to which is due ("ius habet") nothing but this body . . I will be carried with the everlasting better part of me ("parte meliore mei perennis") above the high stars.' [1] The youth is instructed to "be contented;" "contented" means 'satisfied,' but the sense of a debt or something "due" being 'contented' or 'paid' is also implied (compare *Oth*. 3.1.1, "Masters, play heere, I wil content your paines"). Death is pictured as a jailer ("fell arest"), who will lock away the poet with no possibility of release from custody, even on payment of a surety ("With out all bayle"). As in Sonnet 64.1, "times fell hand," “fell” means ‘pitiless’ or ‘dire,’ the whole metaphor being reminiscent of Hamlet’s dying phrase, “this fell Sergeant death / Is strick’d in his Arrest” (*Ham*. 5.2.328-9).

The poet maintains that his life retains some title (“interest”) in this sonnet (“in this line”), whose purpose is to stay with the friend as a memorial (“for memoriall”). When he comes to “reuew” it, he will over-read or look over, “The very part was consecrate to thee:” “consecrate” is both ‘dedicated’ and ‘made blessed by’ and is appropriate, because monuments and burial-grounds were customarily hallowed. The admission that, “The earth can haue but earth, which is his due,” echoes the Committal from the *Book of Common Prayer*’s “Order for the Burial of the Dead,” “I commend thy soul to God . . and thy body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,” which draws on Genesis, “thou art dust, and to dust shalt thou returne” (3.19; *GV*). Here the earth is “due” or entitled only to his bodily part (Ovid’s “corporis huius ius habet”). The next line is ambiguous: “the better part of me” (Ovid’s “parte meliore mei”), that part unconfined by death or time, qualifies either “thine,” the youth (as in Sonnet 39.2, “thou art all the better part of me”), or, following Ovid more closely, qualifies the poet’s “spirit:” his ‘soul,’ or ‘the seat of his love,’ or his ‘creative power,’ is owed to the friend. The Ovidian subtext underwrites his claim that his “better part” will prevail beyond death, as will this memorial.

The friend will, then, have only lost the poet’s body, the “dregs of life,” or the dross that remains after the spirit is distilled or taken off (compare Golding’s “dregs of earthly filth”).[2] His dead body will be “pray to wormes,” echoing, as in Sonnet 71, Job’s words, “My fleshe is clothed with wormes and dust of the earth,” and, “the sonne of man, *which is but* a worme” (7. 5 & 25.6; *GV*). His body is pictured as “The coward conquest of a wretches knife.” The ‘wretch’ is death or time (in Sonnet 100.14 time wields a “crooked knife”), who stalks his victim, his “conquest,” in a cowardly and unseen way. “To base of thee to be remembred” is a further unattached clause: either the poet’s gross body is not sufficiently noble (“To base”) to be remembered by the friend, or the “wretches knife,” with its base action, should not be recalled by him.

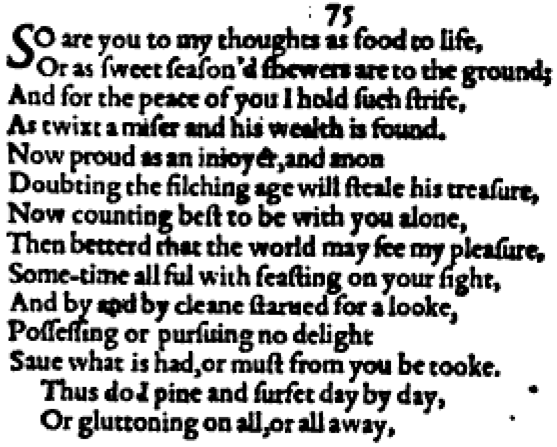
The couplet works from the general to the particular: the worth of anything (“The worth of that”) flows only from what “it containes.” What is contained here is the poem and its contents, the poet’s spirit and its issue (“this”), and it is this poem that will remain with the friend.

74.1. Ovid, *Met*. 15.873-5, “cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius / ius habet . . parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis / astra ferar.” See Golding 15.985-9, “Let comme that fatall howre / Which (saving of this brittle flesh) hath over mee no powre . . / Yit shall the better part of mee assured bee to clyme / Aloft above the starrye skye.”

74.2. Golding 1.78.

74.3. The phrase, the ‘remains of the dead,’ is an 18th century usage.

Sonnet 75



75
SO are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as ſweet ſeaſon'd ſhewers are to the ground;
And for the peace of you I hold ſuch ſtrife,
As twixt a miſer and his wealth is found.
Now proud as an inioyer, and anon
Doubting the filching age will ſteale his treaſure,
Now counting beſt to be with you alone,
Then betterd that the world may ſee my pleaſure,
Some-time all ful with feaſting on your ſight,
And by and by cleane ſtarued for a looke,
Poſſeſſing or purſuing no delight
Saue what is had, or muſt from you be tooke.
  Thus do I pine and ſurfet day by day,
  Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

The miser who starves himself to accumulate wealth, on which he will feast only by looking, was proverbial: compare Whitney's emblem *Avaritia*, where the miser

> . . dothe abounde, yet sterues and nothing spendes,
> But keepes his goulde, as if it weare not his:
> With slender fare, he doth his hunger feede,
> And dare not touche his store, when hee doth neede. [1]

The *topos* had an allied biblical passage, echoed in Sonnet 1, Isaiah's condemnation of the niggard, who will "make the hungry leane, and . . withholde drinke from the thirstie" (32.6; *BB*). [2] The poet firstly admits the effect the youth has on his thoughts: he sustains them ("as food to life") and refeshes them, "as sweet season'd shewers . . to the ground," where "sweet season'd" intends 'sweetly flavoured' as is food, or 'seasonable' or timely, or 'seasonal' showers of a sweet source, which nurture the ground. To sue or obtain peace of the youth ("for peace of you") the poet is at war with himself ("I hold such strife") like a miser, who is torn between looking after himself and looking upon "his wealth." To "sue" or 'take' one's peace of a person was customary - it derived from a Pax given or taken; Henry Smith in *A Preparative To Mariage* writes of a wife that she "hath taken the peace of thee, the first day of her marriage." [3]

The poet at one moment is "proud as an inioyer," 'proves to be' or 'finds himself' enjoying his wealth (a reading of 'prou'd,' in opposition to "Doubting," rather than 'proud' is more probable), [4] but in the next moment ("anon") is found worrying ("Doubting") either that the present time, that pilfers things ("the filching age"), will steal away "his," the miser's, "treasure," or, since misers are associated with age, his own ageing will take away the one he treasures (even sexually). At one moment he counts it "best to be with you alone," to be with the friend in private ("counting" continues the miser's habit with his money); at the next in company ("Then") the best is "betterd" or surpassed, because the public world can "see my pleasure" (misers hide their hoards). (Compare *Ven*. 78, where Venus' "best is betterd with a more delight;" the phrase was associated with misers.) [5] At one moment ("Some time") he is "all ful with feasting on your sight," as a miser might look greedily on his store, but immediately ("by and by") finds himself "cleane starued for a looke," totally bereft of a look at the friend or of the friend's looking on him ("cleane starued" contines the miser's habit of starving himself rather than spend). He neither owns ("Possessing") or chases after ("pursuing") any pleasure other than ("Save what") that which is to be had or taken from the friend. Like a miser in turmoil he is daily torn between wasting away ("pine") and gorging himself ("surfet") either by feeding ravenously ("gluttoning") on all, or, chiastically, yearning ("pine") for his "all," who is "away," his absent friend.

75.1. Whitney 74.

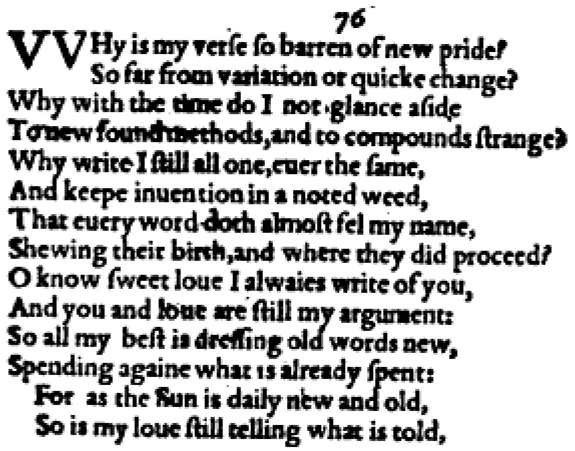
75.2. Compare Ecclus. 11.18-19, which condemns the niggard's lack of foresight: "Some man is riche by his care and nigardship, and that is the portion of his rewarde: In that he sayth, Now haue I gotten rest, and nowe will I eate and drinke of my goodes my selfe alone."

75.3. Henry Smith, *Preparative* 56.

75.4. Compare Sonnet 67.12, where nature's exchequer is "proud of many," and Sonnet 129.11, where lust, "Inioyd no sooner but dispised straight," is described as a "blisse in proofe and proud a[nd] very wo."

75.5. Compare William Warner, *The First and Second parts of Albions England* (London: Thomas Orwin, 1589) 118, who condemns "Churles," whose practice was not to employ their "Tallents" or "Their Coffers excrements" for the common man who would otherwise "haue sterued," and whose unwillingness to listen is contrasted with "the best that betterd them heard but aloofe our mones."

Sonnet 76


76
VVHy is my verſe ſo barren of new pride?
So far from variation or quicke change?
Why with the time do I not glance aſide
To new found methods, and to compounds ſtrange?
Why write I ſtill all one, euer the ſame,
And keepe inuention in a noted weed,
That euery word doth almoſt fel my name,
Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed?
O know ſweet loue I alwaies write of you,
And you and loue are ſtill my argument:
So all my beſt is dreſſing old words new,
Spending againe what is already ſpent:
  For as the Sun is daily new and old,
  So is my loue ſtill telling what is told,

76
VVHy is my verſe ſo barren of new pride?
So far from variation or quicke change?
Why with the time do I not glance aſide
To new found methods, and to compounds ſtrange?
Why write I ſtill all one, euer the fame,
And keepe inuention in a noted weed,
That euery word doth almoſt fel my name,
Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed?
O know ſweet loue I alwaies write of you,
And you and loue are ſtill my argument:
So all my beſt is dreſſing old words new,
Spending againe what is already ſpent:
  For as the Sun is daily new and old,
  So is my loue ſtill telling what is told,

If Shakespeare's volume is viewed as a sequence of 152 sonnets, plus 2 anacreontic sonnets, plus a longer poem, then he has observed the occasional practice of Elizabethan sonneteers of giving their work a tripartite structure, sonnet sequence, short [anacreontic] verses, and a sustained piece, the exemplar for which was Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti and Epithalamion* (see Introduction). It was customary also at a work's half-way point to take stock by looking backwards and forwards as Shakespeare does in Sonnet 76, the middle of 152 sonnets, the precedent for which was again Spenser's *Amoretti and Epithalamion*. It has been pointed out that its sections (89 sonnets, 9 anacreontic verses and 24 epithalamial stanzas) number 122.[1] *Amoretti* 62, which celebrates the beginning of the new year, March 25, by marking the cusp between the old and the new, at the half way point of the work introduces its second half:

> The weary yeare his race now hauing run,
> The new begins his compast course anew.

It continues by contrasting “old yeares sinnes” with “new yeares ioy” and concludes with a prayer to “change old yeares annoy to new delight.”

Whitney also begins the second part of his *A Choice of Emblemes* with an emblem entitled, “Respice, & prospice,” and the verses,

> The former parte, nowe paste, of this my booke,
> The seconde parte in order doth insue:
> Which, I beginne with IANVS double looke,
> That as hee sees, the yeares both oulde, and newe,
> So, with regarde, I may these partes behoulde,
> Perusinge ofte, the newe, and eeke the oulde. [2]

The *subscriptio* is followed by a new dedication to Sir Philip Sidney. In Sonnet 76 Shakespeare’s ‘old and new’ is not annual but diurnal, “For as the Sun is daily new and old,” as he admits to “dressing old words new.” [3]

The poet begins by lamenting the quality of his earlier verse, which is “barren of new pride,” lacking splendour and hackneyed. Why, he asks, is his verse devoid of “variation” and “quick change,” both terms used by rhetoricians? Thomas Wilson in *The Art of Rhetorique* argues that “varietie of inuention must alwaies be vsed;” “quick change,” originally a fencing term, here intends ‘lively movement.’ Puttenham in *The Arte of English Poesie* extols a poet’s “excellent sharpe and quick inuention” and the use of “*quicke conceite*.” [4] Why doesn’t he follow the times or fashion (“with the time”) and take notice of (“glance aside”) new literary modes (“new found methods” and “compounds strange”)? To “glance aside,” also a fencing term, intends ‘to look elsewhere’ (compare Sonnet 139.6, “glance thy eye aside”). [5] Both “method” and “compound” were medical terms, a “method” being a cure, a “compound” a medicine or physic that obtained a cure. In rhetoric a “compound,” the opposite of a “single,” is a word of more than one syllable; Puttenham gives “*prooue*” as an example of a single and "[*reproòue*][*approòue*][*disproòue*]" as examples of "compounds." [6] Compounds of three syllables or more Puttenham terms "stranger feet," a trait of foreign poetry and Latin grammarians. [7] 'Compounds strange' are forced neologisms or verbal constructions like "quicke change" or "noted weed."

(Sonneteers conventionally complained about their lack of variation: compare Sidney's struggle to find new modes of expression in *Astrophil and Stella* 3. 6-7:

> Ennobling new found tropes with problemes old:
> Or with strange similes, inricht each line.

and his parody of those who search out other models for their poetry or who import the "method" of the dictionary, "Ye that do Dictionaries method bring / Into your rymes, running in ratling rowes" [*Astrophil and Stella* 15.5-6]; Shakespeare's ignoring "new found methods" and "compounds strange" is probably working a convention rather than obliquely attacking some particular poet.)

Why does his writing appear monotonous ("Why write I still all one, euer the same")? Why does he confine his "inuention" within a "noted weed" (rhetoric's first part is *inventio* or "the finding out of apt matter")? 'Noted' implies well-known or habitual (see *1H4* 1.2.173, "our noted outward garments") and "weed" means garment or dress, (but playing homonymically with 'knotted weed,' a weed growing in a laid-out garden or 'knot'). The result is that every word almost embarrasses ("fel") his reputation ("name"), betraying their origin ("showing their birth") and from where they derived ("where they did proceed"). (Editors customarily emend "fel" to 'tel," giving a reading of 'every word almost bespeaks the poet's name.' But a case can be made for retaining "fel" meaning to 'humble' or 'humiliate,' compare Isa. 10.33, "the Lord God of hoastes shall . . fell the high minded" [*BB*; the *GV* has, "the hie shalbe humbled"].)

The poet addresses the friend as, "sweet loue," and affirms that he writes always of him and that he and love remain ("still," the second of three occurrences) the subject ("argument") of his verse. The orderly setting out an "argument" is the function of rhetoric's second part, *dispositio*. So his best effort is "dressing old words new" or anew;

“dressing” picks up the *motif* of clothes from “weed” and continues the medicinal imagery of “methods” and “compounds.” In spending again what is spent, he is both re-using and exhausting again what is used or exhausted. He concludes by reverting to the example of the sun, which repeatedly (“daily”) rises anew and declines (“is . . new and old”). So is his love for the friend: it can only keep telling repeatedly (“still”) what has already been told.

76.1. Edmund Spenser, *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. W.A.Oram, E.Bjorvand, R.Bond, T.H.Cain, A.Dunlop & R.Schell (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989) 637.

76.2. Whitney 108.

76.3. Sonnet 76 shares both theme and vocabulary with Sonnet 105: 76.1, “my verse,” 105.7, “Therefore, my verse;” 76.2, “variation,” 105.10, “varying to other words;” 76.2, “quicke change,” 105.11, “in this change is my inuention spent;” 76.5, “Why write I still all one, euer the same,” 105.3-4, “praises be, To one, of one, still such, and euer so;” 76.6, “keepe inuention,” 105.11, “is my inuention;” 76.7, “euery word,” 105.10, “to other words;” 76.10, “you and loue are still my argument,” 105.9, “Faire, kinde, and true, is all my argument;” 76.12, “Spending againe what is already spent,” 105.11, “is my inuention spent.”

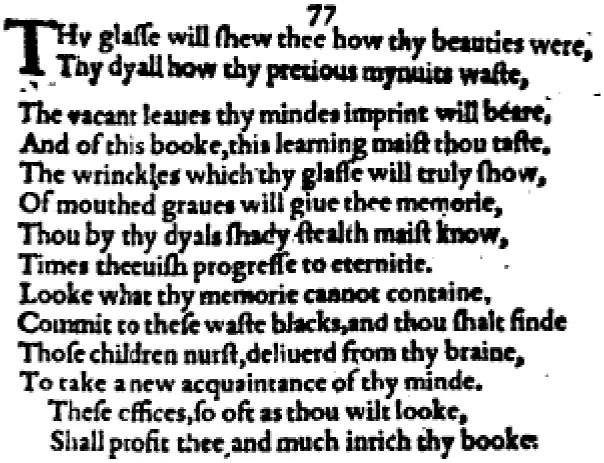
76.4. Wilson 205. John Marston in *The Scourge of Villanie*. *Three Bookes of Satyres* (London: James Roberts, 1598) Satire 10.54-57 lists among “fencing feates,” “*counter times, finctures,* slye *passataes,* / *Stramazones,* resolute *Stoccataes,* / . . the quick change, with wiping *mandritta,* / The *carricado,* with th’ *enbrocata*.” Puttenham 162 & 257.

76.5. *OED* glance v 2 improbably cites this as an instance of ‘dart aside.’ Shakespeare uses the phrase, “glaunce awaie,” as a fencing term in *Shr*. 5.2.61.

76.6. Puttenham 111.

76.7. For example, James I, *Daemonologie* 13, “*Astronomia*. Which word is compound of νομος and αστερων.”

Sonnet 77



77
THy glaſſe will ſhew thee how thy beauties were,
Thy dyall how thy pretious mynuits waſte,
The vacant leaues thy mindes imprint will beare,
And of this booke,this learning maiſt thou taſte.
The wrinckles which thy glaſſe will truly ſhow,
Of mouthed graues will giue thee memorie,
Thou by thy dyals ſhady ſtealth maiſt know,
Times theeuiſh progreſſe to eternitie.
Looke what thy memorie cannot containe,
Commit to theſe waſte blacks,and thou ſhalt finde
Thoſe children nurſt,deliuerd from thy braine,
To take a new acquaintance of thy minde.
  Theſe offices,ſo oft as thou wilt looke,
  Shall profit thee,and much inrich thy booke.

77
THy glaſſe will ſhew thee how thy beauties were, wear?
Thy dyall how thy pretious mynuits waſte,
The vacant leaues thy mindes imprint will beare,
And of this booke, this learning maiſt thou taſte.
The wrinckles which thy glaſſe will truly ſhow,
Of mouthed graues will giue thee memorie,
Thou by thy dyals ſhady ſtealth maiſt know,
Times theeuiſh progreſſe to eternitie.
Looke what thy memorie cannot containe,
Commit to theſe waſte blacks, and thou ſhalt finde blācks = blancks
Thoſe children nurſt, deliuerd from thy braine,
To take a new acquaintance of thy minde.
  Theſe offices, ſo oft as thou wilt looke,
  Shall profit thee, and much inrich thy booke.

Sonnet 77 is the middle sonnet of the sequence, if it is seen as one of 154 sonnets, prefacing a new half and serving as a dedicatory sonnet, to be followed immediately by invocations to the Muses in Sonnets 78 and 79. As a mirror sonnet, it observes the sonneteers’ occasional practice of inserting such a sonnet at the mid-point of their sequence. A precedent had been set in Edmund Spenser’s *Amoretti and Epithalamion,* where *Amoretti* 45 (of 89 sonnets) begins

> Leaue lady in your glasse of christall clene,
> Your goodly selfe for euermore to vew. [1]

Sonnet 77 is also a formally constructed piece of rhetoric: the specular image of line 1 is developed in lines 5-6, the “dyall” allusion of line 2 in lines 7-8, and the use of a book as an aide-memoire of lines 3-4 in lines 9-14. The sestet, as does Sonnet 122 in more detail, works the difference between natural and artificial or local memory.

The sonnet opens with the youth's mirror ("glasse"), which will display to him what his beauty once was ("were;" the *quarto*'s "were" is to be preferred to the standard editorial amendment, 'wear,' because of the sonnet's temporal shifts). The friend's sundial ("dyall") will show him how the moments of youth, which are "pretious" because they are few, waste or wear away. The empty leaves ("vacant;" in Sonnet 122 they are "idle") will carry on them the stamp or "imprint" of the youth's mind, so that, recorded or incharactered ("of this booke"), he may in the future experience what had earlier been learned ("taste this learning"). The use of "taste" is Latinate and dedicatory: literary tasting had classical antecedents, foremost being Pliny's where, having provided a sample of his own verses ('I sing songs with minute verses ["versibus minuitis"] like Catullus once did'), he offered them as a taste of the book he would publish ('For this taste I promise a whole book in return, which I will show you when first published. In the interim love the young man ["ama iuvenem"]'). [2]

The "wrinckles" that will be ingraved on the youth's face and plainly reflected in the mirror will prompt him to recall "mouthed graues," graves shaped like mouths that consume all (compare *MND* 5.1.369, "the graues, all gaping wide"), but hinting at pursed mouths or lined mouthings in front of a mirror, Hermione's "practis'd Smiles / As in a Looking-Glasse" (*WT* 1.2.116-17), and suggestive of engravings or records being recited. Similarly the "shady stealth" of the sundial's fescue will show the youth "Times theeuish progresse to eternitie." Time like a thief creeps slowly, furtively and without apparent movement towards the end of time (compare Sonnet 104, where the "Dyall hand" moves with "no pace perceiued").

The sestet draws on the tradition of "The Art of Memory," a system of mnemonic exercises, which was frequently taught as part of rhetoric and much practiced. The origin of the "Arte Memoratiue" was thought to have been the pseudo-ciceronian *Ad Herennium*, a treatise for orators; detailed accounts could also be found in Aquinas and

Erasmus. In England the earliest instruction books were translations of European texts, Petrus Ravenna’s *Artificiosa Memoria* of 1491, translated by Robert Copeland as *The arte of Memory* (1545), and Guigliemo Gratarolo’s *De Memoria Reparanda* of 1553, translated by William Fulwood as *The Castel of Memorie* (1562). Thomas Wilson in *The Art of Rhetorique* also described the technique (see Sonnet 122 for further detail). [3] Practitioners of the art, rhetoricians, grammarians and others, distinguished between natural and artificial memory. The natural memory was the superior but limited, was susceptible to forgetfulness, and sometimes in need of remedy. The artificial or local memory (from *locus* = place) was a received system that worked through mnemonic association using either familiar places or lists. (Compare Gratarolo’s definition of the “artificiall Memory, which of it selfe is naturall, but . . is confirmed by certayne preceptes, and consisteth in obseruations, places, and Images (or figures).”) Conventionally two types of lists were provided, one based on the alphabet, the other on the names of friends. Gratarolo gives the example of the “Latyne Alphabete,’ with which things could be associated and remembered, “in such sorte that euerye one of their names shoulde beginne with some one of euerye letter: euen as yf these were the names: an Asse, a Beare, a Cat, a Dogge . .” [4] The lists that were drawn up and memorized were associated with tables of wax and paper, often portable memory aids: Wilson explains that “The places of Memorie are resembled vnto Waxe and Paper” and “That sight printeth thinges in a mans memorie, as a Seale doth print a mans name in Waxe;” [5] Gratarolo identifies a memory place with wax, paper and tables: “The place therefore is like and is compared to waxe or paper or tables (in the which of olde time many thinges were written): also the image or figure is likned to letters or writing: and the recityng of the names is compared to the readinge or recitinge of things being reade.” When the table or page is totally familiarized, the practitioner could move backwards and forwards within its rows placing what he wanted to remember with sureness: “The place is the parte seruing in stede of the Memory and receiueth thinges as the Memorie doeth, and it is multiplied by hauyng respect forward and backward to warde the right syde and towarde the left syde, vpwarde and downewarde.” [6]

The poet instructs that whatever ("Looke what") is beyond the capacity or retention-span of the youth's memory ("what thy memorie cannot containe") must be supplemented by an aide memoire. He must "commit" what is to be recalled to "these waste bla[n]cks," the vacant leaves that have been scraped clean ("waste" = razed), but recalling the original sense of blank or whiteness that has not been inked. (Elizabethans committed things both to memory and to paper.) Then in the future he will find earlier written records "deliuerd from thy braine" as in childbirth and tended carefully like children ("children nursed").

The "offices" of the couplet are either the product of the "Arte Memoratiue," an exercise in which was technically termed an "office" (compare Petrus Ravenna, "The offyce of this arte is to excyte the mynde naturall," or Edmund Spenser, *Three Proper, and wittie, familiar Letters*: "I shall be faine to supplye the office of the Arte Memoratiue") or they are the poet's verses, the word retaining in Shakespeare's day the idea of an introductory song or verse. [7] (The Great *Book of Common Prayer* used to lay down that, before the Communion Service, an introit or "office" should be sung, which functioned as a prefatory antiphon to the service proper: "Then shall the Clerkes syng in Englishe for the office, or Introite, (as thei call it) a Psalme appoyncted for that daie.") [8] The young man's thoughts, engraved on paper and as often as they are gazed upon, will serve as "offices" to his profit and to the book's enrichment. Verses were particularly valuable in the office of memory claims Gratorolo: "Verses also doe helpe muche to the stedfastnes of the Memorie by reason of the order of the composition & good makyng." [9]

77.1. The practice can also be found in, among others, Richard Barnfield, *Cynthia. With Certaine Sonnets, and the Legend of Cassandra* (London: Humphrey Lowndes, 1598), where in a sequence of 20 sonnets Number 11 instructs, "Looke in this glasse (quoth I) there shalt thou see / The perfect form of my faelicitie," and in Henry Constable's sequence, *Diana. The praises of his Mistres* (London: James Roberts, 1592), which comprises 20 sonnets and where *Sonnetto Novo* begins, "Thine eye the glasse where I behold my hart." Others have mirror sonnets around the half-way point: Michael Drayton in *Ideas Mirrour. Amours in Quatorzains* (London: James Roberts, 1594) begins Sonnet 23 out of 51, "Wonder of Heauen, glasse of diuinitie;" Bartholomew Griffin in *Fidessa* begins Sonnet 33 out of 62, "He that would faier Fidessaes image see, / My face of force must be his looking glasse."

77.2. Pliny, *Epistulae* 4.27: "Canto carmina versibus minutis / his olim quibus et meus Catullus . . Ad hunc gustum totum librum repromitto, quem tibi ut primum publicaverit exhibebo. Interim ama iuvenem."

77.3. Petrus Ravenna, *The Art of Memory, That otherwise is called the Phenix. A boke very behouefull and profytable to all professours of scyences. Grammaryens / Rethoryciens Dialectyke / Legystes / Phylosophres & Theologiens*, trans. Robert Copeland (London: William Middleton, 1545); Guglielmo Gratarolo, *The Castel of Memorie*: *wherein is conteyned the restoring, augmenting, and conseruing of the Memorye and Remembraunce, with the safest remedies, and best preceptes therevnto in any wise apperteyning*, trans. Willyam Fulwood (London: Rouland Hall, 1562); Wilson 216-21.

77.4. Gratarolo B5^{v} & G7^{v}.

77.5. Wilson 217.

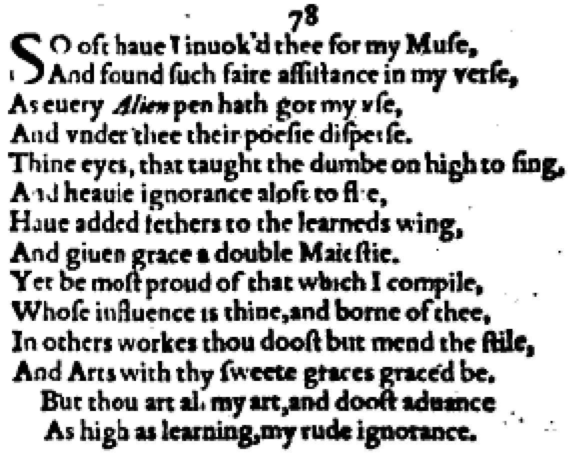
77.6. Gratarolo H5^{r}.

77.7. Ravenna A4^{r}; Edmund Spenser, *Three Proper, and wittie, familiar Letters: lately passed between two Vniuersitie men* (London: Henry Bynneman, 1580) 63.

77.8. Church of England, *The booke of the common praier and administracion of the Sacramentes, and other rites and ceremonies of the Churche: after the vse of the Churche of Englande* (London: Richard Grafton, 1549) "Order of Holy Communion."

77.9. Gratarolo F8^{v}.

Sonnet 78


78
SO oft haue I inuok’d thee for my Muſe,
And found ſuch faire aſſiſtance in my verſe,
As euery *Alien* pen hath got my vſe,
And vnder thee their poeſie diſperſe.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumbe on high to ſing,
And heauie ignorance aloft to flie,
Haue added fethers to the learneds wing,
And giuen grace a double Maieſtie.
Yet be moſt proud of that which I compile,
Whoſe influence is thine, and borne of thee,
In others workes thou dooſt but mend the ſtile,
And Arts with thy ſweete graces graced be.
  But thou art all my art, and dooſt aduance
  As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

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And Arts with thy ſweete graces graced be.
  But thou art all my art, and dooſt aduance
  As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

Invocations to a muse or muses are a feature of dedicatory sonnets and of Sonnet 78, which introduces the sequence’s second half. It is the first of a pair of dedicatory sonnets: its classical trope of ‘compilation’ will be developed in Sonnet 79. Sonnet 78 opens with the poet recalling how the youth has frequently been called upon (“inuok’d,” the standard term, compare Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 55.1, “Muses, I oft inuoked your whole ayde”) to inspire him and has found him ready to aid his verse (“assistance,” hinting at patronage). As a result “euery *Alien* pen,” either poets who have been strangers to the poet or youth or poets who have drawn on foreign sources (“pen” = poet by metonymy), have taken over or usurped the poet’s practice (“got my vse”) and have distributed in manuscript or published their poetry (“disperse”) under his name or with his patronage ("vnder thee"). Defending the English literary tradition and complaining about those who go elsewhere for inspiration was a familiar introductory resolution: Michael Drayton in the dedicatory verse to *Ideas Mirrour*, citing the warrant of Sidney not to steal from overseas, resolves not to

> trafique further then thys happy Clyme,
> Nor filch from *Portes* nor from *Petrarchs* pen,
> A fault too common in thys latter tyme.
> Diuine Syr Phillip, I auouch thy writ,
> I am no Pickpurse of anothers wit.

John Southern's address "To the Reader" in *Pandora* opens "Thou find'st not heere, neither the furious alarmes, / Of the pride of *Spaine*, or subtilnes of *France*: / Nor of the rude *English*, or mutine *Almanes*." [1]

The youth's eyes, like those of a sonneteer's mistress, have instructed those incapable of voice ("the dumbe") to sing "on high," either with elevated voice or lofty style or in the heavens. His eyes have taught ignorance, which normally weighs down ("heauie"), to rise upwards; they have, in the imping metaphor of repairing wings, "added feathers" to those already learned and thus gained a twofold glory: their own and that provided by the youth ("double Maiestie"). Pinnate imagery was a feature of invocations to the muses as the poet's aspirations soar heavenwards. Barnabe Barnes in *A Diuine Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets* acknowledges in Sonnet 1 that "*my Muse fethered with an Angels wing*, / *Diuinely mounts aloft vnto the skie*" (5-6), while Thomas Lodge in the first invocatory sonnet to *Phillis* commands, "Rowse you my muse beyond our Poets pitches . . Vse you no *Eglets* eyes, nor *Phenix* feathers, / To tower the heauen from whence heauens wonder sallies." William Smith in the Dedicatory Verses to *Chloris* complains that his "weake pend muse to flie too soone doth proue, / Before hir feathers haue their full perfection, / She soares aloft prickt on by blinde affection," and Henry Constable invokes *Diana*, asking that she "Blame not my hart for flieng vp too hie, / sith thou art cause that it this flight begunne." [2]

The poet urges the youth to take pride in his compositions ("that which I compile"). To "compile" originally meant to 'rob' or 'plunder:' Cooper's *Thesaurus* gives under

"Compilo," "to robbe" and, "Compilare sapientim alicuius, per translationem. Cic. To robbe one of his wisedome," while Henry Cockeram translates "*Compilation*" as "Theft." [3] To "compile" was a literary trope of classical origin: it was identified with Vergil, known among his contemporaries as the 'compilator,' because he stole from Homer. Jerome recounts that 'the Mantuan poet was known among the ancients as the 'compilator,' because he copied word for word certain verses of Homer.' [4] To "compile" kept its classical echo: Spenser sees himself in the Vergilian heroic tradition when he writes in *Amoretti* 80, "After so long a race as I haue run / Through Faery land, which those six books compile," and Sir Walter Ralegh in his dedicatory sonnet to *The Faerie Queene*, acclaims Spenser as "that celestiall theife."

The poet urges the youth to take pride in that which he takes from him (compare Sonnet 85 where he complains of his "tong-tide Muse" and disparages "comments . . richly compil'd"). His verse is inspired by the youth ("influence," intending in-pouring) and issues from him ("borne of thee"). By contrast, in other poets' work the youth merely corrects their versifying ("style," but hinting at a style or even a quill or pen being sharpened). Their "Arts" are only graceful by the addition of the youth's "sweet graces." In the poet's case the youth is all his art ("thou art all my art") and can move both forward and upward ("aduance") the poet's "rude ignorance," even to the pitch to which learning has risen.

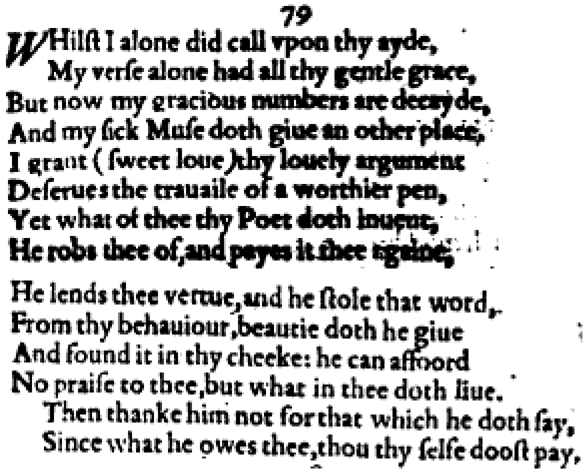
78.1. Drayton, *Ideas Mirrour* A2^r; John Southern, *The Musyque of the beautie, of his Mistresse Diana* (London: Thomas Hackett, 1584).

78.2. Barnabe Barnes, *A Divine Centurie of Spirituall Sonnets* (London: John Windet, 1595); Thomas Lodge, *Phillis*: *Honoured with Pastoral Sonnets, Elegies, and amorous delights* (London: John Busbie, 1593); Thomas Smith, *Chloris, or The Complaint of the passionate despised Shepheard* (London, Edmund Bollifant, 1596); Constable, *Diana* 2.1-2.

78.3. Cooper, *Thesaurus* compilo; Cockeram, *Compilation*.

78.4. Jerome, *Liber Hebraicarum Quaestionum in Genesim*, Praefatio: "Mantuanus vates, ut cum quosdam versus Homeri transtulisset ad verbum, compilator veterum diceretur."

Sonnet 79



79
WHilſt I alone did call vpon thy ayde,
My verſe alone had all thy gentle grace,
But now my gracious numbers are decayde,
And my ſick Muſe doth giue an other place.
I grant (ſweet loue) thy louely argument
Deſerues the trauaile of a worthier pen,
Yet what of thee thy Poet doth inuent,
He robs thee of, and payes it thee againe,
He lends thee vertue, and he ſtole that word,
From thy behauiour, beautie doth he giue
And found it in thy cheeke: he can affoord
No praiſe to thee, but what in thee doth liue.
  Then thanke him not for that which he doth ſay,
  Since what he owes thee, thou thy ſelfe dooſt pay,

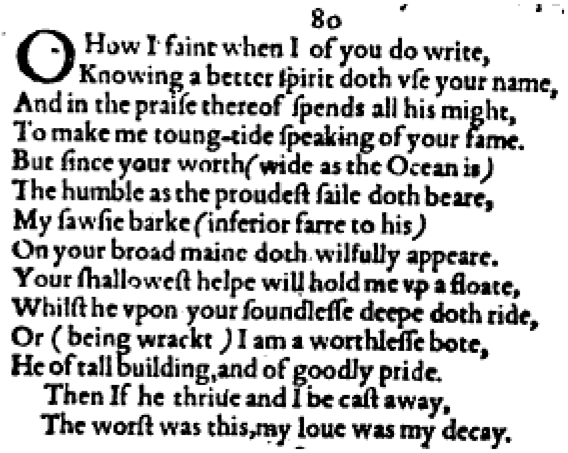
Having established in Sonnet 78 that the youth should take pride in what the poet takes from him (“compile”), the poet in Sonnet 79 attacks a rival poet who fraudulently steals from the youth. The poet concedes that during the period when he was sole claimant to the youth’s “ayde,” either poetic or pecuniary, his verse was the sole beneficiary of the youth’s “gentle grace,” his inspiration or endorsement. To ‘call upon someone’s aid’ was used of the Muses when seeking inspiration and of patrons when seeking favour. Now his verse, once made gracious by the youth, has become weak and disproportionate (“decay’d”); “numbers,” by metonymy verse, was a rhetorical feature prescribing the required “vniformitie,” essential to the third part of rhetoric, *Elocutio*. Wilson explains that, “whereas Inuention helpeth to finde matter, and Disposition serueth to place arguments: Elocution getteth words to set forth inuention, and with such beautie commendeth the matter.” The requirement is to “keepe an vniformitie, and . . a nomber in the vttering of his sentence.” [1] The poet’s muse, lacking the support of the friend, is “sick” and cedes place to a rival. The poet concedes that the beloved (“sweet loue”) is a worthy subject or “argument” for love, “argument” being the second part of rhetoric set out in the *Dispositio*. [2]

The rival poet (“thy Poet”) is now attacked: his ‘compiling’ or theft constitutes fraud, because he draws on the youth as Muse or the source of his *Inventio* in which he “findeth the matter” and, stealing it from him (“robs thee of”), returns it to him as tribute (“payes it thee againe”). When he awards the youth “vertue,” he has “stolen” the very word from the youth’s demeanour (“thy behauiour”). When he attributes to him “beautie,” he has already “found” (= ‘invented’) it “in thy cheeke,” by synecdoche his whole face. The rival poet can offer no praise to the youth other than that already embodied in the youth himself. The poet concludes by arguing that the youth must not thank the rival for his Utterance (“that which he doth say”), the last part of rhetoric, because he is already furnishing, as Muse or patron, whatever the rival is obliged to offer. An irony of the sonnet is that almost exclusively its inspiration is rhetorical nicety.

79.1. Wilson 163.

79.2. See Wilson 6, “*Dispositio*, the which is nothing els but an apt bestowing, and orderly placing of things, declaring where euery argument shall be set.”

Sonnet 80


80
O How I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better ſpirit doth vſe your name,
And in the praiſe thereof ſpends all his might,
To make me toung-tide ſpeaking of your fame.
But ſince your worth(wide as the Ocean is)
The humble as the proudeſt ſaile doth beare,
My ſawſie barke (inferior farre to his)
On your broad maine doth wilfully appeare.
Your ſhalloweſt helpe will hold me vp a floate,
Whilſt he vpon your ſoundleſſe deepe doth ride,
Or (being wrackt) I am a worthleſſe bote,
He of tall building,and of goodly pride.
Then If he thriue and I be caſt away,
The worſt was this,my loue was my decay.

80
O How I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better ſpirit doth vſe your name,
And in the praiſe thereof ſpends all his might,
To make me toung-tide ſpeaking of your fame.
But ſince your worth (wide as the Ocean is)
The humble as the proudeſt ſaile doth beare,
My ſawſie barke (inferior farre to his)
On your broad maine doth wilfully appeare.
Your ſhalloweſt helpe will hold me vp a floate,
Whilſt he vpon your ſoundleſſe deepe doth ride,
Or (being wrackt) I am a worthleſſe bote,
He of tall building, and of goodly pride.
  Then If he thriue and I be caſt away,
  The worſt was this, my loue was my decay.

Sonnet 80 continues the attack on the rival poet found in the preceding sonnets, employing as its starting point the classical trope of ‘setting sails to fame,’ used by Martial of Nerva, emperor and occasional poet, with whom he compares Tibullus. Nerva, ‘having borne the pierian garland, was humble enough (“contentus”) to wear that wreath and not to set sails to fame (“famae nec dare vela suae”). [1] The reference was known in Shakespeare’s day, Cooper’s *Thesaurus* giving a negative gloss to Martial: “Vela dare suae famae, per translationem [‘to set sails to fame by copying’]. Mart. To indeuour or attempt to get fame and praise.” [2] The image resembles that of Sonnet 86’s opening, where the fame of the rival is also presented in sailing terms.

The poet opens by lamenting his weakness ("O how I faint when I of you do write"), while the rival poet is cast as "a better spirit;" "better" is ironically self-effacing and indicates how the poet's abilities are less favoured, as the rival, who writes more spiritedly, gains greater success in poetry and patronage. (In Sonnet 85.7 he is an "able spirit.") The rival invokes the friend's name as Muse, or exploits his name as his patron, or drops his name in company, always misusing his name ("doth vse your name;" there is a hint of the sexual in "vse"). He exhausts all his energy ("spends all his might"), even his sexual energy, in praise of the friend's name, so that he might make the poet "toung-tide," when speaking of the youth's "fame." The poet's slowness of speech or silence is comparable to his "toung-tide Muse" in Sonnet 85.1.

The syntax of the second quatrain is contorted, although the sense apparent. Since both the youth's value and largesse or what he is worth to people ("worth") is as expansive as the "Ocean," it can "beare" or carry the "humble as the proudest saile;" "beare" sustains the sailing metaphor with its echo of 'bear away' or "Beare vp" (*Tmp*. 3.2.3), while 'to bear a low sail' was to humble oneself (compare *3H6* 5.1.52, "beare so low a sayle"). The rival's "proudest saile" is one that is majestic or stands tall (in Sonnet 86.1 it is a "proud full saile"). Finally a suggestion of the 'sexually aroused' cannot be dismissed, if Shakespeare is punning on 'sail' meaning 'to leap a mare,' compare Cotgrave, "Saillir . . *to ride, or leape one another, as the male doth the female*." The origin is the Latin *salire*, Cooper in his *Thesaurus* giving, "Salire dicuntur animalia ratione carentia ['animals lacking reason are said to leap']. Ouid. To leape as beasts do the females in generation." [3] The poet's "sawsie barke," a ship that is venturous, daring (compare *Tro*. 1.3.42 where a "sawcy Boate" has "weake vntimber'd sides") and impudent (compare Sonnet 138.13, "sausie Iackes"), ought to be able to appear "On your broad maine," the youth as a wide expanse of sea, even though it is of lesser pride than the rival's ("inferior farre to his"). The poet's barque appears "wilfully," as one which is "sawsie," or one full of sexual passion (will = penis), or, as in Sonnet 136, one whose name is "*Will*."

The friend's least assistance ("shallowest help" with an allusion to 'shallow water') will keep the poet from sinking ("a floate") and keep him free from debt ("a floate"), [4] even as the rival “vpon your soundlesse deepe doth ride” as a boat rides on the water, although ‘ride’ was also a euphemism for ‘copulate’ (compare Sonnet 137.7, “Be anchord in the baye where all men ride,” where the anchor’s action with its fluke is patently sexual). A “soundlesse deepe” is a depth of wealth without bottom or unfathomable (resisting plummetting) or “soundlesse” means silent and unresponsive.

On the other hand the poet might be “wrackt:” either ‘wrecked’ as a boat in the shallows, thus destroyed; or ruined as in ‘rack and ruin,’ thus reduced to penury; or finally ‘racked,’ tortured and grown “faint.” He would become a “worthlesse bote,” without value or money, while the rival is of “tall building, and of goodly pride;” “tall” is ‘upright’ and ‘lofty,’ a ‘tall ship’ being one of great size with topsails like a galleon; “goodly pride” is ‘handsome’ and ‘glorious,’ but also ‘furnished with goods.’ If the rival were so to flourish (“If he thriue”) and if the poet were to be “cast away,” either shipwrecked or ruined because dismissed (from service), then the worst factor would be that it was of his own making: his love was the cause of his “decay,” his ruined fortune or the dwindling of his resources.

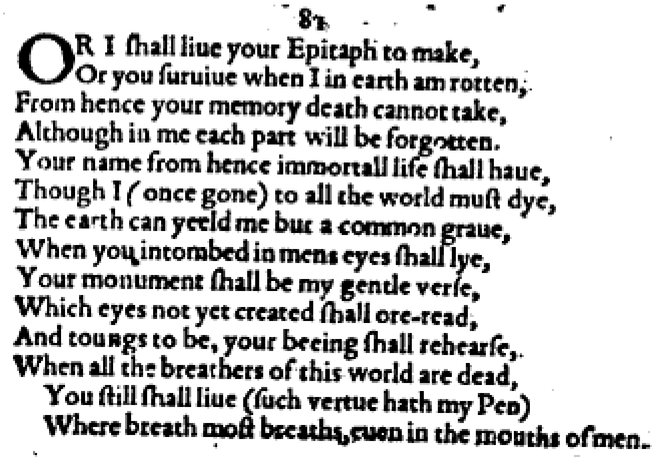
80.1. Martial, *Epigrammaton* 8.70.5-8, “Pieriam tenui frontem redimire corona / contentus, famae nec dare uela suae. / Sed tamen hunc nostri scit temporis esse Tibullum.”

80.2. Cooper, *Thesaurus* velum.

80.3. Cotgrave, *Dictionarie* Saillir; Cooper, *Thesaurus* salire.

80.4. Compare Ariosto 43.5-7, “Three times your fathers wealth, you shall ere night / Possesse, and I will set you so aflote, / You neuer shalbe poore, to your liues end.”

Sonnet 81



81.
OR I ſhall liue your Epitaph to make,
Or you ſuruiue when I in earth am rotten,
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortall life ſhall haue,
Though I (once gone) to all the world muſt dye,
The earth can yeeld me but a common graue,
When you intombed in mens eyes ſhall lye,
Your monument ſhall be my gentle verſe,
Which eyes not yet created ſhall ore-read,
And toungs to be, your beeing ſhall rehearſe,
When all the breathers of this world are dead,
You ſtill ſhall liue (ſuch vertue hath my Pen)
Where breath moſt breaths,euen in the mouths of men.

81
OR I ſhall liue your Epitaph to make,
Or you ſuruiue when I in earth am rotten,
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortall life ſhall haue,
Though I (once gone) to all the world muſt dye,
The earth can yeeld me but a common graue,
When you intombed in mens eyes ſhall lye,
Your monument ſhall be my gentle verſe,
Which eyes not yet created ſhall ore-read,
And toungs to be, your beeing ſhall rehearſe,
When all the breathers of this world are dead,
  You ſtil ſhal liue (ſuch vertue hath my Pen)
  Where breath moſt breaths, euen in the mouths of men.

Sonnet 81, the final epitaphial sonnet, is also the last of the climacteric sonnets, as the poet envisages a time when either he or the friend has completed this life. Thomas Wright describes 81 as the most "perillous" of the nonary climacterics, "They number them also by nine, and so make eighty one, the most perillous as comprehending nine times nine." [1] Sonnet 81 moves towards the *topos* of poetic immortality. The poet's claim that his "gentle verse" will be a "monument," evoking once more the *loci classici* of Horace and Ovid (see Sonnets 55-65 *inter alia*), was standard among sonneteers, compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 69.8-9, "Euen this verse vowd to eternity / shall be thereof immortall moniment," and Drayton, *Idea* 48.9-14 with its ovidian echoes,

> And though in youth, my youth vntimely perrish,
> To keepe thee from obliuion and the graue,
> Ensuing ages yet my rimes shall cherrish,
> When I entomb’d my better part shall saue;
> And though this earthly bodie fade and die,
> My name shall mount vpon eternitie. [2]

The sonnet’s opening, “Or” can be read either with Sonnet 80’s final “Or” in mind, or as ‘Whether . . Or,’ or as ‘Either . . Or.’ The first proposal is that the poet will survive the youth, so that he will be able “your Epitaph to make,” where an “Epitaph” (ἐπί + τάφος = upon + grave) is writing on a tomb, while “make” was used technically of poetic endeavour (from ποιέω = to make). The alternative, as in Sonnet 32.1, is that the youth will “suruiue” the poet as he lies “rotten” in the earth, echoing its epicedial source in Job, “And I as a rotten thing do consume away” (13.28; *BB*).

“From hence” (either ‘from this moment’ or ‘from where your name is recorded’) death cannot “take” away the memory of the youth, even if each part of the poet, lying dismembered in the ground, will go unremembered (“forgotten”); “from hence” (‘from this moment’ or ‘from this place’) the name of the youth “immortall life shall haue.” The poet’s epitaph will prevent the youth’s name from being effaced, a claim made by Ovid whose name will not be wiped away (“nomenque erit indelibile nomen”). [3] Once the poet has “gone,” however, he will be unrecorded and forgotten by the whole world: “to all the world must dye.” The earth will award (“yeeld”) him, as dividend or harvest, only “a common graue,” a grave proper to a commoner (albeit one who writes “gentle verse”), or a grave without a headstone, betokening anonymity. The youth, however, through the poet’s verse will be “intombed in mens eyes,” where “intombed” means both ‘entombéd’ or ‘contained’ in their eyes, and homophonically ‘entoméd,’ thus ‘recorded in their eyes as in a tome” or as something read. The youth’s “monument” will be the poet’s “gentle verse.” It will be “o’er-read,” ‘read over’ with a hint of repetition, by “eyes not yet created,” where “created” recalls the earlier “make.” Similarly tongues, as yet unborn (“toungs to be”), will “rehearse” the youth’s being: “rehearse” primarily intends ‘say over’ or ‘pronounce aloud,’ but as in all epitaphial sonnets, the funeral hearse to which trophies and verses were fixed is evoked as well as the idea of "numbered" as in Sidney's translation of the elegaic Ps. 22.11, "My bones might be rehearsed").

Either the end of line 11 or line 12 requires a grammatical stop."When all the breathers of this world are dead" can be construed either as 'when all those now breathing are dead' or, in keeping with the idea of immortality, 'when all who have lived in this world are dead.' Until such time the youth "still shall liue," because of the power of the poet's pen ("such vertue hath my Pen"). His continuance in the poet's verse will be spoken aloud in men's mouths, the closer to the mouth, the stronger or louder the pronouncement. Shakespeare has imitated Ovid's claim about his "opus", that concludes the *Metamorphoses*: 'while the power of Rome prevails,' Ovid asserts, 'I will be read in the mouths of men' ("ore legar populi"). [5] Shakespeare's contemporaries, finally, would not have missed the associative use of "Pen" as a feather held close to the mouth to determine the strength of the breath or whether life was present.

81.1. Wright, *Clymactericall* 3-4.

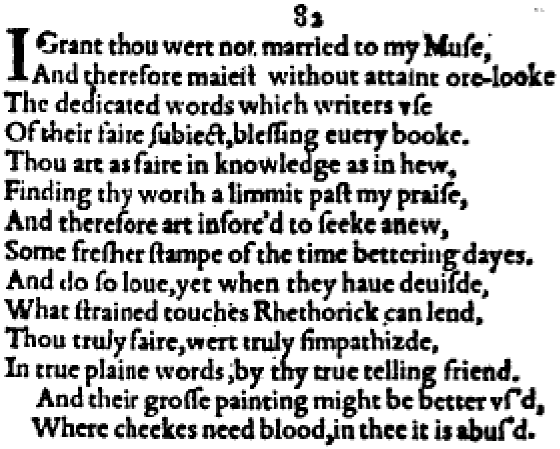
81.2. Michael Drayton, *Idea* 48 in *The Barrons Wars in the raigne of Edward the second. With Englands Heroicall Epistles* (London: I[ames] R[oberts], 1603) Q3^{v}.

81.3. Ovid, *Met*. 15.876.

81.4. See Sidney, Philip and Sidney, Mary, *The Psalms of Sir Philip Sidney and The Countess of Pembroke*, ed. J.A.C. Rathmell (New York: Doubleday, 1963) 47.42.

81.5. Ovid, *Met*. 15.878; see Sonnet 55 for a lengthier treatment.

Sonnet 82



82
I Grant thou wert not married to my Muſe,
And therefore maieſt without attaint ore-looke
The dedicated words which writers vſe
Of their faire ſubieɫt,bleſſing euery booke.
Thou art as faire in knowledge as in hew,
Finding thy worth a limmit paſt my praiſe,
And therefore art inforc'd to ſeeke anew,
Some freſher ſtampe of the time bettering dayes.
And do ſo loue,yet when they haue deuiſde,
What ſtrained touches Rhethorick can lend,
Thou truly faire,wert truly ſimpathizde,
In true plaine words,by thy true telling friend.
And their groſſe painting might be better vſ'd,
Where cheekes need blood,in thee it is abuſ'd.

82
I Grant thou wert not married to my Muſe,
And therefore maieſt without attaint ore-looke
The dedicated words which writers vſe
Of their faire ſubiect, bleſſing euery booke.
Thou art as faire in knowledge as in hew,
Finding thy worth a limmit paſt my praiſe,
And therefore art inforc’d to ſeeke anew,
Some freſher ſtampe of the time bettering dayes.
And do ſo loue, yet when they haue deuiſde,
What ſtrained touches Rhethorick can lend,
Thou truly faire, wert truly ſimpathizde,
In true plaine words, by thy true telling friend.
And their groſſe painting might be better vſ’d,
Where cheekes need blood, in thee it is abuſ’d.

Sonnet 82 begins with the poet conceding that the youth, his muse and patron, is not bound solely to him, their relationship metaphorically not being a monogamous one (“married to my Muse”). The youth, then, may “without attaint ore-looke / The dedicated words which writers vse.” An “attaint” (from *tangere* = touch, but thought wrongly to be connected with *ad* + *tinctus* = tincted or stained) was a legal term involving a conviction for a faulty verdict with a consequent stain or dishonour: in matrimony a husband was said to be “touched with his wiues default.” [1] Since the youth is not confined to the poet’s muse, he is free to look over (“ore-looke”) without fear of stain the verses dedicated to him by other writers. Their “faire subiect” is either the argument treated or the actual recipient of the dedication; “vse” implies a kind of misuse made explicit later in “abus’d.” The phrase “blessing euery booke” is a floating participial phrase and could apply to the youth (“faire subiect”), who endorses every book or the “dedicated words,” which grace the books.

The poet acclaims the youth’s right-thinking and beauty (“Thou art as faire in knowledge as in hew”), where “hew” is both natural ‘colouring’ (hue) and ‘figure’ or ‘proportion’ (hew). The youth knows his beauty to be of a measure (“limmit”) beyond the ability of the poet to praise and so is compelled (“inforc’d”) to seek again (“anew”) a “fresher stampe;” “fresher” contrasts with the poet’s old ways, while “stampe” carries a range of meanings: either an instrument for making impressions, or the impression made such as an imprint or ‘device’ on paper, or an actual printing press, or, finally, a “stamp” or seal of approval, awarded by “time bettering dayes.” As in Sonnet 32.5 (“the bett’ring of the time”) the poet acknowledges the advances poetry might make over time.

The poet, speciously, advises the youth’s to accept such “fresher” stamps, but warns against the durability of their exaggerated eloquence: to ‘devise’ is to ‘invent,’ but a ‘device’ or emblematic design was often attached to dedications; “strained touches” picks up the echo of “attaint,” and, as in Sonnet 17’s “heauenly touches,” alludes to the classical image of the final touch given to a painting or statue by the finger (*ad unguem* = to the nail) or to the final touch given to the face when tinting with cosmetic colouring. To gain effect other writers stretch the “limmit” in their application of what Thomas Wilson, following Quintillian, calls “the colours of *Rhetorique*.” Wilson censures those whose rhetoric is too highly painted and criticizes the way they “sette their wordes, placing some one a mile from his fellowes, not contented with a plaine and easie composition.” He complains that some are repetitive, always “ready to beginne againe as fresh as euer they were,” while others are tedious (“so grosse for their inuention”). [2] Repeatedly the poet insists that his efforts are in “true plaine words.” Despite the attempts of others the youth will still be “truly faire;” he will still be simply depicted or represented (“truly sympathized”) by his “true telling friend,” the ever honest poet.

The couplet makes explicit the earlier image of colouring: "grosse painting" is firstly the picturing forth of other poets, "grosse" meaning unrefined or without a proper final touch. Sidney styles such poetry as "larded." [3] Secondly the image is one of cosmetic fucus applied to cheeks, particularly sublimate and mercuric sulphide, which at court were notoriously laid on grossly or thickly. Thomas Tuke remarks that courtiers of either sex would "goe vp and downe whited and sised oer with paintings laied one vpon another, in such sort: that a man might easily cut off a curd or cheese-cake from either of their cheekes." [4] In the youth's lively cheeks such application of colour is not needed. Other writers should spend their efforts where they are needed ("where cheekes need blood"); they need not be spent on the youth, where they are merely superfluous and so an abuse ("in thee it is abus'd").

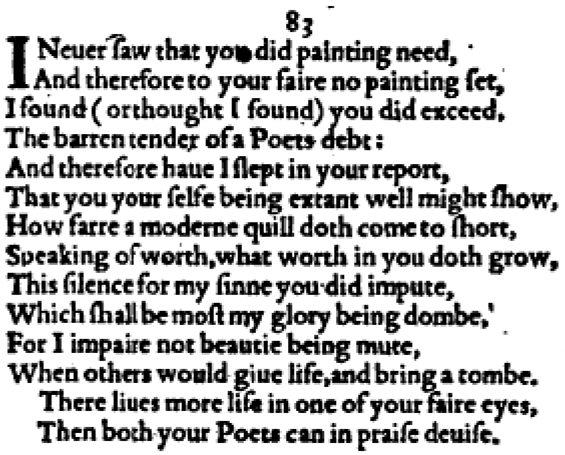
82.1. Wilson 153.

82.2. Wilson 171. The 'colours of rhetoric' or 'rhetorical colours' were standard phrases for an elaborate or "painted kinde of speech" (2 Cor. 11.5; *GV* sidenote): compare Sidney, *Arcadia* (1590) 257^v, where Amphialus' defence was "painted with rhetorical colours."

82.3. Sidney, *Defence* H1^v, "the Lirick, is larded with passionate Sonnets."

82.4. Tuke B3^v.

Sonnet 83


83
I Neuer ſaw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your faire no painting ſet,
I found (or thought I found) you did exceed,
The barren tender of a Poets debt:
And therefore haue I ſlept in your report,
That you your ſelfe being extant well might ſhow,
How farre a moderne quill doth come to ſhort,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow,
This ſilence for my ſinne you did impute,
Which ſhall be moſt my glory being dombe,
For I impaire not beautie being mute,
When others would giue life, and bring a tombe.
There liues more life in one of your faire eyes,
Then both your Poets can in praiſe deuiſe.

83
I Neuer ſaw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your faire no painting ſet,
I found (or thought I found) you did exceed,
The barren tender of a Poets debt:
And therefore haue I ſlept in your report,
That you your ſelfe being extant well might ſhow,
How farre a moderne quill doth come to ſhort,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow,
This ſilence for my ſinne you did impute,
Which ſhall be moſt my glory being dombe,
For I impaire not beautie being mute,
When others would giue life, and bring a tombe.
There liues more life in one of your faire eyes,
Than both your Poets can in praiſe deuiſe.

Sonnet 83 continues the argument of Sonnet 82, affirming the natural beauty of the youth: “I neuer saw that you did painting need.” The superfluous “painting” concerns Wilson’s “colours of *Rhetorique*,” as well as the cosmetic fuci of which the youth, already “faire . . in hew” (Sonnet 82.5), has no need. The poet, accordingly, has “to your faire no painting set;” “set” refers to the fixing of paint including cosmetics setting on the face and hints at the literary phrase, ‘setting pen to paper.’ The poet seems hesitant (“I found (or thought I found),” although later the “thought” will be revealed as a mistake, because the youth can be depicted. For the moment he thinks the youth beyond the scope of what is owed a patron (“you did exceed, / The barren tender of a Poets debt”). A “tender” is an offering which might expect reciprocation (compare *Ham*. 1.3.100, “many tenders / Of his affection"), but the poet's offerings have been "barren," either empty of themselves or fruitless of return.

"And therefore," is a rhetorical repetition. The poet has stayed silent ("slept"), when it came to reporting on the youth, so that the youth, by standing forth of his own accord ("being extant"), might show the inadequacy of a rival poet: "How farre a moderne quill doth come to short." As in Sonnet 17 the poet observes Sidney's distinction between "Auncient" and "Moderne" poetry: the "Moderne, obseruing onely number," is capable of being extended into "stretched miter" or, as here, falling short. [1] His silence is intended to reveal the inability of the rival poet(s) to express the youth's flourishing value ("what worth in you doth grow").

The youth, however, has misconstrued the poet's intent, interpreting it as a sin, "This silence for my sinne you did impute." So the poet has recourse to David's example, who wrote, "Blessed is that man to whom the Lorde wyll not impute sinne" (Rom. 4.8; *BB*). Even as he is "dumbe" his silence will be his blessedness ("glorie"). Being silent ("mute"), he doesn't damage beauty or make it worse ("impaire," from *in* + *peior* = to make worse, see Sonnet 84.10, "making worse"), even as other writers, while trying to "giue life," produce only a "tombe," to be read both as 'tomb' and 'tome.'

The couplet returns to the concluding image of Sonnet 82, "the colours of *Rhetorique*," whose copiousness, Wilson states, Quintillian likened to an over-abundance of eyes:

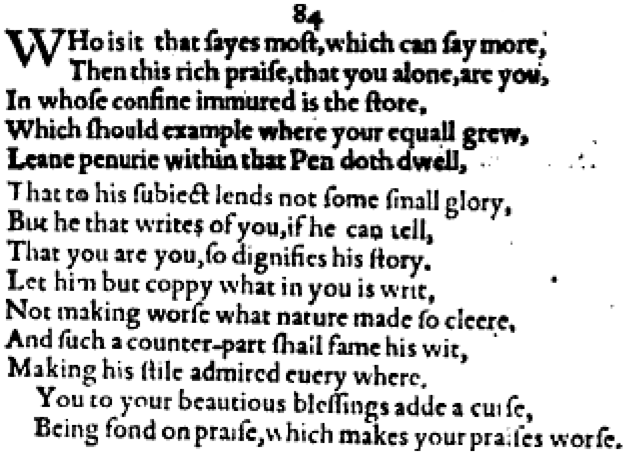
> *Quintilian* likeneth the colours of *Rhetorique* to a mans eye sight. And now (quoth he) I would not haue all the bodie to be full of eyes, or nothing but eyes: for then the other partes should wante their due place and proportion. [2]

So also in one of the youth's eyes there is more life than in all the rhetorical colour that "both your Poets can in praise deuise." As in Sonnet 82.9 "deuise" means 'invented;' "both your Poets" suggests the poet and his rival, but, given the plural in "others" at line 12, two further poets, who vie with each other to praise the youth, are possible.

83.1. Sidney, *Defence* L1^{v}.

83.2. Wilson 171.

Sonnet 84



84
WHo is it that ſayes moſt,which can ſay more,
Then this rich praiſe,that you alone,are you,
In whoſe confine immured is the ſtore,
Which ſhould example where your equall grew,
Leane penurie within that Pen doth dwell,
That to his ſubiect lends not ſome ſmall glory,
But he that writes of you,if he can tell,
That you are you,ſo dignifies his ſtory.
Let him but coppy what in you is writ,
Not making worſe what nature made ſo cleere,
And ſuch a counter-part ſhall fame his wit,
Making his ſtile admired euery where.
You to your beautious bleſſings adde a curſe,
Being fond on praiſe,which makes your praiſes worſe.

84
WHo is it that ſayes moſt, which can ſay more,
Then this rich praiſe, that you alone, are you,
In whoſe confine immured is the ſtore,
Which ſhould example where your equall grew,
Leane penurie within that Pen doth dwell,
That to his ſubiect lends not ſome ſmall glory,
But he that writes of you, if he can tell,
That you are you, ſo dignifies his ſtory.
Let him but coppy what in you is writ,
Not making worſe what nature made ſo cleere.
And ſuch a counter-part ſhall fame his wit,
Making his ſtile admired euery where.
  You to your beautious bleſſings adde a curſe,
  Being fond on praiſe, which makes your praiſes worſe.

The *quarto*’s punctuation of Sonnet 84’s octet, all commas, is problematic and requires a number of decisions of the reader. The most coherent pointing is a colon after line 2’s “praise,” the remainder of the quatrain being the praise’s content, and a question mark after line 4’s “grew.”

The sonnet contrasts the youth’s singularity with any replicated praise of it. Just as God’s individuation is contained in the self-defining phrase, “I AM THAT I AM” (Exod. 3.14; compare Sonnet 121.9, “I am that I am,” for another instance of identity versus constructed identity), so here the youth’s uniqueness is reflected in the poet’s simple definition, “you alone, are you” and “That you are you.” The poet asks: ‘who is there, who writes lavishly, who can say more than this rich praise: "you alone are you?" In your frame ("confine") is enclosed ("immured") the abundance, that should provide the pattern ("example"), wherever a matching likeness ("equall") of you might grow.' The vocabulary of "confine," "immured" or enclosed within a wall, "store" or 'stock,' and "grew," all suggest an enclosed garden, a *hortus conclusus*, the biblical and iconographic type, whose intactness reinforces the conceit of the youth's oneness (see Sonnet 6.6, "maiden gardens," for further commentary).

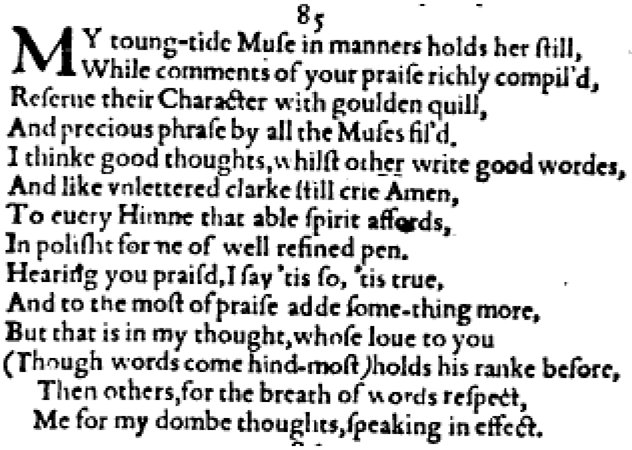
A false polyptoton ("penurie . . Pen") obtains in "Leane penurie within that Pen doth dwell." The line builds on the saying of Proverbs, "vayne wordes bryng foorth onely penurie" (14.23; *BB*) and states a rule: 'any pen (by metonymy, the poet), that cannot add "some small glory" either to his dedicatee or his argument ("subiect"), is a pen or poet marked by meagreness and deficiency (both of style and reward).' But any poet ("he that writes of you"), if he were to write simply, "you are you," would find his account graced ("dignified") both poetically and with favours; "his" means 'its,' that is the pen's, but again, by metonymy, the poet's.

The youth is advised to let another poet "coppy what in you is writ," to construct exactly in words what is inscribed ("writ") in the youth, his unique "Character," which will be developed in the next sonnet. By so doing he will avoid "making worse" or impairing (see Sonnet 83.11, "impaire") what nature has made manifest ("so cleere"). Such a matching copy ("counter-part") will make his genius famous ("fame his wit") and his "stile admired euery where;" "stile" means his manner of writing and his stylus or pen.

The couplet reverses the argument: "beautious blessings" are either the talents with which the youth has been blessed, or the praises awarded him, or the patronages he awards. But to them the youth attaches a "curse:" he is infatuated with praise to the point of foolishness ("fond on praise").[1] His addiction impairs or subverts praises offered him by rival poets: because he is flawed and lacks the natural perfection earlier ascribed to him, he cheapens any "coppy" or praise of himself.

84.1. Compare Sonnet 3.7, where "fond" is Shakespeare's rendering of Ovid's narcissistic "credule."

Sonnet 85



85
MY toung-tide Muſe in manners holds her ſtill,
While comments of your praiſe richly compil'd,
Reſerue their Character with goulden quill,
And precious phraſe by all the Muſes fil'd.
I thinke good thoughts,whilſt other write good wordes,
And like vnlettered clarke ſtill crie Amen,
To euery Himne that able ſpirit affords,
In poliſht forme of well refined pen.
Hearing you praiſd,I ſay 'tis ſo, 'tis true,
And to the moſt of praiſe adde ſome-thing more,
But that is in my thought,whoſe loue to you
(Though words come hind-moſt)holds his ranke before,
Then others,for the breath of words reſpect,
Me for my dombe thoughts,ſpeaking in effect.

85
MY toung-tide Muſe in manners holds her ſtill,
While comments of your praiſe richly compil'd,
Reſerue their Character with goulden quill,
And precious phraſe by all the Muſes fil'd.
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But that is in my thought, whoſe loue to you
(Though words come hind-moſt) holds his ranke before,
  Then others, for the breath of words reſpect,
  Me for my dombe thoughts, ſpeaking in effect.

Sonnet 85, one of the cleverest of the sequence, expands the poet's singular charactering of the youth foreshadowed in Sonnet 84. The "toung-tied" character of the poet's muse, his inability to give voice to his thoughts, draws on the old proverb, "the tongue is called the Character of the mind." [1] Being "tongue-tide," the muse holds herself "still," either 'keeps herself silent,' or 'keeps herself unmoving' (because 'tied') and hence silent, or finally 'holds her stylus' in a 'mannered' way. The phrase, "in manners," introduces the classical genre of a 'mannered or characterizing poem,' Cicero's "poema moratum," or Horace's "morata recte / fabula," 'a tale rightly mannered or characterised.' (Cicero in turn is drawing on Aristotelian rhetoric, where ἦθος, manners or character, is the prerequisite of a speaker.) [2] The poet is thus being literarily proper and his muse is acting in character (“in manners”) by being silent or not characterizing the youth - other than “you are you” (Sonnet 84.8).

At the same time other “comments,” other treatments of the young man, are being richly “compiled,” ‘assembled’ but also ‘derivative’ and ‘stolen from elsewhere’ (“compiled” is from *cum* + *pilare* = to steal) thus evoking the classical example of the great “compilator,” Vergil, so called because he stole from Homer. (The term is used by the poet of himself in Sonnet 78.) Their praises ‘keep’ (“Reserue”) their “Character with goulden quill.” “Character” firstly suggests an ancient stylus which inscribes characters (χαρακτήρ = stylus or style) and secondly the ‘manner’ in which they write their praises. A “goulden quill” produces lofty language, that draws on classical precedents: compare the “golden quill,” with which Spenser inscribes his beloved on his heart (*Amoretti* 85.10) or the classical (“*Moeonian*”) quill of Homer which is out-blazoned in *The Faerie Queene*. [3] The praises are marked with a “precious phrase,” phrases of high esteem but especially egregious phrases, which are shaped (“fil’d”) by recourse to the other nine muses of antiquity, “all the muses” (with a play on filing or sharpening a quill). Thirdly, anticipating the coming liturgical metaphor, “Character” intends an indelible “marke in the soule, which is neuer blotted out.” [4] In pre-reformation (and Counter-Reformation) theology it was imprinted by those Sacraments that were not iterated, Baptism, Confirmation, and Orders; as Francis Mason affirms, “in Baptisme, and holy Orders, there is imprinted an indeleble Character.” [5] In the case of Baptism it gave a person his Christian individuality, overcame anonymity, and could never be defaced or scored out. Post-reformation divines contested the nature and existence of such a character: the character of Baptism was rethought as “the indelible character of his election,” [6] while the character of priesthood, in the words of James I the “Clericall character,” was denied, although James would admit to the “politike character of Regall Maiesty.” [7] Morton Eudes succinctly sums up the view in Shakespeare’s day: “there is not any such indeleble or perpetuall Character, which hindereth a Clergie man to take againe vpon him the estate of a secular man.” [8]

The poet casts himself as one, whose character is like that of clerks who are charactered, but who could not read or write characters, an "vnlettered clarke." Monasteries were notorious for illiterate clerks who attended offices or services not knowing the Latin in which the offices were chanted or sung, who exclaimed at the end of a psalm or hymn, "Amen." The poet might "thinke good thoughts," but cannot give voice to them. He can merely follow the "good words" of other poets and like an old clerk proclaim "Amen" or 'it is so,' the final endorsing of what had been sung. Ironically the poet, unlike the unlettered clerk, is able to translate the "Amen" into English, "'tis so, 'tis true," appending it to every paean which the other "able spirit" offers up (in Sonnet 80.2 he is "a better spirit"). The rival's praises are "In polisht forme of well refined pen." The image of a stylus or quill (Latin = *penna*), that is well sharpened, is a favourite of Cicero and his successors and derives from the jeweller, who with his scalpel cuts and polishes gems (Pliny writes of 'gems that must be cut and filed' to make them more precious, an allusion worked into the earlier "precious phrase" that is "fil'd" by the Muses.) [9] Cicero transfers the image to the spoken word: he speaks of things that are 'polished by me more refinedly' and a 'stylus that refines perfectly.' [10] The rival poet through such literary endeavour produces "the most of praise," its uttermost expression, to which the poet adds "something more," a concluding endorsement. What the poet might have said, the expressing of his love, remains confined to his thoughts. His love for the youth retains its superior ranking, even though his words come after ("hindmost"). The youth, finally, is instructed to have regard for the puffed-up words of others, their "breath of words," but to value the poet for his "dumb thoughts," his silent words, which speak "in effect" or in reality (used generally in opposition to 'in word').

85.1. John Calvin, *A harmonie vpon the the three Euangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke with the commentarie of M. Iohn Caluine: faithfully translated out of Latine into English, by E.P* (London: Thomas Dawson, 1584) 334, "As also in an old prouerb the tongue is called the Character of the mind;" compare Culmann, *Sententiae* (1612) 18, "Speech is the character (the ingrauen forme, picture, or image) of the minde."

85.2. Cicero, *Caecilium* 1.31.66; Horace, *Ars Poetica* 319-20; Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.2.3.

85.3. Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 2.10.3.1.

85.4. Perkins, *Galatians* 255.

85.5. Francis Mason, *The Consecration of the Bishops in the Church of England: With their succession, Iurisdiction, and other things incident to their calling*: *As Also of the Ordination of Priests and Deacons* (London: Robert Barker, 1613) 82.

85.6. William Barlow, *A Defence of the Articles of the Protestants Religion, in aunsweare to a libell lately cast abroad* (London: John Wolfe, 1601) 26.

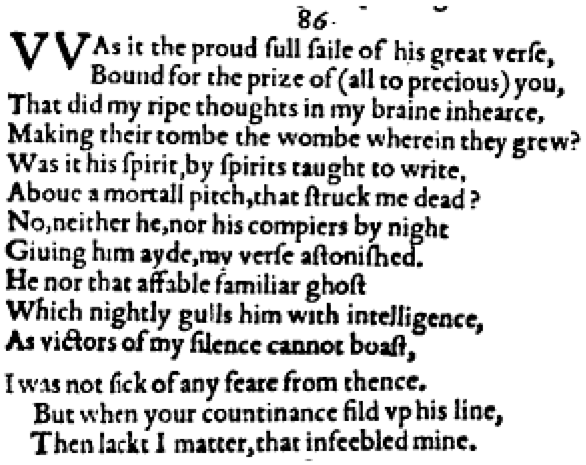
85.7. James I, *A Remonstrance of the Most Gratious King Iames I. King of Great Brittaine, France, and Ireland . . Against an Oration of the most Illustrious Card. of Perron* (Cambridge: Cantrell Legge, 1616) 6 & 25.

85.8. Morton Eudes, *Catholique Traditions* (London: W[illiam] Standby, 1609) 194.

85.9. Pliny, *Hist*. 36.7.10.54, "gemmisque etiam scalpendis atque limandis."

85.10. Cicero, *Academicae Quaestiones* 1.1.2, "limantur a me politius;" *De Oratore* 3.49.190, "stilus hoc maxime . . limat."

Sonnet 86


86
VVAs it the proud full ſaile of his great verſe,
Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my braine inhearce,
Making their tombe the wombe wherein they grew?
Was it his ſpirit,by ſpirits taught to write,
Aboue a mortall pitch,that ſtruck me dead ?
No,neither he,nor his compiers by night
Giuing him ayde,my verſe aſtoniſhed.
He nor that affable familiar ghoſt
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my ſilence cannot boaſt,
I was not ſick of any feare from thence.
But when your countinance fild vp his line,
Then lackt I matter,that infeebled mine.

86
VVAs it the proud full ſaile of his great verſe,
Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my braine inhearce,
Making their tombe the wombe wherein they grew?
Was it his ſpirit, by ſpirits taught to write,
Aboue a mortall pitch, that ſtruck me dead?
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Giuing him ayde, my verſe aſtoniſhed.
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Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my ſilence cannot boaſt,
I was not ſick of any feare from thence.
  But when your countinance fild vp his line,
  Then lackt I matter, that infeebled mine.

Sonnet 86 has been much searched to uncover the identity of the rival poet, variously Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, Barnabe Barnes, Samuel Daniel, *et cetera*; more recently an earlier case for George Chapman, translator of Homer's *Iliad*, has been developed by Kerrigan and Evans, who focus particularly on the lucubratory elements of the sonnet. What might count against Chapman's candidacy, however, is that he had a history of such bad luck with patrons – he continually battled peniury – that any threat he might pose to this poet is problematic.

Sonnet 86, although separated from Sonnet 80's "proudest saile," opens with its naval metaphor: "WAs it the proud full saile of his great verse, / Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you." The lines picture a tall corsair with upright ("proud") sails, "full" of wind or "spirit," moving at pace towards its "prize." The rival's "great verse" is destined ("bound") for the friend who is "all to precious," either 'most precious to the poet,' or 'most rewarding to the rival,' because he is the more favoured (in Sonnet 84.4 he produces a "precious phrase"). The rival's verse causes the poet's "ripe thoughts," those ready to bear fruit, to remain shut up in his head as in a bier or 'hearse' ("in my braine inhearce"). They are still-born ("Making their tombe the wombe wherein they grew"), the image of poetic still-birth being standard (compare Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 50. 1 & 11, where "the fulnes of my thoughts of thee" find "their death in birth").

The rival poet's "spirit" of which the poet now asks questions, is his poetic daemon (as in *Ant*. 2.3.20, "Thy Daemon, that thy spirit which keepes thee"), the inner genius of supernatural origin that attends poets and on which they draw. His spirit is attended and taught by other "spirits" to write above "mortall pitch;" "pitch" is either the height to which something might rise (see *R3* 3.7.188, "the pitch, and height of his degree"), hence above an earthly ("mortal") level; or it is a musical metaphor (compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 80.12, "my spirit to an higher pitch will rayse"); or it is a falconine image, "pitch" being the apogee a hawk reaches before swooping on its "prize," so rendering it dead ("mortall"). Was it the rival's spirit or his accompanying spirits that struck the poet's thoughts "dead?"

The poet allows that neither the rival poet nor "nor his compiers by night," who give him "ayde," have reduced his verse to silence ("astonished"). His "compiers by night" are his nocturnal companion "spirits." The lucubratory was the time-hallowed classical tradition of writing at night by candle light, Martial's "nox lucubrata" or "A night that one watcheth or studieth by candle." [1] Quintillian writes of the lucubratory 'silence of the night, closed study, and single light.' From Cicero onwards it was a feature of dedicatory verses: at the start of *Paradoxia Stoicorum* Cicero asks Brutus to accept his "parvum opusculum lucubratum" ('small work written by night'). [2]

Neither the rival nor his "affable familiar ghost" can claim any victory; "affable" means "gracious in wordes." [3] A "familiar ghost," an 'intimate' one, is either the "spiritus familiaris," "a familiar spirit, or a God of the houshold," the Lares, who as gods of the hearth kept watch by the householder particularly at night; or it could be a good angel (Milton's Raphael is "the affable Angel"); or, more ominously, since it operates "nightly" it could be a malignant spirit, such as the "bad Angell designed also to euery one which allureth to wickednesse." [4] The spirit "nightly gulls," either 'intoxicates' or 'deceives' the rival night after night with inspiration ("intelligence"). The rival and his spirit have not caused the poet's silence: he did not sicken ("sick") or become "faint" (Sonnet 80.1) from that quarter. The couplet turns to the friend: it is only when his "countinance," both his 'face' and his 'patronage' ("countinance" was a euphemism for patronage) either 'filled up' or 'polished' ("fild") the rival poet's muse or subject matter ("line"), that the poet's attempts to write verse were found wanting: "Then lackt I matter, that infeebled mine."

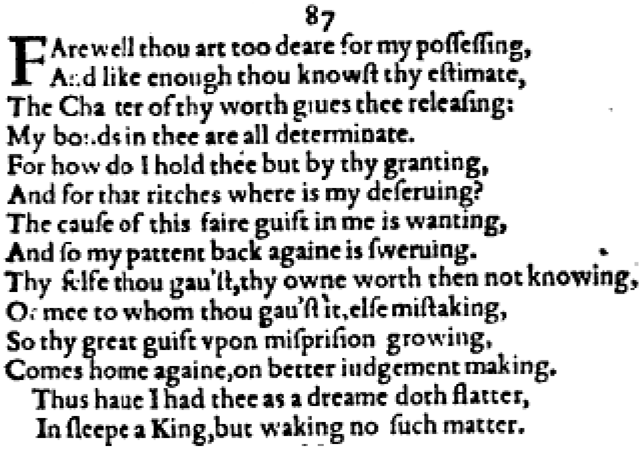
86.1. Martial 4.90.9; Cooper, *Thesaurus* lucubro.

86.2. Quintillian, *Institutiones* 10.3.25, "lucubrantes silentium noctis et clusum cubiculum et lumen unum;" Cicero, *Paradoxia Stoicorum* Proemium.

86.3. Cooper, *Thesaurus* affabilis.

86.4. Rider, *Dictionarie* familiaris; John Milton, *Paradise Lost* 7.42; Salkeld 262.

Sonnet 87


87
FAre well thou art too deare for my poſſeſſing,
A::d like enough thou knowſt thy eſtimate,
The Cha ter of thy worth giues thee releaſing:
My bo:.ds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,
And for that ritches where is my deſeruing?
The cauſe of this faire guift in me is wanting,
And ſo my pattent back againe is ſweruing.
Thy ſelfe thou gau'ſt,thy owne worth then not knowing,
Or mee to whom thou gau'ſt it,elſe miſtaking,
So thy great guift vpon miſpriſion growing,
Comes home againe,on better iudgement making.
Thus haue I had thee as a dreame doth flatter,
In ſleepe a King,but waking no ſuch matter.

87
FArewell thou art too deare for my poſſeſſing,
And like enough thou knowſt thy eſtimate,
The Charter of thy worth giues thee releaſing:
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,
And for that ritches where is my deſeruing?
The cauſe of this faire guift in me is wanting,
And ſo my pattent back againe is ſweruing.
Thy ſelfe thou gau’ſt, thy owne worth then not knowing,
Or mee to whom thou gau’ſt it, elſe miſtaking,
So thy great guift vpon miſpriſion growing,
Comes home againe, on better iudgement making.
  Thus haue I had thee as a dreame doth flatter,
  In ſleepe a King, but waking no ſuch matter.

Sonnet 87 is marked by its feminine rhymes: 12 of the 14 lines, although end-stopped, contain 11 syllables. Having dealt with the rival poet, the poet now takes leave of the friend, bidding him, “Farewell,” and adjudging the contract between them void, the youth being absolved from any obligation to him. As in Sonnet 13 and to a lesser extent Sonnet 18 the conceit employed to explain their separation is that of legal conveyancing. The youth is ‘too costly’ or ‘too precious’ for the poet physically or emotionally to possess (“Too deare for my possessing”). In all likelihood (“like enough”) the youth knows his own value (“estimate”), although later it will become clear he doesn’t. A “Charter,” John Cowell writes in *The Interpreter*, is a contract or “written evidence of things done betweene man and man,” granting rights to the possession of property, especially relating to the conveyancing of landed property. He distinguishes between “charters of the King, and charters of priuate persons." [1] The legal instrument between the poet and the friend has in it a right to be released from it: the youth can therefore be relieved of the charter or relieve the poet of it ("giue thee releasing"). The obligations on the poet, however, are "all determinate." Normally the 'determination of a lease' or the 'determination of a charter' occurred when the lessee died (without issue), the use of the property or right to it reverting to the lessor. The poet admits that any rights or duties ("bonds'), granted to him under the charter, have ceased and reverted back to the lessor, the youth.

He further admits that any charter entitling him to possess ("hold") the youth is of the youth's "granting." On what grounds ("where"), he asks, can he justify his retaining such wealth ("ritches" = richesse)? He has not satisfied or has defaulted on ("in me is wanting") the charter's legal provision ("cause"), which has become a *causa deficiens* or deficient cause, the 'gage,' by which possession was granted, being dead. Hence the "pattent," the licence or title to sole possession of a piece of property to the exclusion of others, the youth, has been forfeited back to the youth ("back again is sweruing"). A "pattent" (from *patere* = to lie open, hence an opening) is used elsewhere by Shakespeare sexually (see *MND* 1.1.81, "Ere I will yeeld my virgin Patent vp / Vnto his Lordship").

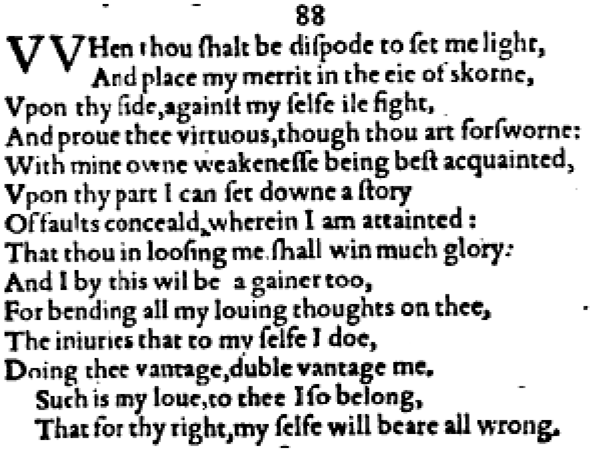
The youth had granted the gift of himself to the poet, not knowing his own value: grounds for the voiding of a contract if the ignorance were not culpable. Or the youth gave himself to the poet, misjudging the poet's worth: a further grounds for the invalidity of a contract. So the youth's contract granting himself to the poet is based on a "misprision," an oversight or neglect; Cowell writes that it "signifieth in our common lawe, neglect, or negligence, or ouersight: As for example, Misprision of treason . . the concealement, or not disclosing of knowne treason, for the which the offendours are to suffer imprisonment during the Kings pleasure, loose their goods, and the profits of their lands, during their liues." [2] The youth's gift of himself thus falls under the 'law of growing-to,' by which property reverted to the lessor, ("vpon misprision growing;" see Sonnet 18, commentary). His gift of himself is escheated to himself ("comes home againe"). All this has occurred because of his wiser judgement ("on better judgement making").

The couplet emphasizes the unreality of the past: "Thus haue I had thee" suggests an emotional and a physical "possessing," but only within the false enhancement of a dream ("as a dreame doth flatter"). The final line aphoristically asserts: "In sleepe a King, but waking no such matter." What was seen in a royal light when dreaming is seen as spurious when awake.

87.1. John Cowell, *The Interpreter: Or Booke Containing the Signification of Words*: *Wherein is set foorth the true meaning of all, or the most part of such Words and Termes, as are mentioned in the Law Writers, or Statutes of this victorious and renowned Kingdome* (Cambridge: John Legatt, 1607) N4^{v} *Charter*.

87.2. Cowell, *Interpreter* Xx3^{r} *Misprision*.

Sonnet 88



88

VVHen thou ſhalt be diſpode to ſet me light,
And place my merrit in the eie of skorne,
Vpon thy ſide,againſt my ſelfe ile fight,
And proue thee virtuous,though thou art forſworne:
With mine owne weakeneſſe being beſt acquainted,
Vpon thy part I can ſet downe a ſtory
Of faults conceald,wherein I am attainted:
That thou in looſing me,ſhall win much glory:
And I by this wil be a gainer too,
For bending all my louing thoughts on thee,
The iniuries that to my ſelfe I doe,
Doing thee vantage,duble vantage me.
Such is my loue,to thee I ſo belong,
That for thy right,my ſelfe will beare all wrong.

88
VVHen thou ſhalt be diſpode to ſet me light, diſpoſde
And place my merrit in the eie of skorne,
Vpon thy ſide, againſt my ſelfe ile fight,
And proue thee virtuous, though thou art forſworne:
With mine owne weakeneſſe being beſt acquainted,
Vpon thy part I can ſet downe a ſtory
Of faults conceald, wherein I am attainted:
That thou in looſing me, ſhall win much glory:
And I by this wil be a gainer too,
For bending all my louing thoughts on thee,
The iniuries that to my ſelfe I doe,
Doing thee vantage, duble vantage me.
Such is my loue, to thee I ſo belong,
That for thy right, my ſelfe will beare all wrong.

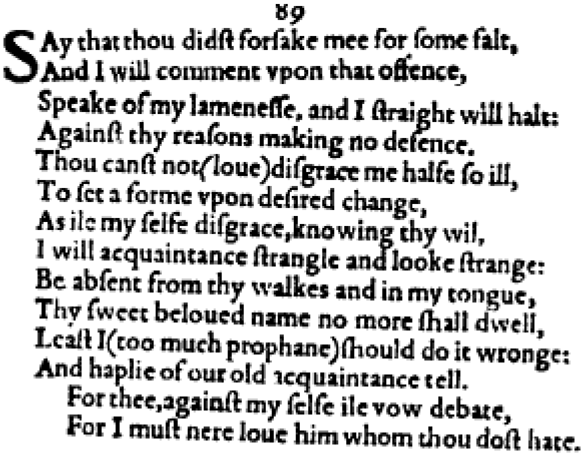
Sonnet 88 is the adversative to Sonnet 87. The poet envisages a time when the friend might undervalue or despise him ("When thou ſhalt be dispode to set me light"). 'To set light' was a colloquialism intending to 'underweigh' or 'underestimate the worth.' It introduces the sonnet's main metaphor, that of the balance and the balance register. 'To dispose the balance' was to arrange the weights equally on the scales with neither side too heavy nor too light (like the figure 88); a false balance was said to be 'light-poised,' while a false account was said to be 'light.' The pivot on which the scales' beam was poised was sometimes called the "eye," which to weigh correctly must be kept upright and not inclined to a side. (Compare the extended conceit in *Rom*. 1.2.93-4: "Herselfe poys'd with herselfe in either eye: / But in that Christall scales, let there be waid . ." or Wecker's instruction to the reader of his *Chyrurgerie*, "with . . an vpright eye, weigh, and consider.") [1] The suggestion of the feet (of a balance) being unequal ('*dis*' + '*pode*') is lost sadly, if the *quarto*’s “dispode” is emended, as is customary, to ‘disposed.’ The poet conceives a time when the friend will be prepared to “place my merrit in the eie of skorne,” scornfully to weigh his worth with the hint of placing it in the centre of scorn as ‘in the eye of the wind.’ At that time the poet will weigh in on the friend’s side and fight against himself (“Vpon thy side, against my selfe ile fight”). Coming down on his side, the poet will prove him virtuous, even though he has been unfaithful (“forsworne”).

Since the poet knows his own shortcomings better than others (“being best acquainted”), he can record in an account (“set downe”) on the youth’s side of the ledger (“Vpon thy part”) a history of entries (“a story”) detailing hidden betrayals (“faults conceald”), by which he becomes subject to dishonour or attainder (“wherein I am attainted”), thus losing all his possessions including the youth and extinction of all his rights including his rights to the youth. Sonnet 87’s “misprision” is here used in its technical sense of faults or treasons not disclosed, the punishment for which in the case of “Misprision of treason” was, in Cowell’s words, “to loose their goods” (see Sonnet 87 commentary). The poet will manipulate the accounts, so that the youth, relieved of any obligation to the poet (“thou loosing me”), will “win much glory,” the balance being to his credit.

The poet can now claim that in rigging the balance of the accounts, he also will be a winner (“be a gainer”), because, by not being upright and inclining (“bending”) all his “louing thoughts” toward the youth and in directing towards him all the harms the poet does himself (“the iniuries that to myself I doe”), he will be working to the youth’s advantage and will thus doubly profit himself (“duble vantage me”). A ledger contained ‘sheets of advantage’ or profit, while ‘to vantage’ meant to falsify accounts: the falsifying works to each’s advantage. The couplet returns to Sonnet 87’s idea of possession: “Such is my loue, to thee I so belong.” The poet’s love is such that he will carry the whole weight of any wrongs (“beare all wrong”) for the sake of what is properly the youth’s or for the sake of his being correctly weighed (“for thy right”).

88.1. Johann Wecker, *A Compendious Chyrurgerie: Gathered, & translated (especially) out of Wecker . . by Ihon Banester* (London: Iohn Windet, 1585) *6^{v}.

Sonnet 89


89
SAy that thou didſt forſake mee for ſome falt,
And I will comment vpon that offence,
Speake of my lameneſſe, and I ſtraight will halt:
Againſt thy reaſons making no defence.
Thou canſt not(loue)diſgrace me halfe ſo ill,
To ſet a forme vpon deſired change,
As ile my ſelfe diſgrace,knowing thy wil,
I will acquaintance ſtrangle and looke ſtrange:
Be abſent from thy walkes and in my tongue,
Thy ſweet beloued name no more ſhall dwell,
Leaſt I(too much prophane)ſhould do it wronge:
And haplie of our old acquaintance tell.
For thee,againſt my ſelfe ile vow debate,
For I muſt nere loue him whom thou doſt hate.

89
SAy that thou didſt forſake mee for ſome falt,
And I will comment vpon that offence,
Speake of my lameneſſe, and I ſtraight will halt:
Againſt thy reaſons making no defence.
Thou canſt not (loue) diſgrace me halfe ſo ill,
To ſet a forme vpon deſired change,
As ile my ſelfe diſgrace, knowing thy wil,
I will acquaintance ſtrangle and looke ſtrange:
Be abſent from thy walkes and in my tongue,
Thy ſweet beloued name no more ſhall dwell,
Leaſt I (too much prophane) ſhould do it wronge: proface (*in Folger & Yale Wright*)
And haplie of our old acquaintance tell.
For thee, againſt my ſelfe ile vow debate,
For I muſt nere loue him whom thou doſt hate.

Sonnet 89 argues that the friend has forsaken the poet, giving no reason which might allow the poet to reply. The argument evokes that of Ps. 38, where David, "*forsaken of his friends*," complains that "I am bowed, *and* crooked very sore," laments that "My louers and my friends stand aside," describes how, "I as a deafe man heard not, and *am* as a dumme man, *which* openeth not his mouth. Thus am I as a man, that heareth not, and in whose mouth *are* no reproofes. . . Surely I am ready to halte (sidenote: I am without hope to recouer my strength), and my sorow *is* euer before me," and concludes the psalm, "Forsake me not, O Lord" (*GV*).

The sonnet’s opening is an outburst, “Say that thou didst forsake mee for some falt.” If the friend would disclose what the fault was, the poet could respond or defend himself, (“I will comment vpon that offence”). (The line is metrically awkward and the sonnet fails to observe the strict division between octet and sestet.) The youth is told to “Speake of my lamenesse,” a moral deficiency or social awkwardness rather than a physical impairment. The sense of ‘lame’ metre or unevenness of metrical feet is also relevant because of Sonnet 89’s closeness to sonnets concerning the rival poet (compare *Ham*. 2.2.324-5, “and the Lady shall say her minde freely, or the blanke Verse shall halt for’t”). The poet will “straight,” ‘immediately’ as well as ‘not crookedly,’ “halt,” either ‘desist from,’ or, more likely, ‘lack the strength’ (see *GV* sidenote above) to make defence against the youth’s spoken accusations.

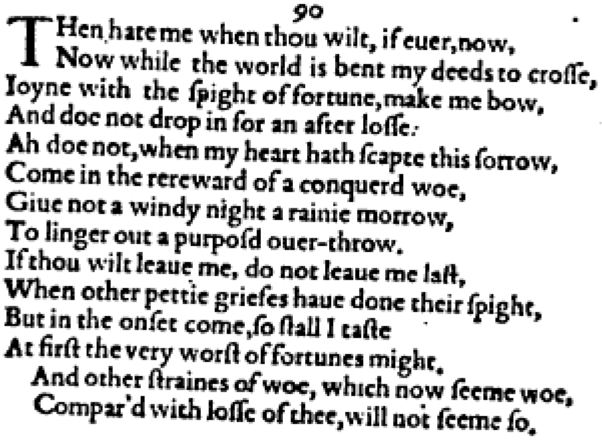
The beloved (“loue”) cannot shame or let the poet fall from favour (“disgrace”) half as much as the poet’s own actions. “To set a forme vpon” is an expression unique to Shakespeare, who uses it once elsewhere to mean ‘to impose form on a void.’ [1] Here it means to set on something a stamp or seal of approval (“forme”). The youth, confirming his abandonment of the poet, would not shame the poet nearly as much as the poet would disgrace himself, if he were to know the youth’s intention (“knowing thy wil”).

The poet will “acqaintance strangle;” he will ‘choke back upon’ or ‘not admit to’ their friendship. Using a false polyptoton, “strangle” / “strange,” he will “looke strange,” either look askance or away, or appear awkward or unmannered. He will absent himself from the youth’s promenades (“Be absent from thy walkes”). He will not allow the youth’s name, now a “sweet beloued name,” to linger on his tongue (“in my tongue / Thy . . name no more shall dwell”), lest he should do it a disservice (“do it wrong”). His state is one of being “too much prophane;” ‘profane’ (from *pro* + *fanum* = on the threshold of the temple) intended those on the outside, those not initiated or who haven’t pronounced ‘vows.’ From Vergil’s “Procul o, procul este, profani” (‘Away, away, profane ones’) and Horace’s “Odi profanum volgus et arceo. Favete linguis” (‘I hate the profane crowd and exclude it. Let your tongues be silent’) ‘profane’ was used of those who must remain distant and outside the coterie. (Horace will sing only to the elected youth of Rome [“virginibus puerisque”].) Here the poet will remain remote from the youth and his friends: if his promenades took place in private gardens, as was customary, then the poet will stay outside the enclosure and literarily absent from his inner circle. Excluding himself and staying silent, he will avoid the chance of accidentally (“haplie”) talking of their earlier friendship, their “old acquaintance.” The couplet has him prepared to “vow” that he will take the friend’s side against himself in any argument (“debate;” compare Sonnet 88.3. “Vpon thy side, against my selfe ile fight”), because he must never love someone (himself), whom the youth hates (“For I must nere loue him whom thou dost hate”).

89.1. *Jn*. 5.7.26, “To set a forme on that indigest / Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude.” Compare Ovid, *Met*. 1.7, “Quem dixere chaos, rudis indigestaque moles.”

89.2. Vergil, *Aen*. 6.258, a translation of Callimachus’ Greek; Horace, *Odes* 3.1.1-2. Compare Ben Jonson, *Hymenaei: Or The Solemnities of Masque, and Barriers, Magnificently performed on the eleventh, and twelfth Nights, from Christmas; At Court* (London: Valentine Sims, 1606) Opening Song 1-3: “*Bid all profane away*; / *None here may stay* / *To view our* Mysteries.”

Sonnet 90



90

THen,hate me when thou wilt, if euer,now,
Now while the world is bent my deeds to croſſe,
Ioyne with the ſpight of fortune,make me bow,
And doe not drop in for an after loſſe:
Ah doe not,when my heart hath ſcapte this ſorrow,
Come in the rereward of a conquerd woe,
Giue not a windy night a rainie morrow,
To linger out a purpoſd ouer-throw.
If thou wilt leaue me, do not leaue me laſt,
When other pettie griefes haue done their ſpight,
But in the onſet come,ſo ſtall I taſte
At firſt the very worſt of fortunes might.
And other ſtraines of woe, which now ſeeme woe,
Compar'd with loſſe of thee,will not ſeeme ſo.

90
THen hate me when thou wilt, if euer, now,
Now while the world is bent my deeds to croſſe,
Ioyne with the ſpight of fortune, make me bow,
And doe not drop in for an after loſſe:
Ah doe not, when my heart hath ſcapte this ſorrow,
Come in the rereward of a conquerd woe,
Giue not a windy night a rainie morrow,
To linger out a purpoſd ouer-throw.
If thou wilt leaue me, do not leaue me laſt,
When other pettie griefes haue done their ſpight,
But in the onſet come, ſo ſtall I taſte ſhall
At firſt the very worſt of fortunes might.
And other ſtraines of woe, which now ſeeme woe,
Compar'd with loſſe of thee, will not ſeeme ſo.

Sonnet 90's opening, "Then hate me," refers back to the concluding words of Sonnet 89, "thou dost hate." "Then" intends 'therefore.' The poet instructs the youth to hate him whenever he chooses ("when thou wilt"), but adds a qualifier, "if euer, now." He should not delay his hating, but do it now, while the world is intent (bent") on frustrating the poet's endeavours ("my deeds to crosse"). The youth must combine forces ("Ioyne") with the rancour of fortune: "spight of fortune" was a commonplace, here also hinting at a lack of recompense, while "make me bow," echoing "I am bowed" of Ps. 38 used in Sonnet 89, implies either subjection (under the yoke of fortune) or subservience (to a patron). The further instruction, "doe not drop in for an after losse," is clear in intent although not in detail. To "drop in" meant to 'fall upon' (compare its use in Marston's *The Malcontent*, "O let the last day fall, drop, drop in our curssed heads!").[1] The image of fortune falling or dropping upon was standard in classical and biblical literature. [2] Here the youth, joined with fortune, is commanded not to fall upon or attack the poet "for an after losse," to cause further and protracted loss or suffering.

The poet argues for immediate rather than extended pain. Now that his heart has "scapte this sorrow," the hurt that the youth and fortune have inflicted upon him and from which he was worked himself free, he asks, knowing the psalmist's plaint, "my sorow *is* euer before me" (see Sonnet 89), that the youth not cause him double affliction by attacking from behind ("rereward") a victim who is already overcome. "Come in the rereward" and "in the onset come" (line 11) are contrasting military metaphors. The poet reshapes the axiomatic, "A stormy night deserves a good day," [3] to argue "Giue not a windy night a rainie morrow," as he asks that his ruin ("ouer-throw") intended ("purposd") by the youth (and his partner fortune) not be drawn out.

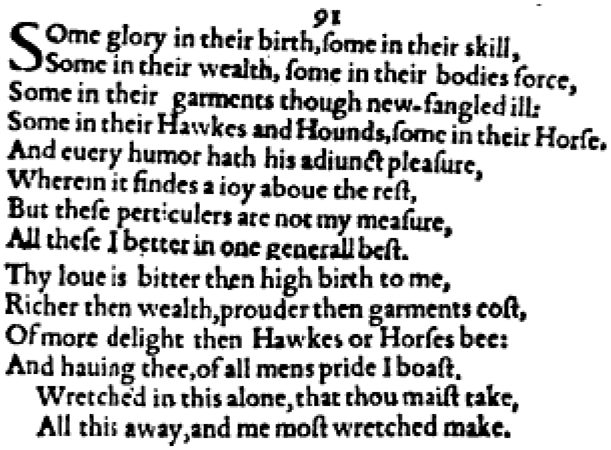
The sestet moves to the conditional, "If thou wilt leaue me." The poet asks that the youth's forsaking him not be the last of his afflictions ("do not leaue me last"), occurring only once a series of lesser sorrows have done their mischief ("When other pettie griefes haue done their spight"). Rather the youth's forsaking him must come "in the onset," in the vanguard, so that the poet might experience ("taste") at the start ("At first") the worst that fortune has to offer ("the very worst of fortunes might"). If the youth's abandoning him is immediate and not delayed, any other kind or degree of grief ("straines of woe"), which might for the moment seem grievous, will lose its grievousness, when measured against the poet's loss of the beloved ("Compar'd with losse of thee").

90.1. John Marston, *The Malcontent* (London: William Aspley, 1604) 4.4.2.

90.2. Cf. Cicero, *De Divinatione* 2.6.15 & 2.7.18 and Acts 1.26, "et cecedit sortes super Matthiam," ("the lot fell vpon Matthias;" *BB*).

90.3. See Tilly N166.

Sonnet 91



91
SOme glory in their birth,ſome in their skill,
Some in their wealth, ſome in their bodies force,
Some in their garments though new-fangled ill:
Some in their Hawkes and Hounds,ſome in their Horſe.
And euery humor hath his adiunct pleaſure,
Wherein it findes a ioy aboue the reſt,
But theſe perticulers are not my meaſure,
All theſe I better in one generall beſt.
Thy loue is bitter then high birth to me,
Richer then wealth,prouder then garments coſt,
Of more delight then Hawkes or Horſes bee:
And hauing thee,of all mens pride I boaſt.
Wretche'd in this alone,that thou maiſt take,
All this away,and me moſt wretched make.

91
SOme glory in their birth, ſome in their skill,
Some in their wealth, ſome in their bodies force,
Some in their garments though new-fangled ill:
Some in their Hawkes and Hounds, ſome in their Horſe.
And euery humor hath his adiunct pleaſure,
Wherein it findes a ioy aboue the reſt,
But theſe perticulers are not my meaſure,
All theſe I better in one generall beſt.
Thy loue is bitter then high birth to me, better
Richer then wealth, prouder then garments coſt,
Of more delight then Hawkes or Horſes bee:
And hauing thee, of all mens pride I boaſt.
Wretched in this alone, that thou maiſt take,
All this away, and me moſt wretched make.

Sonnet 91, like Sonnet 37, observes the rules and examples laid down by Puttenham for the rhetorical figure, "Comparison," or, "*Paragon*," a term Puttenham is reluctant to use since it is reserved by those at court for praising "horses, haukes, hounds" and other riches:

> Though we might call this figure very well and properly the [*Paragon*] yet dare I not so to doe for feare of the Courtiers enuy, who will haue no man vse that terme but after a courtly manner, that is, in praysing of horses, haukes, hounds, pearles, diamonds, rubies, emerodes, and other precious stones: specially of faire women whose excellencie is discouered by paragonizing or setting one to another. [1]

Puttenham's examples, "horses, haukes, hounds," are taken from Horace's *Ars Poetica*, which lists among the attributes of youth that they 'glory in horses and hounds' ("gaudet equis canibusque”). Thomas Drant’s Elizabethan translation expands the reference to “Horse, hauke, or hownde, flaunt, & carousts.” [2] Shakespeare in Sonnet 91, and in its adversative Sonnet 96, shows a knowledge of both Puttenham and Drant as well as Horace himself. The *Ars Poetica* describes four ages of man: ‘the child who . . joys to play with his peers;’ ‘the unbearded youth who glories in his horses and hounds . . who is profligate with money, who is proud (“sublimis”) and who gives his love as quickly as he takes it away;’ ‘the grown man who pursues wealth (“opes”) and connections and who seeks after honours;’ ‘the old man who is cantankerous and querulous, and who praises the time when he was a boy and censures the ways of youth.’ Finally, Horace argues, “perticulers” (“partes”) of any one age should not be transferred to another, because ‘every age has its own adjunct properties’ (“in adiunctis aptis”). [3]

The sonnet is divided rhetorically: “Some glory in their birth,” where “glory” (Horace’s “gaudet”) means ‘revel in,’ or “boast” of (line 12), or ‘take delight in’ their “birth” or ‘pedigree.’ Some glory in their “skill,” their ‘ability’ or ‘wit’ or even ‘art.’ Some glory in their “wealth” (Horace’s “opes”), some in their “bodies force,” “bodies” being either body’s or bodies’. Some glory in their “garments though new-fangled ill,” a phrase that is doubly condemnatory: garments that are new-fangled were ones that were faddish (Drant’s “flaunt”) and already ill (compare *Cym*. 5.4.134, “Be not, as is our fangled world, a Garment, / Nobler then that it couers”). The “Horse” in which some glory is a ‘body or troop of horse’ rather than a single animal. The concluding observation, “euery humour has his adiunct pleasure,” transfers Horace’s final adjunctive caution to the four humours which inhabit the body - choler, melancholy, phlegm and blood - and which influence a person’s disposition. Each humour has its adjoining gratification (“adiunct pleasure”), but in each person one humour by itself was thought often to dominate: “Wherein it findes a ioy aboue the rest.” Yet all these distinguishing qualities (“perticulers,” Horace’s “partes”) are not the standard, by which the poet’s paragon will be praised (“are not my measure”). The poet can “better” all the above “in one generall best,” a singular overall perfection, to be identified as “Thy loue.”

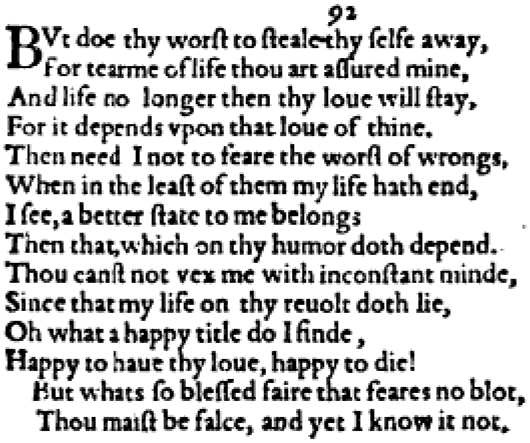
To the poet the friend's love ("Thy loue") is better than "high birth." It is "Richer then wealth, prouder then garments cost," where "prouder" intends, 'more glorious' than the cost of garments. The love is "Of more delight then Hawkes or Horses bee." Indeed the poet can claim that "hauing thee, of all mens pride I boast." In possessing the friend (even physically?) he glories in that in which all men would take pride. The couplet, however, drawing on Horace's claim that 'youth gives and as quickly takes away his love' ("cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix"), changes the poem's tenor, as the poet realizes that being possessed of the youth's love is highly tenuous and that the love might easily be withdrawn. That thought alone distresses him: "Wretched in this alone, that thou maist take / All this away, and me most wretched make."

91.1 Puttenham 195-6.

91.2. Horace, Drant A6^{v}-A7^{r}.

91.3. Horace, *Ars Poetica* 158-78 *passim*: "puer . . gestit paribus conludere;" "inberbus iuuenis . . / gaudet equis canibusque . . prodigus aeris, / sublimis cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix;" "virilis . . quaerit opes et amicitias, inseruit honori;" "senes . . difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti / se puero, castigator censorque minorum;" "Ne forte seniles / mandentur iuueni partes pueroque uiriles; / semper in adiunctis aeuoque morabitur aptis." Jonson renders the final line as "In fitting proper adjuncts to each day" (Jonson, *Art of Poetry* 11, 254).

Sonnet 92


92
BVt doe thy worſt to ſteale thy ſelfe away,
For tearme of life thou art aſſured mine,
And life no longer then thy loue will ſtay,
For it depends vpon that loue of thine.
Then need I not to feare the worſt of wrongs,
When in the leaſt of them my life hath end,
I ſee,a better ſtate to me belongs
Then that,which on thy humor doth depend.
Thou canſt not vex me with inconſtant minde,
Since that my life on thy reuolt doth lie,
Oh what a happy title do I finde ,
Happy to haue thy loue, happy to die!
But whats ſo bleſſed faire that feares no blot,
Thou maiſt be falce, and yet I know it not.

92
BVt doe thy worſt to ſteale thy ſelfe away,
For tearme of life thou art aſſured mine,
And life no longer then thy loue will ſtay,
For it depends vpon that loue of thine.
Then need I not to feare the worſt of wrongs,
When in the leaſt of them my life hath end,
I ſee, a better ſtate to me belongs
Then that, which on thy humor doth depend.
Thou canſt not vex me with inconſtant minde,
Since that my life on thy reuolt doth lie,
Oh what a happy title do I find,
Happy to haue thy loue, happy to die!
  But whats ſo bleſſed faire that feares no blot,
  Thou maiſt be falce, and yet I know it not.

Sonnet 92 and Sonnet 93 constitute a pair. Both echo phrases from the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Fourme of solemnization of Matrimonie:" the rite's "be ye wel assured" in "thou art assured mine" ('assured' was also used of one affianced); the rite's prayer that the couple "abide in thy loue vnto their liues ende" in the sonnet's "for tearme of life" (line 2) and in Sonnet 93.6, "my life hath end;" the rite's "for better for worse . . till death vs depart" in the contrast between "worst of wrongs" and "better state" (lines 5 & 7). The rite's use of Ps. 128, "Blessed are all they that feare the Lorde . . O well is thee, and happie shalt thou be. . . Loe, thus shall the man be blessed: that feareth the Lord," is echoed in "happy title" (line 11), in "Happy to haue thy loue, happy to die" (line 12), and in "blessed faire that feares" (line 13). The rite's admonition from Ephesians, "husbands loue your wiues . . not hauing spotte or wrinckle, or any such thing, but that it shoulde bee holy, and blamelesse," [1] in "no blot" (line 13) and in Sonnet 93's "husband" (line 1) and "wrinckles" (line 8), while Sonnet 93's reference to "creation" (line 9) and "*Eaues*" (line 13) suggests the rite's benedictory prayer, "Almighty God, who at the beginning did create our first parents, Adam and Eve. . ."

The sonnet's opening, "But," looks back to the wretchedness that concludes the previous sonnet. To "doe thy worst" was, as today, a colloquialism (compare the challenge to "ould Time" to "doe thy worst" in Sonnet 19), even if the poet here intends 'do thy best "to steale thy selfe away,"' which suggests leaving surreptitiously and ignobly. The poet will allow the withdrawal because the friend is "assured mine," a familiar phrase since letters were signed off, 'assuredly yours.' He possesses the friend, "For tearme of life," a legal phrase applied to ownership limited only by death. The duration of the friend's love determines the length of the poet's life, because his life "depends" on his love ("And life no longer then thy loue will stay / For it depends vpon that loue of thine"). Thus the poet has no cause to fear the worst of wrongs, death that departs, because even the least slight ("the least of them") kills him ("my life hath end"). He knows ("I see") that a "better state" is his beyond the vagaries of the friend's mood or anything that hangs ("doth depend") on his volatile temperament ("thy humour").

The friend cannot cause him a grievance or accuse ("vex") him of an inconstant mind, given that his lot ("life") depends on the friend's variable favour or "reuolt," which retains its original meaning of 'a vacillating back and forth.' (Florio under "Volto" gives "*in the mind . . to caste reuolt, or reuolue to and fro*" and "*in mind . . cast or reuolted to and fro*"). [2] The poet's constancy gains him ownership of happiness, a "happy title," whether "Happy to haue" the youth's love or "happy to die." (Triple happinesses were a feature of marriage, compare Spenser, who draws on the marriage rite for his pair of *Amoretti* 58 and 59, which address his betrothed as "most assured" and avow, "Thrise happie she, that is so well assured / Vnto her selfe . . that nether will for better be allured, / ne feard with worse . . / Most happy she that most assured doth rest, / but he most happy who such one loues best.") [3]

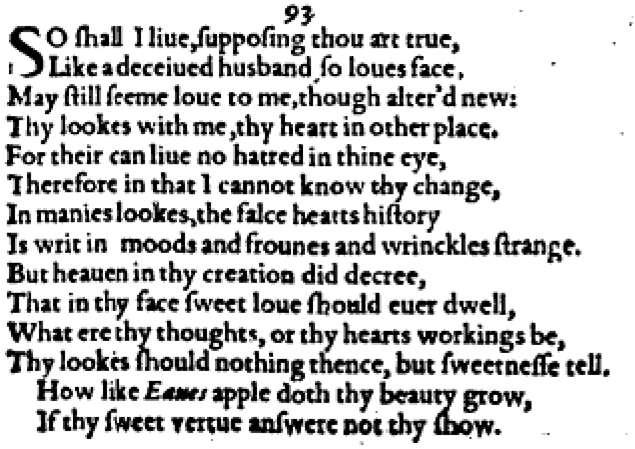
Yet the poet remains fearful: what can be so blessed with beauty ("so blessed faire") that isn't threatened by physical or moral failure ("blot;" compare the "spot" of Sonnet 95.3)? His final thought fills him with dread: what if the youth is false and yet he remains ignorant of the betrayal!

92.1. Eph. 5.25-7.

92.2. Florio, *Worlde* volto; he also translates "Volta" as a "*mans turne or lot*."

92.3. Spenser, *Amoretti* 58.14; 59 *passim*.

Sonnet 93


93
SO ſhall I liue,ſuppoſing thou art true,
Like a deceiued husband ſo loues face,
May ſtill ſeeme loue to me,though alter'd new:
Thy lookes with me,thy heart in other place.
For their can liue no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change,
In manies lookes,the falce hearts hiſtory
Is writ in moods and frounes and wrinckles ſtrange.
But heauen in thy creation did decree,
That in thy face ſweet loue ſhould euer dwell,
What ere thy thoughts, or thy hearts workings be,
Thy lookes ſhould nothing thence, but ſweetneſſe tell.
How like *Eaues* apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy ſweet vertue anſwere not thy ſhow.

93
SO ſhall I liue, ſuppoſing thou art true,
Like a deceiued husband ſo loues face,
May ſtill ſeeme loue to me, though alter'd new:
Thy lookes with me, thy heart in other place.
For their can liue no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change,
In manies lookes, the falce hearts hiſtory
Is writ in moods and frounes and wrinckles ſtrange.
But heauen in thy creation did decree,
That in thy face ſweet loue ſhould euer dwell,
What ere thy thoughts, or thy hearts workings be,
Thy lookes ſhould nothing thence, but ſweetneſſe tell.
  How like *Eaues* apple doth thy beauty grow,
  If thy ſweet vertue anſwere not thy ſhow.

Sonnet 93 begins with Sonnet 92's concluding thought that the friend may be false and the poet ignorant of it. He resolves accordingly to continue to live presuming the youth to be "true." He will be like a "deceiued husband," like a cuckold, who supposes the best and refuses to believe the worst, as did the original, deceived man, Adam. Then "loues face," either the friend's countenance or the face with which love presents itself, will "still seeme loue" to the poet, even though it is changeable ("alter'd new"). (In Sonnet 116 the first impediment to a "marriage of true mindes" is a "loue / Which alters when it alteration findes.") The youth's "lookes," either his glances or his appearance, may stay with the poet, but his affections ("heart") are directed elsewhere.

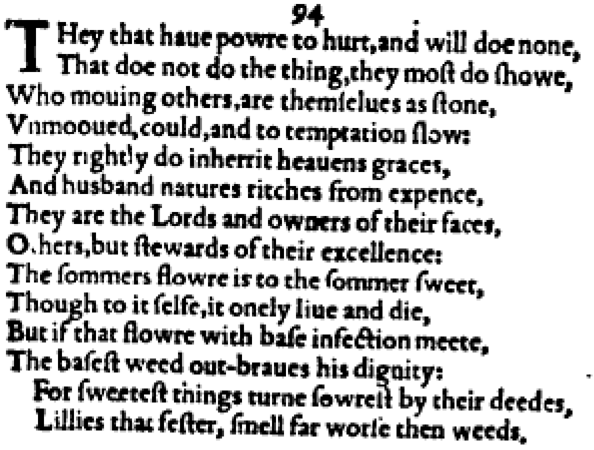
Because the friend’s eye is so fair, “no hatred” can dwell there; the poet can find no sinfulness in that quarter. By contrast, in the “lookes” of many others a history of false hearts can be discerned written in “moods and frounes and wrinckles strange.” (For the marriage rite’s use of “wrinckle” see Sonnet 92.) As in Sonnet 19, Shakespeare draws on the proverbial classical trope that wrinkles and frowns hide crimes and troubled thoughts, found in Ovid’s *Amores*, ‘from wrinkles many crimes are exposed’ (compare Dekker, *The Belman of London*, “countenances, wherein were ingrauen the pictures of troubled thoughts, which tolde that mischiefes were apt to breede there,” or Erasmus’ denial in *The Praise of Folly*, “nor do I feign one thing on my forehead and conceal another in my breast’). [1]

The poet, however, affirms that God (“Heauen”), when creating the youth (“in thy creation”), decreed that in his face “sweet loue should euer dwell,” whatever his inner thoughts or the “workings” of his heart might be. His “lookes” should, therefore (“thence”), give an account only of “sweetnesse.” (It was conventionally held that looking caused the first sin and its first consequence was the eyes’ opening: George Hakewill in *The Vanitie of the eie* argues that, “we finde the first outward occasion of it [sin] to haue been the fairenesse of the apple apprehended by the womens eie, & the punishment first inflicted on it to haue been the opening of the eies.”) [2] The poet concludes by applying to the youth the simile of “*Eaues* apple,” fruit of a tree that was “good to eate of, and pleasaunt to the eyes” (Gen. 3.6; *BB*), whose outer was fair but inner the source of sin. The youth will become like her apple, if he doesn’t allow his inner state (“sweet vertue”) to match his outer appearance (“show”).

93.1. Ovid, *Amores* 1.8.46, “de rugis crimina multa cadunt;” Thomas Dekker, *The Belman of London* (London: Nathaniel Butter, 1608) A4^{v}; Erasmus, *Moriae encomium Erasmi Roterodami* (Parisiis: Gilles de Gourmont, 1511) Capitula 5, “nec aliud fronte simulo, aliud in pectore premo.”

93.2. Hakewill 32.

Sonnet 94



94
THey that haue powre to hurt,and will doe none,
That doe not do the thing,they moſt do ſhowe,
Who mouing others,are themſelues as ſtone,
Vnmooued,could,and to temptation ſlow:
They rightly do inherrit heauens graces,
And husband natures ritches from expence,
They are the Lords and owners of their faces,
Others,but ſtewards of their excellence:
The ſommers flowre is to the ſommer ſweet,
Though to it ſelfe,it onely liue and die,
But if that flowre with baſe infection meete,
The baſeſt weed out-braues his dignity:
For ſweeteſt things turne ſowreſt by their deedes,
Lillies that feſter, ſmell far worſe then weeds.

94
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That doe not do the thing, they moſt do ſhowe,
Who mouing others, are themſelues as ſtone,
Vnmooued, could, and to temptation ſlow:
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Lillies that feſter, ſmell far worſe then weeds.

Sonnet 94 is one of the more challenging of the sequence and has been much discussed: this has partly to do with whether readers respond to it as a straightforward piece or as one laden with irony. It lacks the personal pronouns, "I," and "thou," being presented as an impersonal and detached statement, introduced and concluded by aphorisms that verge on proverbs. Yet the reader feels compelled to view it as a poem directed at the youth, something the surrounding sonnets also urge. Throughout Shakespeare seems to have had in mind the adjacent accounts of the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 5 and 6, beginning with, "Blessed *are* the poore in spirit, for theirs is the kingdome of heauen," and "Blessed *are* the meeke: for they shall inherite the earth" (5.3 & 5; *GV*). Matthew 6 contains the phrase from the Lord's Prayer, "And leade vs not into tentation"

(13), and the instruction about earthly riches, “Lay not vp treasures for your selues vpon the earth (glossed as “vaine riches”), where the mothe & canker corrupt . . But lay vp treasures for your selues in heauen, where neither the mothe nor canker corrupteth . . Ye cannot serue God and riches” (19-25, *passim*; “canker” will be picked up in Sonnet 95). Having condemned outward show, the passage asks, “why care ye for raiment? Learne howe the lilies of the fielde doe growe: they are not wearied, neither spinne: Yet I say vnto you, that euen Solomon in all his glorie was not arayed like one of these” (28-29). The comparison between the lilies and Solomon was customarily framed as ‘brauer’ or ‘outbraving:’ Henry Smith argues that “Salomon was not so glorious in all his royaltie, nor the Lillies which are brauer than Salomon, as he which is clothed with Christ,” while Gerard in his *Herbal* claims Solomon was never too proud to bend toward “lowly plants:” “King *Salomon* . . (though the Lillies of the field outbraued him) he . . thought no scorne to stoupe vnto the lowly plants.” [1]

The sonnet’s opening adage, “They that haue powre to hurt, and will doe none,” is Shakespeare’s rendering of a well-known *sententia* of Publilius Syrus, a 1st century B.C. collector of Latin adages, “Nocere posse et nolle laus amplissima est” (‘to have the power to hurt and to will not to exercise it, is the greatest praise;’ the phrase was developed by the rhetorican, Ausonius, in his *Septem Sapientium Sententiae*, “Quod prudentis opus? cum possis, nolle nocere. / Quid stulti proprium? non posse et velle nocere” [What is the task of the prudent man? When you are able, not to wish to hurt. What is the mark of the stupid? Not to be able, and to wish to hurt]). The aphorism was available to Shakespeare, having already been translated by Sidney: “the more power he [Plangus] hath to hurte, the more admirable is his praise, that he will not hurt.” [2] The sonnet’s “will doe none” is possibly a future tense but more likely means, ‘choose not to do,’ being Shakespeare’s rendering of “nolle.” Such people are praiseworthy as are those who refrain from doing the very thing - exercising the power beauty has - that their outward appearance most demonstrates: they seem to be one thing, but won’t act upon it.

The next descriptors are less straightforward: such people, while attracting others (“moouing others,” hinting at personal magnetism as a lodestone attracts), remain themselves, "as stone, / Vnmooued, could, and to temptation slow;" "as stone" suggests 'impassive' and 'stony-faced;' "Vnmooued," 'obdurate' and 'without requital' (to be 'as still as stone' was common); [3] "could" evokes a tomb's cold stone (one could have a 'stone-cold heart' just as one could be 'stone-dead'); "to temptation slow," suggests those unprepared to take risks or to be enlivened, if only by sin. Though they seem virtuous, theirs is an empty virtue: in not acting or acting only by omission they are lifeless. To them correctly and as of right ("rightly") belongs the inheritance of "heauens graces," those promised in the Beatitudes; they manage or "lay vp" (see Matt. 6.19 above) the "ritches," that nature provides, from wasteful spending or from being spent at all ("from expense"). (To "husband," meaning 'to till,' anticipates the concluding botanical conceit.) They are self-contained and show themselves masters of how they present to others ("They are the Lords and owners of their faces"). All others are merely in the service ("stewards") of what they present as excellent ("of their excellence").

While "summers flowre," either the perfection of summer or a flower particular to summer, is thought by summer to be beautiful or perfumed ("sweet"), to itself, being occupied within itself, it is unknowing of anything other than its living and dying. If, however, it were to meet with "base infection" such as a "canker" that might corrupt it (see above Matt. 6.17 and Sonnet 95.2), then the "basest weed out-braues his dignity." The "basest weed" is either the most infected or the most "lowly plant" (see above); "out-braues" intends outstrips as the "the Lillies of the field outbraued" Solomon (see above); the more highly ranked flower's "dignity" suggests the "glorie" in which Solomon is arrayed; finally "weed" also recalls the biblical "raiment" and "out-braues" then gains a context of finery (compare Jth. 10.4, where Judith "decked her selfe brauely").

The final couplet returns to the proverbial: "sweetest things turne sowrest by their deedes." Two Latin adages were available to Shakespeare, "Corruptio optimi pessima" (Corruption of the best is the worst), which Samuel Purchas in his *Pilgrimage* calls an "old saying," and "Optima corrupta, pessima" which Felltham cites, when condemning effeminate lovers: "when they proue *bad*, they are a sort of the *vilest creatures*: Yet, still the same reason giues it: for, *Optima corrupta*, *pessima*: *The best things corrupted*, *become the worst*." [4] Shakespeare's line, with its inclusion of "by their deedes" is closer to the second version. The final line's "Lillies that fester, smell far worse then weeds" is true from experience: rotting lilies do stink. It also draws on the proverbial: Tilley quotes Lodge's *Rosalynde*, "*Lillies are faire in shew, but foule in smell*." The line is also found exactly in an anonymous play, *The Raigne of King Edward the third*, written in the early 1590s, entered in the Stationers' Register on 1 December 1595 and published by Cuthbert Burby in 1596, parts of which have been attributed to Shakespeare: "Lillies that fester, smel far worse then weeds, / And euery glory that inclynes to sin, / The shame is treble, by the opposite." [5] (The whole speech is a working of "Optima corrupta, pessima.") Here the maxim cannot be separated from the youth and is a warning that, despite a beautiful and dignified exterior, the worst corruption is the sin of choosing not to act.

94.1. Smith, *Sermons* 331; Gerard, *Herball* (1597) To the courteous and well willing Reader.

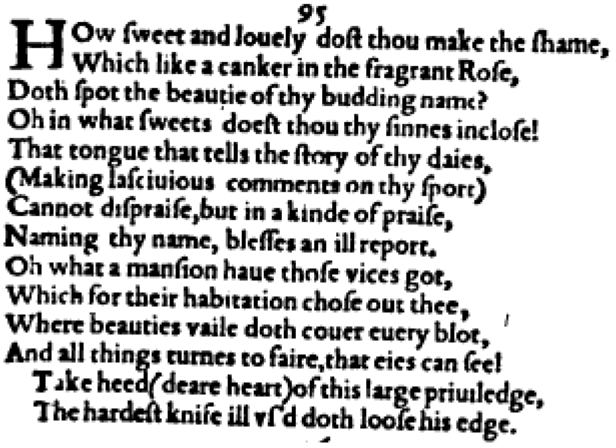
94.2. Publilius Syrus, *Sententiae* Nocere; Ausonius, *Septem Sapientium Sententiae*, Bias Prieneus 6-7; Sidney, *Arcadia* (1590) 169^{r}; see Tilley H170, who gives ample evidence of its contemporary currency.

94.3. Compare Exod. 19.16, "stil as a stone" (*GV*).

94.4. Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimage, or Relations of the World and the Religions Observed in Al Ages* (London: William Stanley, 1617) To the Reader ¶5^{v}; Felltham 96; the whole passage runs, "It was neuer found, but in *two men* only, that their loue exceeded that of the *feminine Sexe*: and if you obserue them, you shall finde, they were both of *melting dispositions*. I know, when they proue *bad*, they are a sort of the *vilest creatures*: Yet, still the same reason giues it: for, *Optima corrupta, pessima*: *The best things corrupted, become the worst*." The adage was ancient, being found in Aristotle (*Nichomachean Ethics* 8.10.1-2) and in Aquinas.

94.5. Tilley L297; Lodge, *Rosalynde* B2^{r}; Anonymous, *The Raigne of King Edward the third* (London: Cuthbert Burby, 1596) D2^{r}.

Sonnet 95


95
HOw ſweet and louely doſt thou make the ſhame,
Which like a canker in the fragrant Roſe,
Doth ſpot the beautie of thy budding name?
Oh in what ſweets doeſt thou thy ſinnes incloſe!
That tongue that tells the ſtory of thy daies,
(Making laſciuious comments on thy ſport)
Cannot diſpraiſe,but in a kinde of praiſe,
Naming thy name, bleſſes an ill report.
Oh what a manſion haue thoſe vices got,
Which for their habitation choſe out thee,
Where beauties vaile doth couer euery blot,
And all things turnes to faire,that eies can ſee!
Take heed(deare heart)of this large priuiledge,
The hardeſt knife ill vſ’d doth looſe his edge.

95
HOw ſweet and louely doſt thou make the ſhame,
Which like a canker in the fragrant Roſe,
Doth ſpot the beautie of thy budding name?
Oh in what ſweets doeſt thou thy ſinnes incloſe!
That tongue that tells the ſtorie of thy daies,
(Making laſciuious comments on thy ſport)
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Oh what a manſion haue thoſe vices got,
Which for their habitation choſe out thee,
Where beauties vaile doth couer euery blot,
And all things turnes to faire, that eies can ſee!
Take heed (deare heart) of this large priuiledge,
The hardeſt knife ill vſ’d doth looſe his edge.

Sonnet 95 works a favourite Shakespeare image, the canker in the rose, found also at Sonnets 35.5, 54, and 70.7-8. It is also linked to the preceding sonnet’s final couplet. The youth’s shame is compared to the canker-worm which eats at the rose’s interior while the leaving the bud’s exterior untouched. For the image Shakespeare needed to look no further than Whitney’s “*Turpibus Exitium*” (‘Ruin from Vices’), where the device is a scarab or canker inside a rose and the *subscriptio* observes that it “cannot indure the sente / Of a fragant [sic] rose,” echoed in Shakespeare’s “like a canker in the fragrant Rose.” [1] The youth covers his shame with a rose-like exterior that is “sweet and louely.” The shame mars or despoils his emerging reputation (“Doth spot the beautie of thy budding name”); “spot” and ‘without spot’ were biblically associated with sin and being without sin. In the poet’s exclamation, “Oh in what sweets doest thou thy sinnes inclose,”

"inclose" intends 'shut up in' or 'contain,' but the roseate context evokes a garden enclosed, a *hortus conclusus*, used typically of an immaculate state without spot of sin.

Another voice ("That tongue"), unidentified but possibly the rival poet by metonymy, is now introduced. The voice provides an account of the youth's actions ("the story of thy daies") and colours it with lewd remarks ("lasciuious comments") either about the way the youth displays himself or his lecherous behaviour ("sport"); "lasciuious," both 'lecherous' and 'sportive,' was used of people meaning 'wanton' or 'effeminate' (Florio associates under "Lasciuo," "lasciuious, wanton . . womanish"), of plants meaning 'prolific' (compare Cooper, *Thesaurus* Lasciuio, "To growe or spring rankly"), and of words meaning 'wanton' (see Nicholas Udall, *Flowers or Eloquent Phrases*, "For *lasciuus* properly is hee that is lecherous both in liuing & also in words"). [2] Paradoxically the "tongue," while intending to condemn ("dispraise"), ends up only praising, because associating the youth's name with any action, even sinful, only enhances it ("naming thy name, blesses an ill report").

The poet's second exclamation, "Oh what a mansion haue those vices got," echoes Whitney's further paradox, "for his meate, his mansion is his fare;" the canker worm chooses the rose as its house and its food. Vice likewise has selected the youth's body as its house: "mansion" was used of the body when enclosing the soul (from 2 Cor. 5.1, "oure erthy mācion of this dwellyng;" *GB*) and was linked with licentiousness through the further biblical use of "mansion" meaning 'to dwell within sexually' (both the Bishops' Bible and Geneva Version gloss the whore's name, Ahobilah, in Ezekiel as "Aholibah signifieth my mansion in her"). Shakespeare uses it of Lucrece, "Her house is sackt . . / Her mansion batterd by the enemie, / Her sacred temple spotted." [3] The vices have chosen the youth as their dwelling ("habitation"), where the covering that beauty affords ("beauties vaile") masks every disgrace or sin ("euery blot") and converts everything visible ("that eies can see") into something comely ("faire").

The poet ends on a cautionary note, advising the youth ("deare heart") to preserve carefully his ample ("large," with a hint of sexual largesse) privilege. [4] The final line, "The hardest knife ill vs'd doth loose his edge," appears proverbial: a knife made of the most tempered steel, if misused, becomes blunt. The phrase, "Take edge away, the knife can cut no more," was axiomatic and the metaphor of losing one's edge or becoming blunt was applied particularly to passion. [5] William Cornwallis argues from Seneca that, "affections vse, is like the vse of a whetstone for a knife, onely to giue it an edge, and then lay it by, for vse it continually or oft times, it maketh the mettal thinne and weake; and thus affection doth to men." [6] Either the youth's appetites, through misuse, will lose their edge (compare Sonnet 110's resolution, "Mine appetite I neuer more will grin'de") or, with a rose's pruning-knife in mind, the youth's sexual profligacy will be pared back by over-use.

95.1. Whitney 21.

95.2. Nicholas Udall, *Flowers or Eloquent Phrases of the Latine speech, gathered out of al the sixe Comoedies of Terence* (London: Thomas Marsh, 1581) X2^{r}; compare Cooper, *Thesaurus*, "Pagina [lasciua]. . A writing that containeth wanton things."

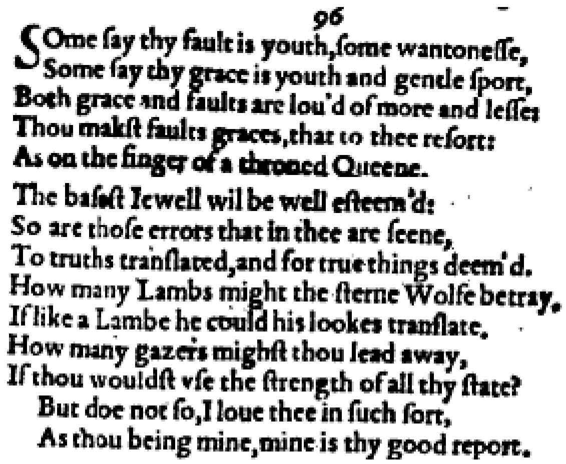
95.3. *Luc*. 1170-72.

95.4. Compare *Ant*. 3.6.93-94, "Onely th'adulterous *Anthony*, most large / In his abhominations," and *Rom*. 2.4.92, "Thou would'st else haue made thy tale large."

95.5. Thomas Churchyard, *A Handeful of Gladsome Verses, giuen to the Queenes Maiesty at Woodstocke this Prograce* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1592) A3^{r}.

95.6. William Cornwallis, *Discourses vpon Seneca the Tragedian* (London: Edmund Mattes, 1601) G7^{v}.

Sonnet 96



96
SOme ſay thy fault is youth,ſome wantoneſſe,
Some ſay thy grace is youth and gentle ſport,
Both grace and faults are lou'd of more and leſſe:
Thou makſt faults graces,that to thee reſort:
As on the finger of a throned Queene.
The baſeſt Iewell wil be well eſteem'd:
So are thoſe errors that in thee are ſeene,
To truths tranſlated,and for true things deem'd.
How many Lambs might the ſterne Wolfe betray,
If like a Lambe he could his lookes tranſlate,
How many gazers mighſt thou lead away,
If thou wouldſt vſe the ſtrength of all thy ſtate?
But doe not ſo,I loue thee in ſuch ſort,
As thou being mine,mine is thy good report.

96
SOme ſay thy fault is youth, ſome wantoneſſe,
Some ſay thy grace is youth and gentle ſport,
Both grace and faults are lou'd of more and leſſe:
Thou makſt faults graces, that to thee reſort:
As on the finger of a throned Queene,
The baſeſt Iewell will be well eſteem'd:
So are thoſe errors that in thee are ſeene,
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If like a Lambe he could his lookes tranſlate,
How many gazers mighſt thou lead away,
If thou wouldſt vſe the ſtrength of all thy ſtate?
  But doe not ſo, I loue thee in ſuch ſort,
  As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

Although separated from Sonnet 91, Sonnet 96 appears its adversative. Like Sonnet 91 it is an example of "the figure of comparison" or, "*Paragon*," and is indebted for its central image to Puttenham's instance of the figure, where jewels are linked to the praise of a queen:

> pearles, diamonds, rubies, emerodes, and other precious stones: specially of faire women whose excellencie is discouered by paragonizing or setting one to another, which moued the zealous Poet [Puttenham himself], speaking of the mayden Queene, to call her the paragon of Queenes. [1]

The sonnet opens with a "fault" / "grace" paradox: "Some say thy fault is youth, some wantonesse." The poet presents a set of opinions only: the youth's waywardness is due to his young years or to his licentious living. On the other hand some argue that his youth is a “grace,” a perfection, as is his “gentle sport;” “gentle” suggests ‘decent’ rather than ‘licentious,’ although “sport,” the way he comports himself, can hint at the sexual (compare Sonnet 95.6, “making lascious comments on thy sport”). The poet’s point is that, whether a grace or a fault, the youth’s behaviour is loved by (“lou’d of”) men of high and low station (“more and lesse”). The friend makes “graces” out of the “faults,” that search him out (“that to thee resort;” see the “vices” in Sonnet 95, that “chose thee out”).

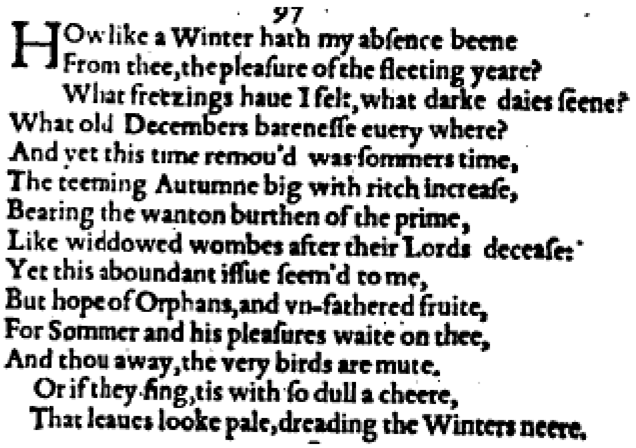
Shakespeare next employs Puttenham’s jewellery metaphor: the “basest Iewell,” when put on the finger of a “throned Queene,” one sitting in full glory, gains in estimation, “wil be well esteem’d.” Similarly things, that in the friend are seen as “errors,” are transmuted (“translated”) or changed “to truths” and adjudged “true things.” (Famously, Bottom’s appearance is similarly “translated;” “Blesse thee *Bottome*, blesse thee; thou art translated.” *MND* 3.1.122.) The metaphor now becomes that of the wolf and the lamb (of both aesopian and biblical roots; see Matthew 7.15): if the pitiless (“sterne”) wolf were either to transfix a lamb with his looks or change his appearance into that of a lamb (“like a Lambe . . his lookes translate”), how many more lambs might he deceive? By parallel, how many of those who gaze upon the friend (“gazers”) might be diverted or lead astray (“away”), if the friend were to turn on them the full range of his powers (“the strength of all thy state”)? He must avoid bringing such powers to bear, because the poet loves him in such a way (“in such sort”), that, possessing him (“thou being mine”), his “good report” or reputation is the poet’s property.

The final couplet is identical in spelling and shape to that of Sonnet 36, the sole instance of such repetition in the sequence. Either it is a deliberate or a mistaken repetition on the part of Shakespeare, or something was confused in the copying of the manuscript, or it is a compositor’s repetition, erroneous or otherwise. The couplet fits here satisfactorily, although a number of factors suggest mistakenly: its assocations with 2 Cor. 6.8 more cogently link it with the lines that precede it in Sonnet 36; the fact that, if the two couplets are super-imposed on each other, their settings coincide exactly, suggests that the same couplet, once keyed, was used twice and the lines were not reset; finally its rhyme, uniquely, is repeated from earlier in the sonnet. (A case for the couplet's suitability here can, however, be made, based on the concluding "report," whose etymology (*re* + *portare* = again + to carry) is allied to that of "translate" (*trans* + *latum* [*ferre*] = across + to carry). Then the legal sense of possession contained in "translated" (see Cooper's *Thesaurus*, "*translatum* . . to translate frome ones possession to an others") becomes explicit in the poet's possession of the friend and his "report.")

96.1. Puttenham 195-6.

96.2. Cooper, *Thesaurus* translatum.

Sonnet 97



97
HOw like a Winter hath my abſence beene
From thee,the pleaſure of the fleeting yeare?
What freezings haue I felt,what darke daies ſeene?
What old Decembers bareneſſe euery where?
And yet this time remou’d was ſommers time,
The teeming Autumne big with ritch increaſe,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widdowed wombes after their Lords deceaſe:
Yet this aboundant iſſue ſeem’d to me,
But hope of Orphans,and vn-fathered fruite,
For Sommer and his pleaſures waite on thee,
And thou away,the very birds are mute.
Or if they ſing,tis with ſo dull a cheere,
That leaues looke pale,dreading the Winters neere.

97
HOw like a Winter hath my abſence beene
From thee, the pleaſure of the fleeting yeare?
What freezings haue I felt, what darke daies ſeene?
What old Decembers bareneſſe euery where?
And yet this time remou’d was ſommers time,
The teeming Autumne big with ritch increaſe,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widdowed wombes after their Lords deceaſe:
Yet this aboundant iſſue ſeem’d to me,
But hope of Orphans, and vn-fathered fruite,
For Sommer and his pleaſures waite on thee,
And thou away, the very birds are mute.
  Or if they ſing, tis with ſo dull a cheere,
  That leaues looke pale, dreading the Winters neere.

Sonnet 97 is the first of three sonnets using an extended seasonal metaphor, whose principal referent is the poet’s inner state. Its initial distancing (“my absence . . / From thee”) suggests the poet is away and only later does it become clear that it is the youth (“And thou away”). His separation from the youth is “like a Winter,” while the youth is acclaimed, “the pleasure of the fleeting yeare,” either he is that in which the quickly-passing year takes pleasure or that which the quickly-passing year proves as pleasure. The “freezings” the poet has suffered are the coldnesses of absence; the “dark daies” he has seen are moments of depression and melancholy. He everywhere sees about him the bareness (“barenesse” with a hint of ‘barrenness’) of “old Decembers,” “old,” because

December at the year's end is normally presented as old, but also most 'familiar' like the 'old man.'

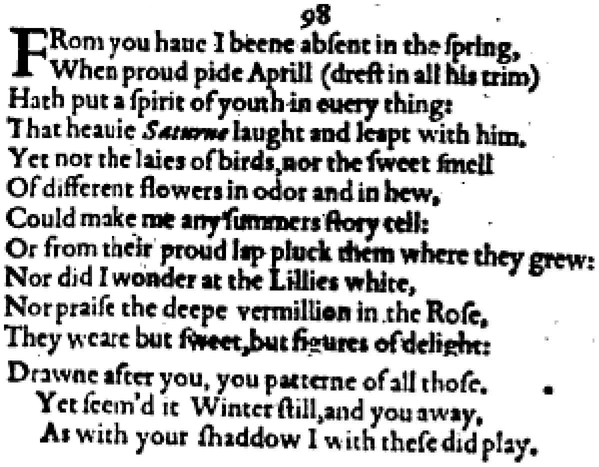
The shifts between the seasons now become complex, revolving around a double "time:" "this time remou'd" is the time of separation, which is like winter; yet it is also "sommers time," not so much the time possessed by summer, but the time when summer is on the verge of giving birth as in her "tyme came' (Luke 1.57; *BB*) or when Hermione was "something before her time, deliuer'd" (*WT* 2.2.25). Summer carries in her womb that which is conceived in the spring and given birth to as prolific harvest in the autumn ("teeming Autumne"). The floating modifier, "big with ritch increase," either looks back to summer which is heavily pregnant ("big") or to autumn which is large with ample yeild. [1] Summer is seen as "Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime:" "wanton," because conceived in exuberant playing, while "burthen" ('burden' with a hint of 'birthin'') is that which is carried in summer's womb. The foetus was commonly termed the "burthen" (compare (*Jn*. 3.1.89-90, "let wiues with childe / Pray that their burthens may not fall this day," or La Primaudaye in his *Academie*, who describes "the veines whereby the burthen is nourished . . may bee compared vnto plants"). [2] The fruit was sired by "prime" or spring. But spring has passed on; the sire is now dead, so that what is born is born after its sire's death ("Like widdowed wombes after their Lords decease"). It is a posthumous birth, of the womb of a widowed summer.

To the poet the "aboundant issue" of this "time remou'd," either its emotional outcome or its poetic outlay, seemed only that for which an orphan might hope ("hope of Orphans") or "fruite" (both seasonal and foetal as in "fruite of thy wombe"), whose begetter had already passed on ("vn-fathered fruite"). (An orphan in 16th century England wasn't necessarily a child, both of whose parents had died, but was generally one without a father – widows and orphans were linked.) Summer and its delights ("his pleasures") have abandoned the poet and now attend on or to the absent youth ("waite on thee"). Where earlier the youth was "the pleasure of the fleeting yeare," now summer and that which it has borne in pleasure, are absent to the poet who remains issueless and without song ("the very birds are mute").

A little comfort, however, is offered in the couplet: if a voice were to ensue (“Or if they sing”), then it would be with so gloomy a countenance (“cheere”), that “leaues looke pale,” not sanguine, nearly lifeless and drained of colour, because of fear (“dreading the Winters neere”). The poet’s paucity of poetic output allows an allusion in the “pale” leaves to sheets of paper as yet scarcely written upon.

97.1. Compare Sonnet 1.1, “Of fairest creatures we desire increase.”

97.2. de la Primaudaye, *Academie* (1594) 397.


98
FRom you haue I beene abſent in the ſpring,
When proud pide Aprill (dreſt in all his trim)
Hath put a ſpirit of youth in euery thing:
That heauie *Saturne* laught and leapt with him.
Yet nor the laies of birds,nor the ſweet ſmell
Of different flowers in odor and in hew,
Could make me any ſummers ſtory tell:
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the Lillies white,
Nor praiſe the deepe vermillion in the Roſe,
They weare but ſweet,but figures of delight:
Drawne after you, you patterne of all thoſe.
Yet ſeem’d it Winter ſtill,and you away,
As with your ſhaddow I with theſe did play.

98
FRom you haue I beene abſent in the ſpring,
When proud pide Aprill (dreſt in all his trim)
Hath put a ſpirit of youth in euery thing:
That heauie *Saturne* laught and leapt with him.
Yet nor the laies of birds, nor the ſweet ſmell
Of different flowers in odor and in hew,
Could make me any ſummers ſtory tell:
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the Lillies white,
Nor praiſe the deepe vermillion in the Roſe,
They weare but ſweet, but figures of delight:
Drawne after you, you patterne of all thoſe.
  Yet ſeem’d it Winter ſtill, and you away,
  As with your ſhaddow I with theſe did play.

Sonnet 98 continues the theme of seasonal absence found in Sonnet 97, casting April as a jester or fool, who manages to make the wintry spirit cavort with him; “proud pide Aprill” is the spring month arrayed in all its finery (“drest in all his trim”) like a fool attired in his parti-coloured (“pide”) dress. (The pied coat of the fool was standard, compare Tourneur, *The worldes Folly*, “a *Foole* in a pied coat.”) [1] Spring has rejuvenated all things, so that “heauie Saturne laught and leapt with him.” Astrologically the god, Saturn, was classified as “heauy” and was associated with melancholy, the opposite of sanguine. He was identified with December through the Roman festival of Saturnalia, which began on the December solstice and continued for a week (December 17-23), during which time the roles of master and slave were reversed. Subsequently Saturnalia was associated with the Feast of Fools, celebrated at the same time in December as a pre-reformation popular festival. In John Davies’ description of the ages in *Microcosmos*

Saturn is identified with old age, "The last *Decrepit* is, and so is call'd; / Which *Saturn* rules with *Scepter* of dul *lead*." [2] Sonnet 97's "old Decembers" leaping and laughing imitate the antics of a fool, full of vigour and youth. But the example of the seasons cannot affect the poet, for whom the youth remains absent. Nothing can lift his spirits: not the songs of birds ("laies;" in Sonnet 97.12 they are "mute"), nor the perfume ("sweet smell") of flowers that vary in scent ("odour") or colour or shape ("hew" intends 'hue' as well as a "figure" that is hewn). None of these can enable him to count or narrate ("tell") a story befitting the season of summer. Nor can he pluck flowers from the swollen or glorious belly ("proud lap"), from which they had issued.

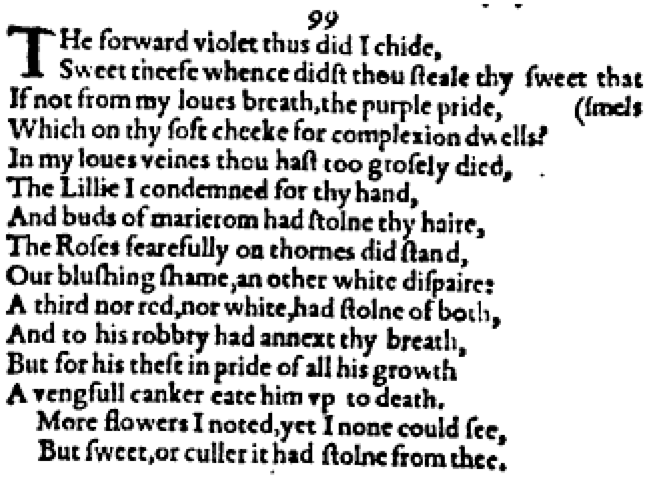
He cannot "wonder at the Lillies white," a proverbial association. He is unable to "praise the deepe vermillion in the Rose," completing the standard floral mixture of white and red. The lily and rose were "but figures of delight," shapes that give delight but which are fashioned in imitation of the youth ("drawn after you"), so that rather than prefiguring or foreshadowing him, they come after or behind him; they are figures in his shadow, as a jester in the shadow of a king. The youth is their "patterne," their model or source, from which any delight they afford is originally drawn. (As in Sonnet 19.12 the 16th century conflation of 'pattern' and 'patron,' both from *pater* = father, is relevant, while Shakespeare probably has in mind also the function Horace awards poetry to "delight" ["delectando"] and its object, which he defines as the "sweet" ["dulci"].) [3] While the youth is the source of the wonderment summer might bring, for the poet his absence makes it seem "Winter still." In playing with the lily and rose, he seems to play only with faint replicas of the youth ("your shaddow"), "play" recalling the theatricality of Saturn cavorting like a jester.

98.1 Cyril Tourneur, *Laugh and lie downe: Or, The worldes Folly* (London: William Jaggard, 1605) F2^{v}.

98.2. Davies, *Microcosmos* 66.

98.3. Horace, *Ars Poetica* 343-44.

Sonnet 99



99
THe forward violet thus did I chide,
Sweet theefe whence didſt thou ſteale thy ſweet that
If not from my loues breath, the purple pride, (ſmels
Which on thy ſoft cheeke for complexion dwells?
In my loues veines thou haſt too groſely died,
The Lillie I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marierom had ſtolne thy haire,
The Rofes fearefully on thornes did ſtand,
Our bluſhing ſhame, an other white diſpaire: One
A third nor red, nor white, had ſtolne of both,
And to his robbry had annext thy breath,
But for his theft in pride of all his growth
A vengfull canker eate him vp to death.
More flowers I noted, yet I none could ſee,
But ſweet, or culler it had ſtolne from thee.

Sonnet 99 is unique among Shakespeare's sonnets because it contains 15 lines, a feature leading to much speculation and contrived explanation. Precedents have been found among sonneteers such as Thomas Watson, Barnabe Barnes and Bartholomew Griffin all of whom write sonnets of varying lengths including 15 lines, but the solitariness of the sonnet in Shakespeare's sequence makes it exceptional. Nor is it likely that it is an early endeavour, that has gone unedited and slipped through to publication: even if it contains awkwardnesses, not even a neophyte sonneteer is likely to have mistakenly written one of 15 lines. The most plausible explanation is that the first line is intended as an introduction for a piece of direct speech like Spenser's *Amoretti* 58, which has a superscription, "*By her that is most assured to her selfe*," and comprises words attributed to the sequence's beloved. (Spenser replies in the following adversative Sonnet 59.) In Sonnet 99 Shakespeare’s first line serves as a similar superscription, introducing a piece of direct speech and identifying immediately the violet as a “Sweet theefe.”

The “forward violet” is either a precocious one, early in blooming like the “sweet” or “March” violet (compare *Ado* 1.3.58, “a very forward March-chicke,” intending a precocious youth) or one of first rank: Gerard in his *Herball* states that the March violet has “a great prerogatiue aboue others.” In accusing the violet of theft - in Sonnet 35.14 the youth is addressed as “sweet theefe” - the poet is contravening accepted folklore, because the violet was strongly identified with the virtue of honesty. Gerard claims:

> Gardens themselues receiue by these [violets] the greatest ornament of all, chiefest beautie and most gallant grace; and the recreation of the minde which is taken heereby, cannot be but verie good and honest: for they [violets] admonish & stir vp a man to that which is comely & honest . . and do bring to a liberall and gentle manly minde, the remembraunce of honestie. [1]

The violet is rebuked (“chide”), because it can only have stolen the perfume it displays from the breath of the friend. Its “purple pride” is that which stands out in the veins on its surface. (Gerard observes of the “Damaske Violet” or “*Viola Damascena*” that its flowers have “a number of black purple veines diuaricated ouer them.”) [2] They thus decorate the violet’s “soft cheeke,” dwelling on its surface and not inside, and contributing to its complexion as might a cosmetic. The violet has “died” or infused colour into “my loues veines,” all “too grosely,” densely or richly but also excessively and without refinement. ‘Purple’ and ‘blue’ were used specifically of blood in veins as they showed through the skin. [3]

The poet has censured the lily either for stealing its whiteness from the violet (there was a “white garden Violet” and a “white Damaske violet”) or for comparing its hand to that of the violet, whose flower, “consisting of fiue little leaues, the lowest whereof is the greatest,” was likened to a hand. [4] Lily hands were customary. [5] Marjoram is condemned for stealing its “haire” from the violet’s “hairy stalke.” Gerard remarks on marjoram’s “maruellous sweete smell” and states that its “stalkes are slender . . about which, growe foorth little leaues, soft, and hoarie.” [6] “Roses fearfully on thornes did stand,” intends roses 'stood out on thorny stems,' but sugggests roses 'were tense;' 'to stand on thorns' was used proverbially of anxiety. [7] The red rose by blushing betrays shame, the white rose by being pale betrays despair.

The third rose is the "Damask Rose," neither "red, nor white," but mingling the red and white ("stolne of both;" compare Sonnet 130.5, "I haue seene Roses damaskt, red and white"). To this robbery is adjoined ("annexed") a further robbery: that of the damask rose stealing the scent of the damask violet ("thy breath"). Because the rose's triple theft (of red, white and scent) is bolder and more forward that the violet's single theft, in the splendour of its bloom ("in the pride of all his growth") it is struck down by a "vengeful canker," the canker-worm that attacks the rose, eating away its inside until it dies. Proverbially the punishment for a flower's being "forward" was to be afflicted by the canker (see *TGV* 1.1.45-46, "Writers say; as the most forward Bud / Is eaten by the Canker ere it blow"). The couplet concludes with the poet observing other flowers, but being unable to find any that hadn't stolen from the violet either its perfume or its colour, both of which the violet had stolen from the youth.

99.1. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 698.

99.2. John Gerard, *The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes* (London: Adam Islip, 1633) 462.

99.3. Compare *Ant*. 2.5.28-30, "heere / My blewest vaines to kisse: a hand that Kings / Haue lipt, and trembled kissing."

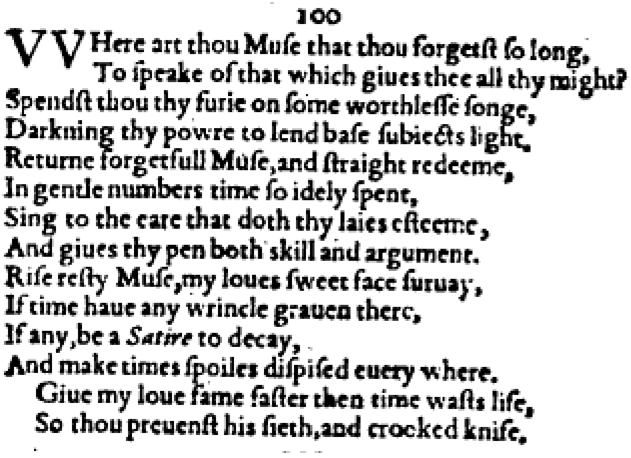
99.4. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 699.

99.5. Compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 1.1, "lilly hands."

99.6. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 538.

99.7. Tilley T239.

Sonnet 100



100
VVHere art thou Muſe that thou forgetſt ſo long,
To ſpeake of that which giues thee all thy might?
Spendſt thou thy furie on ſome worthleſſe ſonge,
Darkning thy powre to lend baſe ſubiects light,
Returne forgetfull Muſe, and ſtraight redeeme,
In gentle numbers time ſo idely ſpent,
Sing to the eare that doth thy laies eſteeme,
And giues thy pen both skill and argument.
Riſe reſty Muſe, my loues ſweet face ſuruay,
If time haue any wrincle grauen there,
If any, be a *Satire* to decay,
And make times ſpoiles diſpiſed euery where.
  Giue my loue fame faſter then time waſts life,
  So thou preuenſt his ſieth, and crooked knife.

Sonnet 100 is the first in a series concerned with the muse, initially the muse on which the ancient poets called, whose whereabouts the poet questions, given its silence and its continually neglecting to give expression to its potency ("which giues thee all thy might"). His second query addresses the muse's poetic dynamic: towards what does it now direct its "furie?" Classical 'fury' was the enthusiasm or frenzy proceeding from the Muses that inspired the poet or prophet, termed by Plato in the *Phaedo* 'mania' (μανία: 'A fury possessed from the Muses . . which stirs up a frenzy and awakens lays and other numbers') and by Cicero "furor" or 'fury,' ('if that prophesying has burned more fiercely, it is called fury, when the soul, withdrawn from the body, is stirred up by a divine impulse'). [1] The poet asks if the Muse is wasting its "furie" on less worthy endeavours ("worthlesse song"); is it obscuring or diminishing ("Darkning") its power, so that it can enlighten a lesser ("base") subject?

The "forgetfull Muse" is instructed without delay ("straight") to "redeeme / In gentle numbers time so idely spent." To 'redeem the time,' meaning 'to save time from being lost' or 'not to spend time idly,' was a rendering of the Vulgate's "tempus redimentes," found in Colossians in the context of using inspiration profitably: "that God may open vnto vs the doore of vtteraunce, that we may speake ye misterie of Christ . . That I may vtter it, as I ought to speake . . redeemyng the tyme" (4.3-5; *BB*). [2] The muse must not waste time idly, but devote it to "gentle numbers," noble verses that are not "base." It must inspire the ear of a poet, who values its songs ("laies") and can give to the muse's "pen" both "skill and argument;" "argument" is that which is laid out in the second part of rhetoric, *Dispositio,* while "pen" and feather were customarily associated with the muse. [3]

The "resty Muse," that is instructed to rouse itself ("Rise"), is an idle muse or one that needs stirring up ("resty" was used of refractory horses: Florio gives under "Restio," "reastie as some horses are, idle, lazie, backward, slowe, slug, slack"). It must look upon ("survay") the beloved's face to determine if "time haue any wrincle grauen there." The other biblical occurrence of "Redeemyng the time" (Eph. 5.16: *BB*) is followed closely by the image of "not hauyng . . wrinckle" (5.27); "grauen" suggests lines etched in the face with an engraving instrument (a knife?). If time were to have disfigured the youth's face, then the muse must subject the decay time brings to censure ("be a *Satire*"); it must make the "spoiles" of time, both that to which it lays waste and that which it takes as plunder, everywhere the object of ridicule ("despised"). "*Satire*" evokes its origin, 'satyr,' the Greek figure with the ears and tail of a horse, associated with the "satyrs,' who formed the chorus in ancient Greek satiric drama and whose function was one of censure. Finally the muse must advance the beloved's "fame faster then time wasts life." Continuing renown will outstrip time's spoiling, because the poetry the muse inspires will obtain everlasting fame. [4] It will outstrip ("preuenst") time's scythe and its "crooked knife,” a knife that is both bent and perverse. (A “culter curvus” or crooked knife was “the parte of a sickle toward the handle.”) [5]

100.1. Plato, *Phaedrus* 245.A, “άπὸ Μουσῶν κατοκωχή τϵ και μανία . . ἐγϵίρουσα καὶ ἐκβακχϵύουσα κατά τϵ ᾠδὰς καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἆλλην ποίησιν.” Cicero, *De Divinatione* 1.31.66, “Ea (praesagitio) si exarsit acrius, furor appellatur, cum a corpore animus abstractus divino instinctu concitatur.”

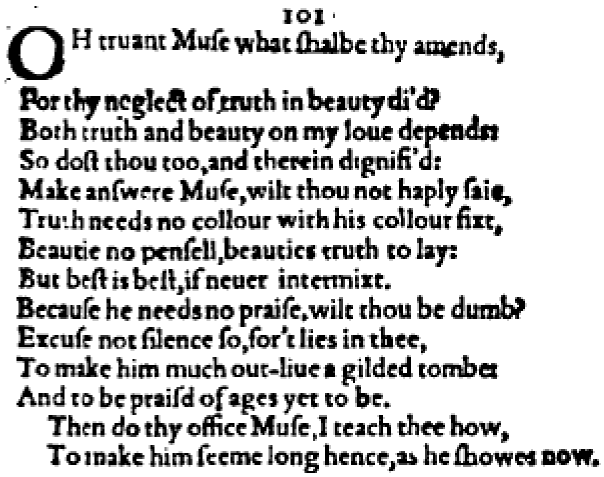
100.2. The phrase’s other occurrence, Eph. 5.16, is the basis for Hal’s foretelling his conversion in *1H4* 1.2.241, “Redeeming time, when men thinke least I will.”

100.3. See Sonnet 78, commentary.

100.4. Compare Ovid, *Met*. 15.878, “perque omnia saecula fama . .vivam.”

100.5. Cooper, *Thesaurus* culter.

Sonnet 101


101
OH truant Muſe what ſhalbe thy amends,
For thy neglect of truth in beauty di’d?
Both truth and beauty on my loue depends:
So doſt thou too, and therein dignifi’d:
Make anſwere Muſe, wilt thou not haply ſaie,
Truth needs no collour with his collour fixt,
Beautie no penſell, beauties truth to lay:
But beſt is beſt, if neuer intermixt.
Becauſe he needs no praiſe, wilt thou be dumb?
Excuſe not ſilence ſo, for’t lies in thee,
To make him much out-liue a gilded tombe:
And to be praiſd of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office Muſe, I teach thee how,
To make him ſeeme long hence, as he ſhowes now.

101
OH truant Muſe what ſhalbe thy amends,
For thy neglect of truth in beauty di’d?
Both truth and beauty on my loue depends:
So doſt thou too, and therein dignifi’d:
Make anſwere Muſe, wilt thou not haply ſaie,
Truth needs no collour with his collour fixt,
Beautie no penſell, beauties truth to lay:
But beſt is beſt, if neuer intermixt.
Becauſe he needs no praiſe, wilt thou be dumb?
Excuſe not ſilence ſo, for’t lies in thee,
To make him much out-liue a gilded tombe:
And to be praiſd of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office Muſe, I teach thee how,
To make him ſeeme long hence, as he ſhowes now.

Sonnet 101 follows on closely from Sonnet 100, its opening imitating the first sonnet of of Sidney’s *Astrophil and Stella* with its absent muse and the poet “biting my trewant pen.” Here the poet’s “truant Muse,” is absent from its appointed place and neglects its “office.” How shall it make reparation (“amends”) for its “neglect of truth,” specifically truth dyed or infused with colour by beauty (“in beauty di’d”)? Both “truth” and “beauty” depend on the poet’s beloved (“depends” is a singular verb with a plural subject, unless “truth and beauty” is one and thus singular). So also does the muse and in so doing it is made worthy (“dignified;” in Sonnet 84.8 the rival poet’s praise of the beloved’s name “dignifies his story;” normally it is the Muse that dignifies a poet’s lines).[1]

The muse is commanded to respond ("Make answere Muse"), the poet asking whether it won't by chance ("haply," muses seemingly reply by fits and starts) confirm that, "Truth needs no collour with his colour fixt." Since the colour of truth is already made fast, it needs no extra colouring. Truth being simple doesn't need the "colours of Rhetorique." [2] Beauty needs no small brush ("pensell") to lay down truth, as paint is laid down by artists (and courtesans), or to colour the truth of beauty. Each, truth and beauty, is perfect unto itself ("best is best"), but only if it remain untinted by the other ("if neuer intermixt"). (By contrast in Sonnet 54.1-2 each compounds the other: "Oh how much more doth beautie beautious seeme, / By that sweet ornament which truth doth giue.")

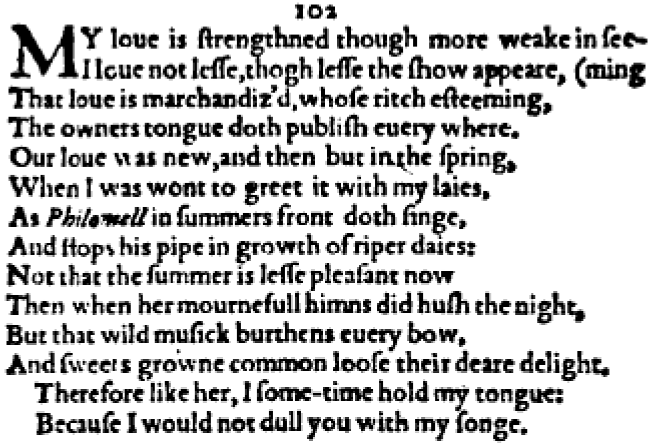
Will the muse remain unspeaking ("wilt thou be dumb"), because the beloved "needs no praise?" The poet's admonition is stern: "Excuse not silence so." It is the muse's duty ("for't lies with thee," echoing the earlier "lay") to render the youth everlasting, so that he will "out-liue a gilded tombe." As with the "Guilded monument" of Sonnet 55, a "gilded tombe" is one overlaid with gold, but the suggestion of a 'gilded tome' cannot be dismissed, a register with gilding down its leading edge. The muse's duty is to record the beloved, so that future ages might praise him ("to be prais'd of ages yet to be").

The couplet is ambiguous: "To make" refers back either to the "office" of the muse or to the "I teach" of the poet. If the commas around, "I teach thee how," are taken parenthetically, then "do thy office Muse . . / . . To make;" if the commas are ignored, then "I teach thee how / To make." The result is the same: the muse's office or the poet's example will register how the youth is, so that, despite "ages," he will "seeme" in the distant future ("long hence") to be what he now demonstrates ("as he showes now").

101.1. Compare Michael Drayton, *Matilda* (London: James Roberts, 1594) A3^{v}, "Shee by thy Muse, her fame from graue doth rayse, / And hie conceit, thy lines doth dignifie."

101.2 Wilson 180. See Sonnets 82 and 83, commentary.

Sonnet 102



102
MY loue is ſtrengthned though more weake in ſee-
I loue not leſſe,thogh leſſe the ſhow appeare, (ming
That loue is marchandiz'd,whoſe ritch eſteeming,
The owners tongue doth publiſh euery where.
Our loue was new,and then but inthe ſpring,
When I was wont to greet it with my laies,
As *Philomell* in ſummers front doth ſinge,
And ſtops his pipe in growth of riper daies:
Not that the ſummer is leſſe pleaſant now
Then when her mournefull himns did huſh the night,
But that wild muſick burthens euery bow,
And ſweets growne common looſe their deare delight,
Therefore like her, I ſome-time hold my tongue:
Becauſe I would not dull you with my ſonge.

102
MY loue is ſtrengthned though more weake in ſee-
I loue not leſſe, thogh leſſe the ſhow appeare, (ming
That loue is marchandiz'd, whoſe ritch eſteeming,
The owners tongue doth publiſh euery where.
Our loue was new, and then but in the ſpring,
When I was wont to greet it with my laies,
As *Philomell* in ſummers front doth ſinge,
And ſtops his pipe in growth of riper daies: her(?)
Not that the ſummer is leſſe pleaſant now
Then when her mournefull himns did huſh the night,
But that wild muſick burthens euery bow,
And ſweets growne common looſe their deare delight,
  Therefore like her, I ſome-time hold my tongue:
  Becauſe I would not dull you with my ſonge.

Sonnet 102's opening builds on the play between "seeme" and "show," that concludes Sonnet 101. The poet affirms that his love increases in power ("is strengthned"), even though it gives the appearance of being less strong ("more weak in seeming"). Just because he is less communicative of his love doesn't mean he loves the less. If someone in love, valuing his love as precious, broadcasts or advertises ("doth publish") it to all and sundry ("euery where"), he merely cheapens it ("is marchandiz'd"). The "owners tongue" sets up the coming reference to Philomel, whose tongue was stopped.

When the love between the poet and his friend was young (in its "spring"), the poet was accustomed to acknowledge ("greet") it with his songs ("laies"). But just as the nightingale ("*Philomell*") ceases its song ("pipe") as summer takes over from spring ("in summer’s front”) and as the longer days of summer draw out (“in growth of riper daies”), so too the poet stops his voice during the summer of their relationship. Although a “pipe” that is stopped suggests a wood instrument with stops that produce music or a bow which is made to sound through stopping, the meaning here is the voice, especially as it is used in singing like a bird. The nightingale was traditionally thought to stop singing at the end of May: John Eliot in his *Fruits for the French* observes, “*The Cookow and the Nightingale sing at one season of the yeare, to wit, in the spring time, from the middest of Aprill to the end of May, or thereabout*.” [1] Philomela was the daughter of Pandion and sister to Procne, married to Tereus. Tereus received permission from Pandion to convey Philomela to Procne, but fell in love with her and, having raped her, cut out her tongue to prevent her from disclosing his act. He held her captive and told Procne she was dead. Philomela later wove a tapestry recounting her ordeal which she had delivered to Procne. Procne liberated her and in revenge killed her son by Tereus, Itys, and served him up to Tereus at a banquet. Tereus was about to use his sword against them but was changed into a hoopoe, Procne into a swallow, and Philomela into a nightingale. [2] Philomel became an emblem of both song and silence: compare George Turbeville’s translation of the Mantuan’s *Eclogues* in words not dissimilar to Sonnet 102’s: “with Nightingall I may / Shut vp my Pipes till next retourne / of Spring, and leaue my lay, / As one withouten speech.” [3]

Yet, the poet admits, the summer of their relationship is no less pleasant than its spring, when the nightingale’s lamenting songs soothed the night, reducing it to silence (“did hush”), because (“but that”) now unrestrained music (“wild musick”) weighs down every bough (“bow”) or fills every bow/bough with song (“burthens”). A ‘burden’ or ‘bourdon’ was the bass or undersong in descant and was thought ‘heavier’ than air. It continued on even while the singer of the melody paused at the end of a verse and was often taken up as a refrain or return by a chorus or a “bow.” It came to be the principal motif of a poem or that which it carries. In *The Rape of Lucrece* Lucrece calls upon Philomel to sing, while “I at each sad straine, will straine a teare” and while “burthen-wise ile hum on TARQUIN still, / While thou on TEREUS descants better skill.” (1131-34). [4] Here the poet who sings the air will stop his tongue, even though the burden (of others) will continue, reasoning that, if a thing grows too familiar through repetition ("sweets grown common"), it loses the pleasure it gives. The aphorism reflects the adage in Culmann's *Sententiae*, "More rare vse doth commend pleasures," which also underpins Sonnet 52.4, "blunting the fine point of seldome pleasure." [5] Just as the nightingale ceases to sing as the height of summer approaches, so the poet will fall silent ("hold my tongue") during the summer of his relationship, because he will not run the risk of boring the friend with his song ("dull you with my songe").

102.1. John Eliot, *Ortho-epia Gallica. Eliots Fruits for the French* (London: Richard Field, 1593) 149; compare Richard Edwards, *The Paradise of Daintie Devises* (London: Robert Waldegrave, 1585) M3^r, "In May the Nightingall, her notes doth warble on the spray." The "his" of "his pipe" probably intends 'its,' since the philomel is feminine later.

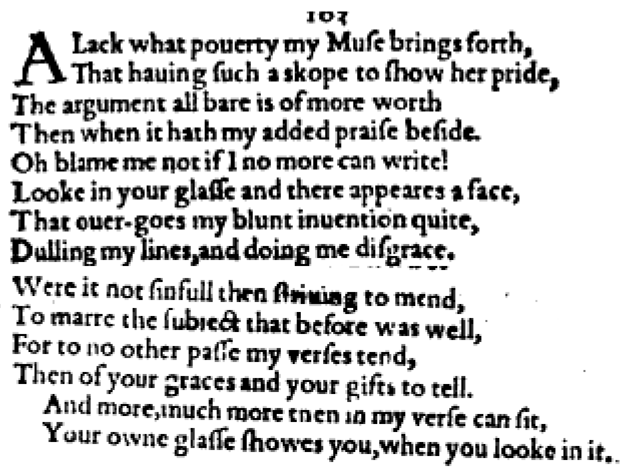
102.2. The legend is recounted in Ovid, *Met*. 6.401-674.

102.3. Baptista Mantuanus, *The Eglogs of the Poet B. Mantuan Carmelitan, Turned into English Verse, & set forth with the Argument to euery Egloge by George Turbervile Gent*. (London: Henry Bynneman, 1567) 47.

102.4. In *The Tempest* Shakespeare uses the same low 'bow' sound for his burden, when Ariel sings "*sweete Sprites beare the burthen*. Burthen dispersedly. . . *bowgh wawgh*" 1.2.380-81.

102.5. Culmann, *Sententiae* (1612) 19.

Sonnet 103



103
ALack what pouerty my Muſe brings forth,
That hauing ſuch a skope to ſhow her pride,
The argument all bare is of more worth
Then when it hath my added praiſe beſide.
Oh blame me not if I no more can write!
Looke in your glaſſe and there appeares a face,
That ouer-goes my blunt inuention quite,
Dulling my lines, and doing me diſgrace.
Were it not ſinfull then ſtriuing to mend,
To marre the ſubiect that before was well,
For to no other paſſe my verſes tend,
Then of your graces and your gifts to tell.
  And more, much more then in my verſe can ſit,
  Your owne glaſſe ſhowes you, when you looke in it.

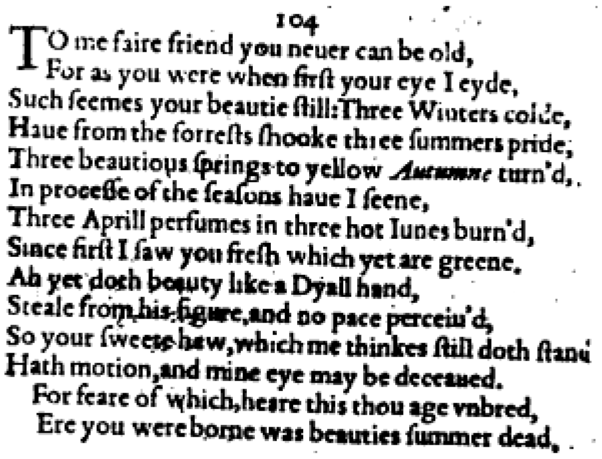
Sonnet 103 alludes to but doesn’t draw extensively on the Narcissus motif, so prominent in the sequence’s early sonnets, particularly Sonnets 1 and 3, where the youth’s gazing upon himself and his poverty-inducing refusal to use his “aboundance” are censured. The sonnet’s exclamation, “Alack,” or ‘alas’ plays with its origin, ‘a lack,’ as the poet laments the “pouerty” his muse produces (“brings forth”). His muse, feminine as in the classical “Musa,” has considerable potential to demonstrate “her” splendour or rhetorical power; “skope” through its etymon σκοπος from σκοπέω means both to look at and the object looked at, anticipating the later, “Looke in your glasse.” [1] Despite the muse’s potency the poet’s subject (“argument,” the essence of rhetoric’s second part, *Dispositio*), even without ornamentation (“all bare”), is of greater value than any further praise he might bring to it (“my added praise”). The youth is asked to absolve him from blame for not contributing more. He must look in his mirror ("glasse") and see there his bare face, which quite surpasses the unpolished or blurred conceit ("inuention," which is the first part of rhetoric) that the poet might offer ("blunt" was used as the opposite of 'sharp sighted,' while 'to be over-gone' in gazing meant to be overlooked or to be held spell-bound). [2] By comparison his face makes the poet's lines lose their point or edge ("Dulling my lines") and causes him embarassment ("disgrace"). If he were to seek to "mend" his style, would it not be "sinfull" to disfigure ("marre") the conceit ("subiect") that earlier was perfect, because his verses incline towards or intend ("tend") no other outcome ("passe") than to recount the youth's graces and talents ("gifts"). [3] To 'tell figures' meant to count, while the choice of "passe," which can mean a 'verse,' so close to "verses," is presumably deliberate. When the youth looks in his mirror, it reflects back to him much more than the poet's verse can contain: self-reflected beauty outdoes all the poet's reflecting.

103.1. The "skope" or aim of an invention or argument was technically correct: Wilson 87-88, states "it is needefull in causes of iudgement, to consider the scope whereunto we must leauell our reasons, and direct our inuention."

103.2. Compare Greene, *Menaphon* H3^{v}, "Samela espying this faire shepheard so farre ouer-gone in his gazing, stept to him, and askt him if he knew her that hee so ouerlookt her."

103.3. To 'mar' and 'mend' were proverbially linked: see John Harrington's repetition of what Ariosto says of his writing habits, that "he vsed his house as he did his Verses, mend them so much, that he mard them quite" (Ariosto 421).

Sonnet 104


104
TO me faire friend you neuer can be old,
For as you were when firſt your eye I eyde,
Such ſeemes your beautie ſtill:Three Winters colde,
Haue from the forreſts ſhooke three ſummers pride,
Three beautious ſprings to yellow *Autumne* turn'd,
In proceſſe of the ſeaſons haue I ſeene,
Three Aprill perfumes in three hot Iunes burn'd,
Since firſt I ſaw you freſh which yet are greene.
Ah yet doth beauty like a Dyall hand,
Steale from his figure,and no pace perceiu'd,
So your ſweete hew,which me thinkes ſtill doth ſtand
Hath motion,and mine eye may be deceaued.
For feare of which,heare this thou age vnbred,
Ere you were borne was beauties ſummer dead.

104
TO me faire friend you neuer can be old,
For as you were when firſt your eye I eyde,
Such ſeemes your beautie ſtill: Three winters colde,
Haue from the forreſts ſhooke three ſummers pride,
Three beautious ſprings to yellow *Autumne* turn'd,
In proceſſe of the ſeaſons haue I ſeene,
Three Aprill perfumes in three hot Iunes burn'd,
Since firſt I ſaw you freſh which yet are greene.
Ah yet doth beauty like a Dyall hand,
Steale from his figure, and no pace perceiu'd,
So your ſweete hew, which me thinkes ſtill doth ſtand
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceaued.
  For feare of which, heare this thou age vnbred,
  Ere you were borne was beauties ſummer dead.

Sonnet 104 is among the more discussed of the sequence: the three years it specifies as the length of the poet's relationship with the friend has been used as a clue to dating the sequence. But sonnets of reckoning are common in sequences, Shakespeare's Sonnet 59 and Spenser's *Amoretti* 60 being examples. As well, a span of three years for love to blossom or lapse, was a traditional trope originating in Horace's *Epodes*, where he remarks, 'A third December has now shaken the pride from the forests, since I ceased to burn with love for Inachia' ("hic tertius December, ex quo destiti / Inachia furere, silvis honorem decutit"). [1] The trope can be found among French sonneteers including Desportes and Ronsard. (Daniel also writes of his "priuiledge of faith," that in the 1592 edition of *Delia*, "was with blood and three yeeres witness signed," although shortly afterwards in 1601 he changed it to "fiue yeares.") [2]

Sonnet 104 is also a heavily cyphered sonnet. It opens by addressing the youth as, “faire friend,” who to the poet can never be old; the emphasis on, “To me,” obtained through inversion, implies that the ageing is evident to others. (The sonnet plays on the distinction between “be” and “seemes.”) The poet remembers the moment when “first your eye I eyde,” a slightly contrived but complexly ambiguous phrase comprising the three homophones, ‘I,’ ‘eye’ and ‘ay.’ Its first reading is, ‘since I first exchanged the glances,’ that initiated our friendship; secondly, ‘since I first gave my ‘yes’ (‘ayed’) to your ‘ay’ (‘yes’)’ in an exchange of words; thirdly ‘since I first eyed your ay,’ an inscribed ‘ay,’ that later will be found to deceive.

Since the moment of first encounter the youth’s beauty “seemes” to the poet to have remained the same (“still,” but hinting at ‘unmoving’). Three years have passed, during which three winters have shaken the splendour and progeny (“pride”) of three summers from the trees; three green springs have turned into yellow autumns in the course of time or the procession of the seasons (“processe of the seasons”). The scent (“perfumes,” from *per* + *fumare* = through + burn) of three Aprils has been “burn’d” in three hot Junes, since the poet first cast eyes on the youth, who remains (“yet”) fresh and innocent (“greene”).

But with a sigh of resignation (“Ah yet”) the poet admits that beauty is “like a Dyall hand.” The movement of the shadow cast by a sundial’s index or gnomon is so slow as to be barely distinguishable. So too beauty is subject to almost imperceptible change. “Steale from his figure” means both that transient beauty steals away like a thief from the figure it inhabits or it takes away from the figure; “no pace,” neither ‘step’ nor ‘speed of stepping,’ is perceived or eyed. The “figure” contains possibly the sonnet’s ultimate cipher, a further homophone of “eye I eyde” being, ‘III,’ the figure three in roman numerals found on a sundial.

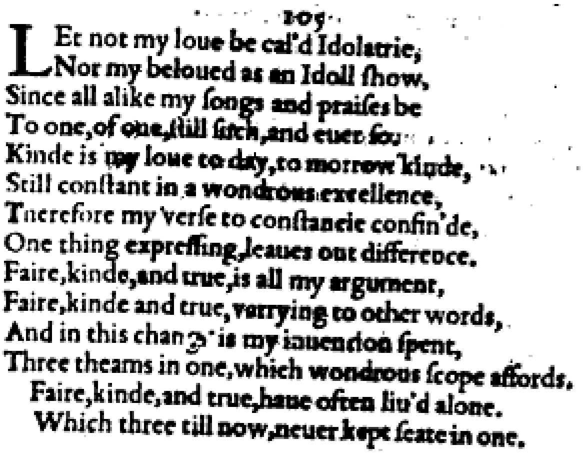
The youth’s “hew” or ‘hue,’ his shaped figure or his complexion, is deceiving: the poet “thinkes” it stands still or continues to stand upright, but it has “motion,” ‘movement’ but strongly suggesting 'decline.' The poet is brought to the realization that his 'eye' / 'ay' / 'I' may be misled ("deceaued"). The couplet admonishes future generations ("thou age vnbred") to listen out of awe ("For fear of which") to the proclamation the poet makes: the youth, the perfection of beauty ("beauties summer"), was well gone ("dead"), even before they were born ("Ere you were borne").

104.1. Horace, *Epodes* 11.5-6.

104.2. Daniel, *Delia* (1592) 26.5; *Delia* 28.6 in *The Works of Samuel Daniel. Newly augmented* (London: Simon Waterson, 1601).

104.3. The reading, "since first I eyed your I (person),' seems unlikely. Sonnets on the homophone were frequent, among the most laboured being Michael Drayton's *Idea* 9, beginning, "Nothing but no and I, and I and no, / How falls it out so strangely you reply?" (*The Barrons Wars* P1^{v}).

Sonnet 105



105
LEt not my loue be cal'd Idolatrie,
Nor my beloued as an Idoll ſhow,
Since all alike my ſongs and praiſes be
To one,of one,ſtill ſuch,and euer ſo.
Kinde is my loue to day,to morrow kinde,
Still conſtant in a wondrous excellence,
Therefore my verſe to conſtancie confin'de,
One thing expreſſing,leaues out difference.
Faire,kinde,and true,is all my argument,
Faire,kinde and true,varrying to other words,
And in this change is my inuention ſpent,
Three theams in one,which wondrous ſcope affords.
Faire,kinde,and true,haue often liu'd alone.
Which three till now,neuer kept ſeate in one.

105
LEt not my loue be cal'd Idolatrie,
Nor my beloued as an Idoll ſhow,
Since all alike my ſongs and praiſes be
To one, of one, ſtil ſuch, and euer ſo.
Kinde is my loue to day, to morrow kinde,
Still conſtant in a wondrous excellence,
Therefore my verſe to conſtancie confin'de,
One thing expreſſing, leaues out difference.
Faire, kinde, and true, is all my argument,
Faire, kinde, and true, varrying to other words,
And in this change is my inuention ſpent,
Three theams in one, which wondrous ſcope affords.
  Faire, kinde, and true, haue often liu'd alone.
  Which three till now, neuer kept ſeate in one.

Sonnet 105 is built around a layman's knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity. Standard understanding postulated that in one God there are three persons, in Richard Hooker's words,

> Our God is one, or rather verie *Onenesse*, and meere vnitie, hauing nothing but it selfe in it selfe, and not consisting (as all things do besides God) of many things. In which essential vnitie of God a Trinitie personall neuerthelesse subsisteth. [1]

The doctrine was encapsulated in the hymn of praise, the Lesser Doxology, echoes of which can be found in the sonnet: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." The same doxology concluded the long Confession of Faith, the "Quicunque vult," appointed by the *Book of Common Prayer* to be sung at Morning Prayer on the major feasts of the year, whose first half is an extended exposition of trinitarian detail and paradox. The Trinity's three persons are based on the oneness of and differences between being (*ens*), truth (*verum*), and good (*bonum*). The first Person of the Trinity, the Father, is of being; the Second Person, the Son, is of truth (the Word or Verbum that became flesh so that two natures, the divine and the human, are joined in one Person); the Third Person, the Holy Ghost, is of love (*bonum*). The operations or progressions in the godhead are in the case of the Second Person, "the generation of the sonne" (*per modum naturae*) and in the case of the Third Person, "the proceeding of the Spirit" (*per modum amoris*). [2] As Philip Stubbes records: "God, is diuided into a trinitie of persons, the father, the sonne, and the holy spirit, distant onely in names and offices, but all one, and the same, in nature, in essence, substance." [3] Shakespeare imitates the godhead's three hypostases in the sonnet's trinity of "Faire" (*bonum*), "kinde" (nature), and "true" (*verum*/*Verbum*).

The sonnet opens with two imprecations, "Let not my loue be cal'd Idolatrie," and, "Nor my beloued as an Idoll show;" "show" can be read intransitively, 'nor let my beloved be displayed as an idol,' or transitively, 'nor let me display my beloved as an idol.' Entitling one's beloved an "Idoll" was a petrarchist commonplace (compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 27.5, "That goodly Idoll"). Idolatry was regularly condemned in Elizabethan England. As well as denunciations from the pulpit, where Romish practices were excoriated as idolatrous, "An Homilie Against Peril of idolatrie" from the Elizabethan "Book of Homilies" or *Certaine Sermons appointed by the Queenes Maiestie, to be declared and read, by all Parsons, Vicars, and Curats; euery Sunday and Holy day in their Churches* was also read. Its denunciations were scripturally based, drawing on the Old Testament commandments, "Thou shalt haue none other Gods, in my sight," and "Thou shalt make thee no grauen image, neyther any similitude" (Exod. 20.3-4; *BB*), and the New Testament injunctions, "Wherfore my deare beloued, flee from idolatrie" (1 Cor. 10.14; *BB*), and "Babes kepe your selues from idols" (1 John 5.21; *BB*). Idols were images of polytheistic false gods and diverted worship from the one, true God. The poet's claim is that his love or its expression cannot be idolatry, because his "songs and praises" are totally ("all alike") and singly addressed "To one, of one, stil such, and euer so." They are directed toward the one person, speak of the one person, are always of that nature and will always be so.

The chiastic line, "Kinde is my loue to day, to morrow kinde," recalls Hebrews, "Iesus Christe yesterday and to day, and the same for euer," (Heb. 13.8; *BB*). The beloved is "kinde," natural and generous; he is "still constant," unchanging and never different in his "wondrous excellence." The poet's songs and praises evoke any number of psalmic echoes, "I wyll set foorth in wordes . . thy excellentnesse: and thy wonderous workes" (Ps. 145.5; *BB*), or "all the gods of the heathen they be but idoles: and it is God that made the heauens . . excellentnesse be in his sanctuarie" (Ps. 96.4-5; *BB*). Wilson defines such "constant trueth" as, "when we do beleeue that those things, which are, or haue bene, or hereafter are about to be, can not otherwise be, by any meanes possible." [4] Since the sole object of the poet's verse is a constant and since it expresses only one thing, the poet can claim that his verse "leaues out difference," just as in the one God there are three persons "without any difference" of nature or kind. (The *Book of Common Prayer*'s Preface for Trinity Sunday acclaims a God, "which art one God, one Lord, not one onely person, but three persons in one substance. For that which we beleeue of the glorie of the father, the same we beleeue of the sonne, and of the holy ghost, without any difference.")

The sestet three times repeats the trinitarian formula, "Faire, kinde, and true," the anaphoral figure being typically used of the godhead. Each hypostasis is embodied in the one person of the youth. In their totality and oneness ("all") they constitute the poet's "argument," which Wilson defines as part of the rhetorical category, "Disposition:" "Inuention helpeth to finde matter, and Disposition serueth to place arguments." [5] But the poet's one argument needs to be rendered into words, so allowing difference and change ("varying to other words"). In enunciating this "change" is the poet's "inuention spent," both used and used up. His invention is "Three theams in one." A 'theam' is firstly the topic of a poem, secondly the principal melody of "songs and praises," and thirdly the first person singular of a word, hence 'three persons in one.' The poet acknowledges that the three-in-one conceipt provides him with "wondrous scope" just as the object of his love was marked earlier by "wondrous excellence."

The couplet has the three titles personified, as they are in the godhead. They have often been seen as dwelling separately (“liu’d alone”) but, until the youth, had never been found residing together as one. To ‘keep seat’ is to be in residence or stay. To affirm that in the youth’s oneness there resides the personification of three “theams,” the Trinitarian hypostases, is idolatrous, as is the implication that these three have only now been enfleshed in one person, as three not two natures.

105.1. Richard Hooker, *Of The Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* (London: John Windet, 1593) 49.

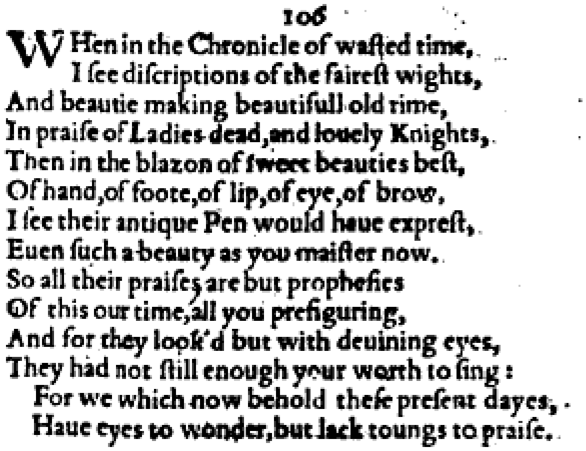
105.2. *Book of Common Prayer*, “Quicunque Vult:” “The father is made of none: neither created nor begotten. The sonne is of the father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten. The holy ghost is of the father & or the sonne: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceding.”

105.3. Philip Stubbes, *A Christal Glas for christian women: wherein, they may see a most wonderfull and rare example, of a right vertuous life and Chrsitian death* (London: T. Orwin, 1592) B1^{v}.

105.3. Wilson 34.

105.4. Wilson 163.

Sonnet 106


106
WHen in the Chronicle of waſted time,
I ſee diſcriptions of the faireſt wights,
And beautie making beautifull old rime,
In praiſe of Ladies dead, and louely Knights,
Then in the blazon of ſweet beauties beſt,
Of hand, of foote, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I ſee their antique Pen would haue expreſt,
Euen ſuch a beauty as you maiſter now.
So all their praiſes are but propheſies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring,
And for they look'd but with deuining eyes,
They had not ſtill enough your worth to ſing:
For we which now behold theſe preſent dayes,
Haue eyes to wonder, but lack toungs to praiſe.

106
WHen in the Chronicle of waſted time,
I ſee diſcriptions of the faireſt wights,
And beautie making beautifull old rime,
In praiſe of Ladies dead, and louely Knights,
Then in the blazon of ſweet beauties beſt,
Of hand, of foote, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I ſee their antique Pen would haue expreſt,
Euen ſuch a beauty as you maiſter now.
So all their praiſes are but propheſies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring,
And for they look'd but with deuining eyes,
They had not ſtill enough your worth to ſing: ſkill
For we which now behold theſe preſent dayes,
Haue eyes to wonder, but lack toungs to praiſe.

Sonnet 106 evokes the archaic, a practice most sequences follow with at least one example, although it was sometimes the object of censure: see, for example, Samuel Daniel's *Delia* 46, beginning, "Let others sing of Knights and Palladines, / In aged accents, and vntimely words." [1] The sonnet employs the device of *figura*, of biblical origin, where an event or person is real and historical, but whose reality is also enclosed and brought to fulfillment in a later *figura*: Old Testament *figurae* such as Moses or the ark are fulfilled in the *figura* of Christ. The idea was standard in medieval and neo-Platonic thought and art. The poet looks back at "a Chronicle," a register or historical account, here of "wasted time," of time laid waste rather than time that lays waste or a chronicle that belongs to such a time past. In the record he sees "discriptions of the fairest wights;" the term, 'wight,' was used of humans both male and female and by

Shakespeare’s day was virtually an anachronism. In the “Chronicle” he sees “beautie making beautifull old rime;” earlier beauty, incorporated in olden poetry (“rime”), made it beautiful; its purpose was to celebrate “Ladies dead, and louely Knights,” characters that populate the romances of bygone generations.

He also sees older poetry trumpeting forth the record (“blazon”) of the finest beauties. A *blason* was a poem of a former age, whose principles had been laid down by Geoffrey de Vinsauf in the thirteenth century and had been repopularized in Clément Marot’s 1543 anthology of French *blasons*, *Les Blasons anatomiques du corps feminin, ensemble les contreblasons*, subsequently much reprinted. [2] (Shakespeare’s Sonnet 130 is a *contreblason*.) The convention extolled a mistress’ beauty, describing her every part emblematically often by biblical analogues from the Song of Solomon or Proverbs, finally praising her inner perfection; compare Spenser’s *Amoretti* 15.7-14:

> if Saphyres, loe her eies be Saphyres plaine,
> if Rubies, loe hir lips be Rubies sound:
> If Pearles, hir teeth be pearles both pure and round;
> if Yuorie, her forhead yuory weene;
> if Gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;
> if siluer, her faire hands are siluer sheene:
> But that which fairest is, but few behold,
> her mind adornd with vertues manifold.

Unlike earlier *blasons* Shakespeare’s is addressed to a young man. In those of ancient poets the poet can discern beauty in their customary divisions “Of hand, of foote, of lip, of eye, of brow;” if given the opportunity, “their antique pen,” would have set forth (“exprest”) that beauty as something of which the youth is now the “maister” or personification.

The sestet, it has been pointed out, echoes a manuscript sonnet of Henry Constable dating probably from the early 1590s:

> Miracle of the world! I neuer will denye
> That former poets prayse the beautie of theyre dayes
> But all those beauties were but figures of thy prayse,
> And all those poets did of thee but prophecye. [3]

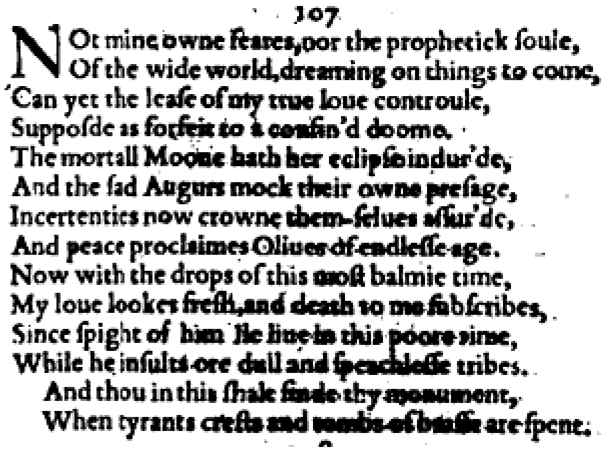
Here, “their praises,” are either the praises of “antique” pens or of “Ladies” and “Knights.” They are only foretellings and anticipations (“but prophesies”) of the present (“this our time”), since they are mere *figurae* of that which the youth is now the fulfillment (“all you prefiguring”). Furthermore, if the ancients hadn’t been blessed with “deuining eyes,” both eyes that prophesy and eyes that discern truths hidden beyond surface appearances, then they would have lacked the insight enabling them to sing the youth’s worth (“they had not skill enough your worth to sing”). By contrast poets and seers of the present time (“we which now behold these present dayes”) have eyes which, looking on the youth’s beauty, react in wonder, but are without the voice to laud him (“but lack toungs to praise”).

106.1. Daniel, *Delia* (1592) 46.1-2.

106.2. Clément Marot, *Sensuiuent les blasons anatomiques du corps femenin, ensemble les contreblasons de nouueau composez, & additionez, auec les figures, le tout mis par ordre: composez par plusieurs poetes contemporains* (Paris: Charles Langelier, 1543).

106.3. William Shakespeare, *The Sonnets and A Lover’s Complaint*, ed. John Kerrigan (London: Penguin, 1986) 312. Kerrigan points out that Constable’s concluding line, “Which onely we withoute idolatrye adore,” links the sonnet to Sonnet 105’s opening, “Let not my loue be cal’d Idolatrie.”

Sonnet 107



107

NOt mine owne feares, nor the prophetick ſoule,
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the leaſe of my true loue controule,
Suppoſde as forfeit to a confin’d doome.
The mortall Moone hath her eclipſe indur’de,
And the ſad Augurs mock their owne preſage,
Incertenties now crowne them-ſelues aſſur’de,
And peace proclaimes Oliues of endleſſe age.
Now with the drops of this moſt balmie time,
My loue lookes freſh, and death to me ſubſcribes,
Since ſpight of him Ile liue in this poore rime,
While he inſults ore dull and ſpeachleſſe tribes.
And thou in this ſhalt find thy monument,
When tyrants creſts and tombs of braſſe are ſpent.

Sonnet 107 has given rise to much discussion, focussing principally on the allusions in lines 4-8 which have been seen as a key to the sonnets’ dating. Recent scholarship has identified them as referring to events around the death of Elizabeth I and the coronation of James I in 1603. Attempts to identify the allusions are important, yet they have deflected attention from the sonnet’s real argument, in which the vagaries of the times are contrasted with the poet’s enduring memorial of his love. A conceit employing contemporary events was a conventional sonnet topic: Sidney’s *Astrophil and Stella* 30 takes events of 1582 only to dismiss them as distractions, while Michael Drayton in a sonnet published in 1605 refers to events as late as 1604, which he uses to contrast steadfastness with “incertaine times” and the “resistlesse force” of the fates. He cites the fall of the Earl of Essex (1599-1601), the truce with the Earl of Tyrone (1599-1600), the death (“quiet end”) of Elizabeth and the accession of James I (1603), and the Somerset House Conference and Treaty of London (18 August 1604), which brokered a peace with Spain and an agreement not to intervene in the affairs of the Netherlands:

> Calling [to] minde since first my loue begunne,
> Th’incertaine times oft varying in their course,
> How things still vnexpectedly haue runne,
> As please the fates, by their resistlesse force:
> Lastly, mine eyes amazedly haue seene,
> *Essex* great fall, *Tyrone* his peace to gaine,
> The quiet end of that long-liuing Queene,
> This Kings faire entrance, and our peace with *Spaine*,
> We and the Dutch at length our selues to seuer,
> Thus the world doth, and euermore shall reele,
> Yet to my goddesse am I constant euer;
> How ere blind fortune turne her giddie wheele:
> Though heauen & earth proue both to me vntrue,
> Yet am I still inuiolate to you. [1]

Shakespeare opens Sonnet 107 with a double negative: ‘neither his own fears nor the prophetic soul of the wide world can set a terminal date for the lease of his love.’ The “prophetick soule, / Of the wide world” is the combined foresight of the world able to foretell events while “dreaming on things to come.” Shakespeare elsewhere associates, derogatively, soothsayers and dreams, for example, “the Dreamer *Merline*, and his Prophecies” (*1H4* 1.150) and the soothsayer in *Julius Caesar*, who is termed “a Dreamer” (1.2.24). [2] Neither the poet’s personal fear of the future nor public forebodings about future events can foreshorten (“controule,” an accounting and legal term) a final date for the “lease of my true loue,” the period of time, in which the poet possesses his love. (A knowledge of future events would provide a “controule.”) Nor will the lease be considered surrendered (“Supposde forfeit”) nor subject to any judgement that, fearful of the future, imposes a temporal restraint (“confin’d doome”). The poet will later assert that the lease afforded his love is “confin’d” neither to a place such as “tombs of brasse” nor to a date that is not of “endlesse age.” (The historical allusions of the next quatrain have allowed Kerrigan and others to see in “confin’d doome,” a reference to the Earl of Southampton’s release from the tower by James I in April 1603, where he had been held following his part in Essex’s rebellion in 1600 against Elizabeth. The reading is plausible, only if “my true loue” were Southampton.)

The second quatrain lists historical instances of unfounded fear which support the claim that the term of the poet's love should not be conditional upon similar forebodings. Injunctions against prophesying and auguring were frequent. The Old Testament inveighed against false prophets, including "a regarder of times, or a marker of the flying of foules" (Deut. 18.10; *GV*; the phrase translates the Vulgate's "observet somnia atque auguria," 'one who takes heed of dreams and auguries,' 'augury' deriving from *avis* = fowl). James I similarly warns against those who direly predict the future or who

> fore-tell what common-weales shall florish or decay: what persones shall be fortunate or vnfortunate: what side shall winne in anie battell: What man shall obteine victorie at singular combate: What way, and of what age shall men die. [3]

The poet firstly observes that, "The mortall Moone hath her eclipse indur'de." Kerrigan has argued, and recent editors concur, that the reference is to the death of Elizabeth in 1603. The "mortall Moone" is Elizabeth herself, often awarded the titles of Diana or Cynthia, the goddess of the moon, but here "mortall" or 'prey to death.' Elizabeth has, then, "indur'de" or 'suffered' her final eclipse. Her light has been overtaken by death's darkness, while the prophets of doom ("sad Augurs"), who predicted turmoil upon her death, have been made to laugh at ("mock") their own foreboding ("presage").

Uncertainty ("Incertenties," compare Drayton's "incertain times") has been overcome and crowned by surety. The choice of "crowne" is apposite, since the surety is that which James' accession to the throne brought after earlier worries about Elizabeth's successor. James brought peace by uniting the realms of England, Wales and Scotland and by effecting a peace with Spain through the 1604 Treaty of London after 20 years of Anglo-Spanish warring. The peace he brought is presented as an imperial peace, as "Oliues of endlesse age." The image draws on the olive branch, the traditional emblem of peace, and anticipates "drops of this most balmie time." Olive oil in the Old Testament was used to anoint kings, priests, and prophets (authorizing their speech). Later the oil of Chrism, a ceremonial oil made by infusing aromatic balm through olive oil, was used to anoint priests and kings. (Compare *R2* 3.2.54-5, "Not all the water in the rough rude sea / Can wash the balm off from an anointed king.") In the liturgical practices that prevailed after the Reformation, however, the ritual of anointing had been proscribed and was no longer found in the rites of Baptism, Confirmation or Orders. James I, despite the opposition of divines and public opinion, insisted that the ritual be included in his Coronation rite because, in the words of Giovanni Scaramelli, the Venetian Secretary to England writing on 4 June 1603, “anointing is a function appointed by God to mark the pre-eminence of Kings.” He pointedly observes that James included “the full ceremony” of enunction for political reasons: “so as not to loose this prerogative, which belongs to the Kings of England as Kings of France.” [4] (The insistence is pertinent also for Sonnet 125.)

Kings of peace saw themselves in the line of Melchisidech, whom the Epistle to the Hebrews titles “kyng of peace” and who “parteyneth vnto another tribe” than the tribe of Levi, because he was not anointed “bodilie” and thus prefigured Christ who was “made . . after the power of the endlesse lyfe,” who “endureth euer,” and who was “made a suertie of a better testament” (Heb. 7 *passim*; *BB*; compare Shakespeare’s “endlesse age” and “assur’de”). The newly anointed kingship of James has brought a “most balmie time,” either ‘a fragrant time,’ or ‘a time whose moments (“drops”) like ointment have brought healing,’ or ‘a time that has been anointed as a chosen time.’ Lastly time’s balm has an aneling effect: it has afforded the youth a new life (“My loue lookes fresh”) and has rendered death subservient (“death to me subscribes”). The writings of death have been over-written (‘subscribe’ is from *sub* + *scribere* = under + write) by the poet, so that, despite death, he will continue to “liue in this poore rime,” where “poore” is disingenuously ‘inadequate.’ Death is only allowed to brag over (“insults”) “dull and speechlesse tribes.”

Before Shakespeare’s time ‘tribe’ had generally been used only of the twelve tribes of Israel, or Israel itself, a meaning found in *The Merchant of Venice* (1.3.111) and *Othello* (5.2.349). Here the term’s recently recovered Latin sense is employed. From the Latin *tres*/*tribus* = three, ‘tribe’ was used of the three main races of imperial Rome, the Latins, Sabines and Etruscans. The Roman *topos* was adopted by James and his court to celebrate his uniting the three “tribes” of England, Wales and Scotland. (Compare Octavius’ imperial prediction in *Antony and Cleopatra*, “The time of vniuersall peace is neere: / Proue this a prosp'rous day, the three nook'd world / Shall beare the Oliue freely" [4.6.5-7].) The poet allows that death ("he") may reign over "dull and speechless tribes," people that are unchosen, lack skill or wit, have no prophecy or voice, and thus cannot defeat death. Theirs are silent monuments ("*lapides muti*"), which, bearing no subscription, are anonymous (writing on monuments or crests was said to be 'subscribed;' *OED* 3b). The youth, however, will find his "monument" in the poet's inscription ("rime"), which will last beyond the finite term granted memorials such as "tyrants crests and tombs of brasse." A 'tyrant' was a mighty ruler, in Shakespeare's time not necessarily an oppressor. His "crest" is either that which crowns his battle helmet or his coat of arms, or the coat of arms that adorns his tomb; "tombes of brasse" are long-lasting tombs that recall the "brasse" of Sonnets 64 and 65 and Horace's 'monument more enduring than brass.' [5] Both will be exhausted ("spent"), even as the poet's verse continues in time.

107.1. Michael Drayton, *Poems*: *by Michaell Draiton Esquire* (London: N. Ling, 1605) *Idea* 51. The omission of 'to' in line 1 is amended in the edition of 1610, *Poems*: *by Michael Drayton Esquire. Newly Corrected by the Author* (London: John Smethwicke, 1610).

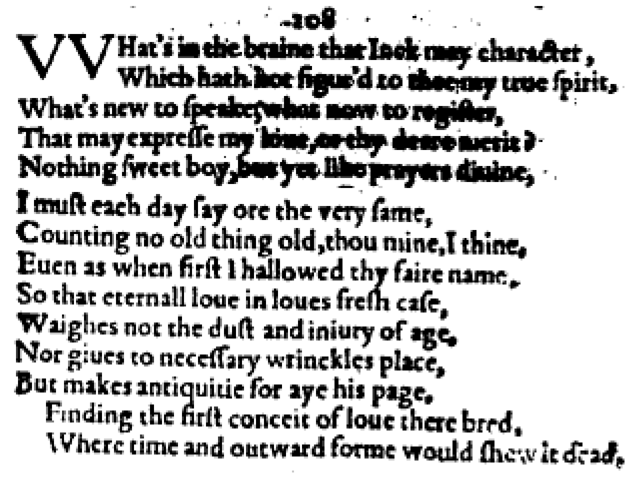
107.2. See also Sonnet 106.9, "prophesies / Of this our time," and *Ham*. 1.5.40, "O my Propheticke soule."

107.3. James 1, *Daemonologie* 13.

107.4. Brown 43-44. See Introduction for further detail.

107.5. Horace, *Odes* 3.30.1, "monumentum aere perennius."

Sonnet 108


108
VVHat’s in the braine that Inck may character,
Which hath not figur’d to thee my true ſpirit,
What’s new to ſpeake, what now to regiſter,
That may expreſſe my loue, or thy deare merit?
Nothing ſweet boy, but yet like prayers diuine,
I muſt each day ſay ore the very ſame,
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Euen as when firſt I hallowed thy faire name.
So that eternall loue in loues freſh caſe,
Waighes not the duſt and iniury of age,
Nor giues to neceſſary wrinckles place,
But makes antiquitie for aye his page,
Finding the firſt conceit of loue there bred,
Where time and outward forme would ſhew it dead,

108
VVHat’s in the braine that Inck may character,
Which hath not figur’d to thee my true ſpirit,
What’s new to ſpeake, what now to regiſter,
That may expreſſe my loue, or thy deare merit?
Nothing ſweet boy, but yet like prayers diuine,
I muſt each day ſay ore the very ſame,
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Euen as when firſt I hallowed thy faire name.
So that eternall loue in loues freſh caſe,
Weighs not the duſt and iniury of age,
Nor giues to neceſſary wrinckles place,
But makes antiquitie for aye his page,
  Finding the firſt conceit of loue there bred,
  Where time and outward forme would ſhew it dead.

Sonnet 108’s use of sacramental vocabulary is similar to that of Sonnet 85. It opens by asking what remains in the poet’s brain that might be imprinted as words (“that Inck may character”), that hasn’t already portrayed or shaped (“figur’d”) his true spirit to the youth. A character originally was both an instrument used for engraving or marking and the figure or letter marked down. In Baptism (and in Confirmation and Orders) a character was an indelible mark imprinted on the soul or, subsequent to the Reformation, the indelible mark of election, the difference typifying the divide between prereformed and reformed thinking on the sacraments (see William Perkins, who contests, “whether baptisme imprint a Character or marke in the soule, which is neuer blotted out”).[1] The Church of England’s Articles of Religion originally established that the sacraments were “not only badges or tokens” but “effectual signs of grace.” The *Book of Common*

Prayer’s catechism defined a sacrament as an “outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace,” while the Homily, ‘Concerning the Sacrament,’ in the Elizabethan “Book of Homilies” affirmed that “we receiue not onely the outward Sacrament, but the spiritual thing also, not the figure, but the trueth.” [2] Generally the outward sign was known as the token or figure and the sacramental action as the figuring or tokening, “A Sacrament is a figure or token: the bodye of Christ is figured or tokened,” or in the case of baptism, “For look what baptism figureth outwardly, y^t doth y^e lord work inwardly by his own power.” [3] The outward sign was, according to Richard Hooker, twofold: the sacramental element (water or bread and wine) and the formula that figures the sacrament, its “outward forme, which forme sacramentall elements receiue from sacramentall words.” Three things operate in a sacrament, “the substance of a sacrament, namely the grace which is thereby offered, the element which shadoweth or signifieth grace, and the word which expresseth what is done by the element.” [4] In the case of baptism the sacramental substance was the “guift of the spirit” by which the child is born anew or made “regenerate.” [5] The *Book of Common Prayer*’s “Rite of Baptism” includes the Lord’s Prayer and subsequently the baptism is inscribed in the Register of Baptisms. In the sonnet the poet’s words are the “outward forme” which have “figur’d” or engraved his spirit, shadowed in his brain, through the element of ink and as rhetorical tropes. His question implies that nothing remains of his conceit that has not been expressed. He asks, “What’s new to speake,” implying that there is nothing new to be said, and “what now to register,” implying that nothing further can be recorded (“now” may be a mistaken ‘new’). No inkings can express the poet’s love (as a “word . . expresseth what is done by the element”) nor the youth’s “deare merit,” akin to the “pretious merit,” obtained in baptism (see Hooker, “so through his [Christ’s] most pretious merit [we] obteine as well that sauing grace of imputation.”) [6]

In addressing the youth as “sweet boy” the poet echoes Ovid’s epithet, “dilecte puer,” used by Narcissus in his farewell to self and rendered by Golding as “sweete boy.” [7] Since all has been said and written the poet must tell over and over like daily prayers the same well-established formula of words (“like prayers diuine, / I must each day say ore the very same”). He must pretend that what he pronounces is not old and worn

(“Counting no old thing old”). His prayer is that he and the youth be one as once they were when he first accounted holy the youth’s fair name. His prayer, “thou mine, I thine,” is the prayer of Christ that concludes the institution of the Eucharistic sacrament, “I pray for them . . for they are thyne. And all myne are thyne, and thyne are myne . father, kepe through thine owne name . . that they may also be one, as we are.” His words, “hallowed thy faire name,” echo the phrase, “halowed be thy name” of the Lord’s Prayer, itself introduced by the command, “when ye pray, vse no vaine repetitions.” [8]

As a result the poet can consider “eternall loue in loue’s fresh case.” The use of “case” is complex: it is either a manner or circumstance of being, hence ‘eternal love in a fresh presenting of love;’ or it is an argument, hence ‘eternal love contained in the poem’s fresh argument of love;’ or it is a vestment, hence ‘eternal love freshly clothed in/by love;’ or “case” is a compositor’s frame, in which characters or types are kept ordered, hence ‘eternal love freshly set forth from the letters of love’ (taken up later in “page”); or “case” is the body that contains the inward spirit and of which it is the outward sign (compare *Ant*. 4.15.89, “This case of that huge Spirit now is cold”), hence ‘eternal love manifest in this young embodiment of love.’ Whatever the case, “eternall loue” refuses to consider (“Waighes not”) the effects of age, the way it breaks things down into “dust” and causes damage (iniury”). It refuses to pay heed (“giue place”) to wrinkles that will inevitably occur. Rather it will make “antiquitie for aye his page:” it will make antiquity forever its servant (“page”) or it will make antiquity the subject on its page. The couplet asserts that the poet’s inward truth, his “first conceit of loue,” which was generated in the past (“there bred”), remains fresh and vital, even though time and old formularies (“outward forme”), his hackneyed figurings, would indicate its demise.

108.1. Perkins, *Galatians* 255.

108.2. Church of England, *The seconde Tome of Homilies, of suche matters as were promised, and entituled in the former part of Homilies* (London: Christopher Barker, 1582) Rr2^{r}.

108.3. John Jewel, *Certaine sermons preached before the Queenes Maiestie, and at Paules crosse* (London: Christopher Barker, 1583) U5^{v}; Niels Hemmingsen, *A Postill, or Exposition of the Gospels that are usually red in the churches of God, vpon the Sundayes* *and feast dayes of Saincts, Written by Nicholas Heminge a Dane . . And translated into English by Arthur Golding* (London: Henry Bynneman, 1569) 76^{v}.

108.4. Richard Hooker, *Of The Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*. *The fift Booke* (London: John Windet, 1597) 129.

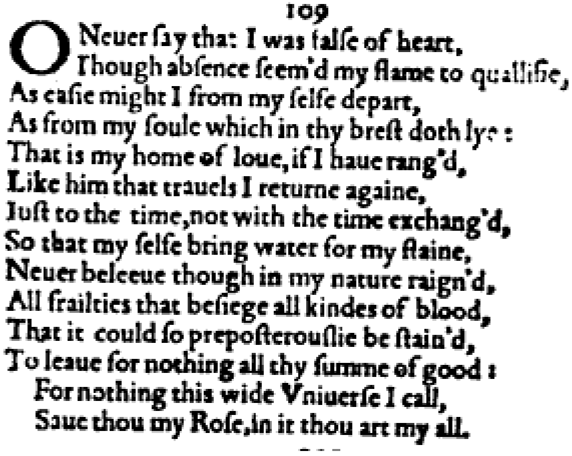
108.5. *Book of Common Prayer*, "Rite of Baptism."

108.6. Hooker, *Politie* (1597) 32.

108.7. Ovid, *Met*. 3.500; Golding 3.627. See Sonnet 1.

108.8. John 17.9-11 (*BB*); Matt. 6.9 (*BB*); see also Luke 11.2. The phrase was common enough, being used of the spouses in the Song of Songs and becoming a motto through Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, "how canst thou be mine, and I thine" (Thomas a Kempis, *Of the imitation of Christ, Three, both for wisedome, and godlines, most excellent bookes; made 170. yeeres since by one Thomas of Kempis . . translated out of Latine . . by Thomas Rogers* (London: Henry Denham, 1580) 3.37; see *De Imitatione Christi* 3.73.3, "Alioquin quomodo poteris esse meus et ego tuus?"

Sonnet 109



109
O Neuer ſay that I was falſe of heart,
Though abſence ſeem'd my flame to quallifie,
As eaſie might I from my ſelfe depart,
As from my ſoule which in thy breſt doth lye :
That is my home of loue, if I haue rang'd,
Like him that trauels I returne againe,
Iuſt to the time,not with the time exchang'd,
So that my ſelfe bring water for my ſtaine,
Neuer beleeue though in my nature raign'd,
All frailties that beſiege all kindes of blood,
That it could ſo prepoſterouſlie be ſtain'd,
To leaue for nothing all thy ſumme of good :
For nothing this wide Vniuerſe I call,
Saue thou my Roſe,in it thou art my all.

109
O Neuer ſay that I was falſe of heart,
Though abſence ſeem'd my flame to quallifie,
As eaſie might I from my ſelfe depart,
As from my ſoule which in thy breſt doth lye:
That is my home of loue, if I haue rang'd,
Like him that trauels I returne againe,
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That it could ſo prepoſterouſlie be ſtain'd,
To leaue for nothing all thy ſumme of good:
For nothing this wide Vniuerſe I call,
Saue thou my Roſe, in it thou art my all.

Sonnet 109 is the first of two dealing with straying, either physical or moral. Its risposte, "O Neuer say that I was false of heart," implies a preceding accusation, although the poet allows that "absence seem'd my flame to quallifie." That 'absence doth quallifie the fire' or mitigate passion was proverbial. To 'qualify' was used also of the humour, blood, which, when too hot or too cold, needed to be qualified to give a moderate temperament. The poet might as easily have separated himself from himself ("depart" means both separate and leave) as separate himself from his "soule," which dwells in the friend's breast ("which in thy brest doth lye").

His breast is the abode of the poet's soul ("That is my home of loue"). If he were to have strayed, either physically or morally ("rang'd" suggests a wandering to and fro rather than journeying), then like a traveller he would return to the youth's breast, his only destination. He would return exactly on time ("Iust to the time") and without having been altered by his being away ("not with the time exchang'd"). He brings his own "water for my staine," the grime of journeying or the blemish of inconstancy or unfaithfulness.

The sonnet's opening "O Neuer," is picked up by the sestet's "Neuer beleeue." The poet admits that weaknesses, which attack the blood ("besiege") and cause an imbalance in the humours, have held sway ("raign'd") over his temperament or character ("nature"). Nevertheless the friend must not believe that his nature ("it") could be so unnaturally stained ("preposterouslie," with a suggestion of something that strains belief), that it would abandon to no advantage "all thy summe of good." 'Preposterous,' a contemporary neologism, is putting what comes after (*post* = after) before (*pre* = before), a reversal of proper order either in the course of nature (compare *Oth*. 1.3.63, "For Nature, so prepostrously to erre") or time (a "time exchang'd") or humours. The 'Preposterous' was also a literary device, which Puttenham defines as a "manner of disordered speech, when ye misplace your words or clauses and set that before which should be behind, *& è conuerso*, we call it in English prouerbe, the cart before the horse, the Greeks call it *Histeron proteron*, we name it the Preposterous." [1] If he were to set "nothing" before "all thy summe" the poet would be failing to observe proper order. The youth's "summe of good" is an echo of the divine *summum bonum*, which in Sonnet 110.12 is a "God in loue."

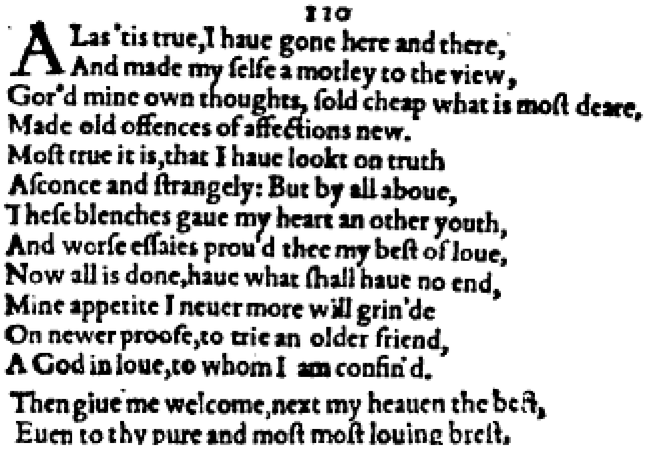
The reason why his nature cannot be so stained is because he counts ("call") as nothing the whole "Vniverse," except that in the universe is contained the beloved, the poet's "all," and "Rose." "Vniverse" is an unusual word for Shakespeare meaning that which turns on one [*unus* + *versus* = one + turned] and in an orderly way, not "*e converso*," 'out of order' or 'preposterously.' [2] Addressing a beloved as 'my rose' was common enough and had classical precedent: Cooper's *Thesaurus* gives under 'rosa,' "Rosam suam vocat amicam amator quidem apud Plautum" ('a lover calls his beloved 'my rose,' for instance in Plautus'). [3] The endearment recalls the "beauties *Rose*" of the first sonnet.

109.1. Puttenham 141.

109.2. “Universe” is used only once elswhere by Shakespeare in *H5* 4.Prol.3.

109.3. The reference is to Plautus, *Asinaria* 3.3.664, “mea rosa.”

Sonnet 110



110
ALas ’tis true, I haue gone here and there,
And made my ſelfe a motley to the view,
Gor’d mine own thoughts, ſold cheap what is moſt deare,
Made old offences of affections new.
Moſt true it is, that I haue lookt on truth
Aſconce and ſtrangely: But by all aboue,
Theſe blenches gaue my heart an other youth,
And worſe eſſaies prou’d thee my beſt of loue,
Now all is done, haue what ſhall haue no end,
Mine appetite I neuer more will grin’de
On newer proofe, to trie an older friend,
A God in loue, to whom I am confin’d.
Then giue me welcome, next my heauen the beſt,
Euen to thy pure and moſt moſt louing breſt.

110
ALas ’tis true, I haue gone here and there,
And made my ſelfe a motley to the view,
Gor'd mine own thoughts, ſold cheap what is moſt deare,
Made old offences of affections new.
Moſt true it is, that I haue lookt on truth
Aſconce and ſtrangely: But by all aboue,
Theſe blenches gaue my heart an other youth,
And worſe eſſaies prou’d thee my beſt of loue,
Now all is done, haue what ſhall haue no end,
Mine appetite I neuer more will grin’de
On newer proofe, to trie an older friend,
A God in loue, to whom I am confin’d.
  Then giue me welcome, next my heauen the beſt,
  Euen to thy pure and moſt moſt louing breſt.

Sonnet 110 begins by confessing to the strayings of the preceding sonnet (“I haue gone here and there”). Its structure, “Alas ’tis true,” “Most true it is,” follows that of *Astrophil and Stella* 5.1,5,8, “It is most true.” The poet’s errancy, physical or moral, is a thing of sadness (“Alas”). It is also the first occasion in the sequence, when he confesses to his own transgressions. Disporting himself in public, he has made a fool of himself (“made my selfe a motley to the view”); “motley” was the parti-coloured clothing of the fool (see *AYL* 2.7.43-44, “O that I were a foole, / I am ambitious for a motley coat”). He has “Gor’d mine owne thoughts.” A ‘gore’ was a triangular scrap of cloth used to widen a garment (Florio has, “Gheroni, the skirts or quarters of a coate, or ierkin, the gores or gussets of a smocke or shirt, the side peeces of a cloke”). The fool’s variegated costume was a patchwork of gores and to be gored was to be covered over with patches. ‘Under gore' was a colloquialism for 'under one's clothes.' Metaphorically it was used of reputation (compare *Tro*. 3.3.227-28, "I see my reputation is at stake, / My fame is shrowdly gor'd"). Here the poet has covered over or kept to himself what he truly thought. (Other meanings of "Gor'd," 'pierced' or 'made bloody,' seem not relevant.) He has "sold cheap what is most deare." What he has sold remains unspecific, but given the sonnet's later sexual theme, it must include the poet's self ("most deare" to himself and the youth) with a suggestion of prostituting his self. Similarly he has "Made old offences of affections new." New liasions have turned out to be repetitions of past disloyalties.

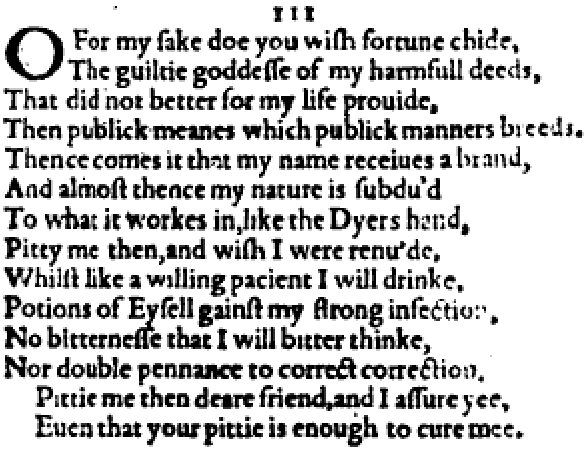
The poet admits that he has "lookt on truth / Asconce and strangely." "Asconce" or 'askance' intends 'disdainfully,' 'with suspicion,' or sideways (turning aside from truth), while "strangely" suggests he has misconstrued truth or been a stranger to it. He invokes heaven ("by all aboue") to swear that his "blenches," his deviatings or transgressions, were used to fool himself into thinking that he was young again ("gaue my heart an another youth"). (The sense of "blench" as 'oeillade' and the idea of a youth other than the beloved are further possible readings.) The more reprehensible of his escapades ("worse essaies") merely proved the youth to be that which he loved best ("thee my best of loue").

Amendment is integral to a confession and the poet now resolves to leave the past in the past, "Now all is done," a familiar phrase common to deathbed prayers and commitals to heaven in imitation of Christ's "consummatum est." [1] He asks the youth to accept his unending resolution, "haue what shall haue no end." He determines not to pursue other loves ("Mine appetite I neuer more will grin'de"), where 'grind' means to whet or sharpen the appetite (compare Sonnet 118.1, "to make our appetites more keene"), but with a specific sense of exercising the sexual appetite, as in Job, "Then let my wife grinde vnto an other man, and let other men lye with her" (31.10; *BB*). He will seek no new experiments ("newer proofe") to test "an older friend," by apposition, a "God in loue," the youth who, where love is concerned, is godlike (rather than a reference to Cupid). To him the poet is "confin'd," either 'bound' as one is 'confined' in service, or 'attached to,' so that he cannot range "here and there" (in each case there is an echo, through *con* +

fines = ends together, of "what shall haue . . end"). Given his confession and purpose to amend, he asks that he might be welcome to the youth ("Then giue me welcome"), who is to him the closest thing to heaven ("next my heauen the best"), and rest in the youth's "pure and most most louing brest," defined in the preceding sonnet as his "home of loue."

110.1. Compare Stubbes, *Christal Glas* C4^r, "Now it is done. Father into thy blessed hands I commit my spirit;" or Anthony Nixon, *Londons Dove: Or a Memoriall of the life and death of Maister Robert Doue* (London: Thomas Creed, 1612) D4^r, "Now it is done; Father into thy blessed hands I commend my Spirite."

Sonnet 111


111
O For my ſake doe you wiſh fortune chide,
The guiltie goddeſſe of my harmfull deeds,
That did not better for my life prouide,
Then publick meanes which publick manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receiues a brand,
And almoſt thence my nature is ſubdu'd
To what it workes in,like the Dyers hand,
Pitty me then,and wiſh I were renu'de,
Whilſt like a willing pacient I will drinke,
Potions of Eyſell gainſt my ſtrong infection,
No bitterneſſe that I will bitter thinke,
Nor double pennance to correct correction.
Pittie me then deare friend,and I aſſure yee,
Euen that your pittie is enough to cure mee.

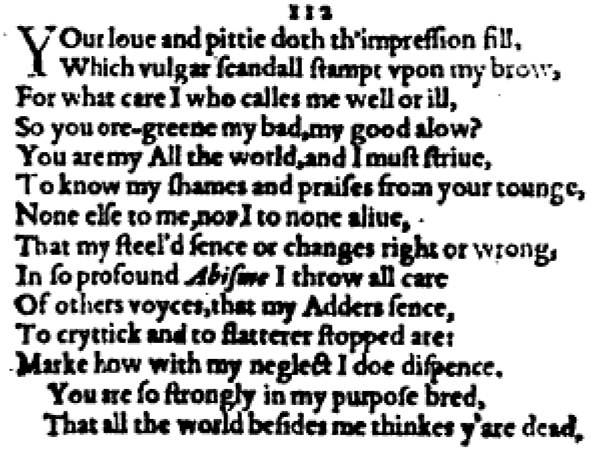
111
O For my ſake doe you wiſh fortune chide, with
The guiltie goddeſſe of my harmfull deeds,
That did not better for my life prouide,
Then publick meanes which publick manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receiues a brand,
And almoſt thence my nature is ſubdu’d
To what it workes in, like the Dyers hand,
Pitty me then, and wiſh I were renu’de,
Whilſt like a willing pacient I will drinke,
Potions of Eyſell gainſt my ſtrong infection,
No bitterneſſe that I will bitter thinke,
Nor double pennance to correct correction.
Pittie me then deare friend, and I aſſure yee,
Euen that your pittie is enough to cure mee.

Sonnet 111 opens with the poet instructing the youth and patron to remonstrate on his behalf with fortune (“doe you with fortune chide;” the misprint “wish” for “with” is apparently a compositor’s lapse of concentration, possible caused by the “wish” of line 8). To ‘chide with fortune’ is a phrase found elsewhere in Shakespeare (see *R3* 2.2.35: “To chide with Fortune”). Fortune is a “guiltie goddesse,” a rendering of the classical epithet, “rea Fortuna.” She is responsible for (“guiltie . . of”) the poet’s actions that have caused harm (“my harmfull deeds”) and has cared for the poet only to the extent (“not better . . Then”) of providing “publick meanes which publick manners breeds;” “meanes” are both the way by which an income is earned and the income itself. (Since Shelley the line has often been interpreted as a Shakespearean lament at having to make ends meet through a public theatrical career.) The "public meanes," provided by fortune, breed "public manners;" they require of him a public face or performance. If the friend were to chide fortune for providing only a public "meanes," then, it is implied, the chiding would reveal that the friend has failed to provide alternative means. The result is that the poet's name bears a mark of infamy or disgrace ("receiues a brand," developed in Sonnet 112's "Vulgar scandall stampt vpon my brow"). As well, his "nature is subdu'd / To what it workes in." His nature is made subject to or submerged in (as brands are) his public work. It is "like the Dyers hand," which in its work is immersed totally in dye and is thereby stained or infected. The simile conjures up an image of the poet's hand full of rhetorical colours.

The sonnet does not observe the customary octet / sestet division: its second half opens with another imperative, "Pitty me then, and wish I were renu'de," renewal carrying suggestions of patronage (Donne's patroness will not "renew" him in "A nocturnall upon *S. Lucies* day"). The poet presents himself as "a willing pacient," who "will drinke, / Potions of Eysell gainst my strong infection." A potion is a draught or medicine, here of "Eysell" or vinegar, which the poet will take as an antidote to his "strong infection," either his disease or his poisoning or his moral corruption. (As in Sonnet 67 Shakespeare awards multiple readings to "infection," whose etymon, *inficere*, Elizabethan dictionaries such as *Riders dictionarie* translated as "*to dye cloth, to colour,* to *corrupt, to* . . *infect, to poyson*.") [1] "Eysell" as a medicine was used to cure a variety of ailments and both to fix dye in fabric and to scour it from the dyer's hand.) The poet picks up the bitterness of vinegar to assert that he will not think bitterly on any bitterness ("No bitternesse that I will bitter thinke"). Nor will he do a "double pennance to correct correction." Since penance is awarded for the infection of sin and a firm purpose of amendment normally accompanies it, the poet resolves not to double up on his penance further to correct something for which he has already suffered. The couplet repeats line 8's instruction, "Pittie me then," as it addresses the "deare friend" and assures him that his "pittie is enough to cure mee," is sufficient to restore him to health.

111.1. Rider, *Dictionarie* inficio.

Sonnet 112


112
YOur loue and pittie doth th'impreſſion fill,
Which vulgar ſcandall ſtampt vpon my brow,
For what care I who calles me well or ill,
So you ore-greene my bad,my good alow?
You are my All the world,and I muſt ſtriue,
To know my ſhames and praiſes from your tounge,
None elſe to me,nor I to none aliue,
That my ſteel'd ſence or changes right or wrong,
In ſo profound *Abiſme* I throw all care
Of others voyces,that my Adders ſence,
To cryttick and to flatterer ſtopped are:
Marke how with my neglect I doe diſpence.
You are ſo ſtrongly in my purpoſe bred,
That all the world beſides me thinkes y'are dead.

112
YOur loue and pittie doth th'impreſſion fill,
Which vulgar ſcandall ſtampt vpon my brow,
For what care I who calles me well or ill,
So you ore-greene my bad, my good alow?
You are my All the world, and I muſt ſtriue,
To know my ſhames and praiſes from your tounge,
None elſe to me, nor I to none aliue,
That my ſteel'd ſence or changes right or wrong,
In ſo profound *Abiſme* I throw all care
Of others voyces, that my Adders ſence,
To cryttick and to flatterer ſtopped are:
Marke how with my neglect I do diſpence.
  You are ſo ſtrongly in my purpoſe bred,
  That all the world beſides me thinkes y'are dead.

Sonnet 112 continues the argument of Sonnet 111, picking up its "pittie" and adding "loue." These virtues of the patron fill in and cover over the "impression" or indentation in the poet's brow caused by the stamp of "vulgar scandall," suggestive of the ancient Roman practice of marking the foreheads of criminals and retainers and making explicit the "brand" or infamy that his name "receiues" in Sonnet 111.5. Something "stampt" retains an impression, but the sense of "stampt" upon or trodden down will be developed later in "ore-greene." The "scandall" is the damage done to the poet's reputation rather than something he has done to cause offense; "vulgar" implies 'common' or 'widespread' slander, although, as in Sonnet 89 which also deals with names, an echo of those excluded from Horace's elect circle, "Odi profanum volgus" ('I hate the uninitiated masses') is present. It does not matter to the poet whoever gives him a good or bad name

("For what care I who calles me well or ill"), so long as ("so") the friend glosses over his faults ("ore-greene my bad"); to "ore-greene" was to cover over with green to prevent something from being "stampt" or trodden in, and derives from the custom, still common in Shakespeare's day, of strewing green rushes on the floor to cover over filth and dirt. The green "sharpe Rush," Gerard observes, is "fitter to straw houses and chambers than any of the rest" because it doesn't "turne to dust and filth with much treading." [1] Likewise no other opinion matters so long as the friend praises his good ("my good alow").

For the poet the friend is his "All the world," his everything (compare "all the world" below, Rev. 12.9). The poet must "striue, / To know my shames and praises from your tounge." The source of true opinion resides not in the public world but with the friend. No one else is alive to the poet and he is alive to no one else: "None else to me, nor I to none aliue." Line 8 is obscure and has caused much speculation: "steel'd sence" is one that is hardened, identified in the sestet as a hardened sense of hearing, but it is also one that has been impressed with a 'style;' "or changes right or wrong" can be read as an either/or: 'no one is alive to the poet such that his hardened sense changes either right or wrong.' Alternatively, "or changes" (as with "or siluer'd" in Sonnet 12.4 or as with "ore-greene" above) can be read as 'o'er-changes:' the poet's hardened sense doesn't over-change right or wrong, or exchange right and wrong each into the other.

All worries ("all care"), caused the poet by others' "voyces," he now casts into a "profound *Abisme*," the bottomless pit beneath the earth into which with his serpent's tongue the "great dragon, that olde serpent . . was cast . . which deceaueth all the world" (Rev. 12.9; *BB*; compare *Ant*. 3.13.148, "th'Abisme of hell"). In ignoring the voices of others the poet's hearing will become an "Adders sence," a biblical alluson drawing on Ps. 58.3-4, whose Geneva Version headnote runs, "*Hee describeth the malice of his enemies, the flatterers of Saul, who both secretly and openly sought his destruction*."

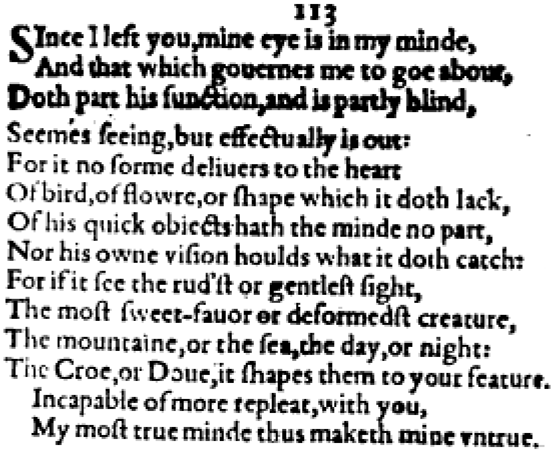
> The vngodly are straungers euen from their mothers wombe: assoone as they be borne, they go astray and speake a lye. They haue poyson [within them] lyke to the poyson of a serpent: they be lyke the deafe adder that stoppeth her eares, and wyll not heare the voyce of charmers, though he be neuer so skilfull in charming.

The poet's ears are blocked ("stopped") against the poison of both "cryttick" (a word in use only from the 1580s onwards) and "flatterer" alike. The friend is instructed to observe how the poet must put aside ("dispence") the neglect that befalls him (compare *Tim*. 3.2.93, "Men must learne now with pitty to dispence").

The couplet's "y'are" is problematic. Despite attempts to amend it to "they are" on the grounds that the "y'" is the old letter thorn (Þ), contracted in printing as a 'y' which would give a reading of "th'are dead" or 'they are dead,' the line is not sufficiently long to warrant a contracted thorn and "y'are" should be retained despite difficulties of interpretation. (The compositor uses the same contraction at Sonnet 120.6, where 'you have' is the only possible reading.) The couplet contrasts the earlier "All the world," the poet's everything, with the whole world other than the poet and patron. The friend is so firmly implanted ("bred") in the poet's resolution or thought (in contrast with those who "from their mothers wombe . . go astray and speake a lye") that, extending the earlier claim, "None else to me, nor I to none aliue," the youth appears alive to no one else but the poet ("all the world besides me thinkes y'are dead").

112.1. Gerard, *Herball* (1597) 31. The proverb, "Strew green rushes for a stranger" (Tilley R213), to 'cover over what is dirty,' was a commonplace: see Heywood, *Dialogue* D3^{v}, "Greene rushes for this stranger, strawe here;" or John Lyly, *Sapho and Phao, Played beefore the Queenes Maiestie* (London: Thomas Cadman, 1584) D1^{r}, "straungers haue greene rushes, when daily guests are not worth a rushe."

Sonnet 113


113
SInce I left you,mine eye is in my minde,
And that which gouernes me to goe about,
Doth part his function,and is partly blind,
Seemes ſeeing,but effectually is out:
For it no forme deliuers to the heart
Of bird,of flowre,or ſhape which it doth lack,
Of his quick obiects hath the minde no part,
Nor his owne viſion houlds what it doth catch:
For if it ſee the rud'ſt or gentleſt ſight,
The moſt ſweet-fauor or deformedſt creature,
The mountaine,or the ſea,the day,or night:
The Croe,or Doue,it ſhapes them to your feature.
Incapable of more repleat,with you,
My moſt true minde thus maketh mine vntrue.

113
SInce I left you, mine eye is in my minde,
And that which gouernes me to goe about,
Doth part his function, and is partly blind,
Seemes ſeeing, but effectually is out:
For it no forme deliuers to the heart
Of bird, of flowre, or ſhape which it doth lack,
Of his quick obiects hath the minde no part,
Nor his owne viſion houlds what it doth catch:
For if it ſee the rud'ſt or gentleſt ſight,
The moſt ſweet-fauor or deformedſt creature,
The mountaine, or the ſea, the day, or night:
The Croe, or Doue, it ſhapes them to your feature.
  Incapable of more repleat, with you,
  My moſt true minde thus maketh mine vntrue.

Sonnet 113, which constitutes a pair with Sonnet 114, works the contrast between what the eye and the mind's eye sees, a common enough conceit. With the poet absent from the friend, the eye that be-holds the friend is his mind's eye, "mine eye is in my minde" (compare *Ham*. 1.2.184-5, where Hamlet sees his father "In my minds eye"); "minde" retains its original sense of memory. The sight, the faculty that directs the poet's movement ("which gouernes me to goe about"), has divided itself from or abandoned its function ("Doth part his function"). The polyptoton, "is partly blind," intends either partially blind or blind because remote from itself. The sight may appear to see ("Seemes seeing"), but "effectually is out;" in effect, it is spent or snuffed out like a light or candle.

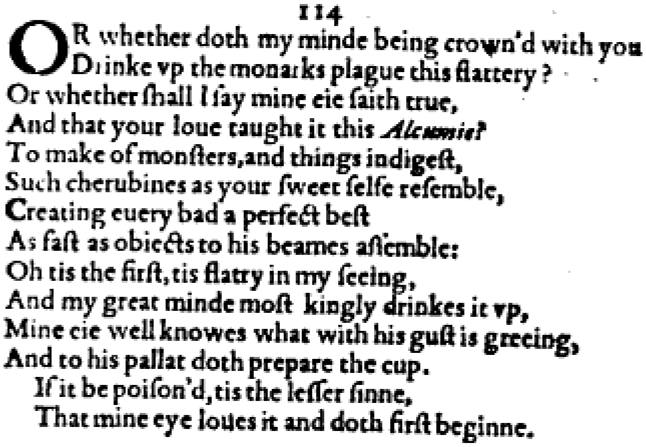
Customarily what the eye saw was converted and received into the mind as a *forma mentalis*. The poet’s sight, however, “deliuers to the heart” no *formae* of “bird, of flowre, or shape,” of which it might grasp hold (“latch;” the *quarto* has an unrhyming “lack”). Evans has pointed out the similarities in Sonnets 113 and 114 to details of the Canticle “Benedicite” or “The Song of the Three Children,” sung after their delivery from the fiery furnace and found attached to the book of Daniel. [1] It was well known as the alternative canticle to be sung daily between lessons in the *Book of Common Prayer*’s Morning Prayer. The canticle acknowledges a “departing from thee” (Song 29) and the lack of a “gouernour” (Song 38), and prays that “our offring be in thy sight this daye.” It praises God that “sittest vpon the Cherubims” (an allusion taken up in Sonnet 114.6) and calls on manifold creatures to bless the Lord including “nights & dayes,” “mountaines, & hilles,” “sea, and floods,” and “All ye foules of heauen” (Song *passim*; *GV*), all features of the sonnet. The mind’s eye of the poet has no share (“part,” continuing the earlier polyptoton) in these “quick obiects,” alive as well as quickly-moving things. Nor does the mind’s eye hold in its “owne vision” what the eye catches sight of (“what it doth catch”).

Whatever is in the poet’s mind’s eye, whether “the rud’st or gentlest sight,” either the most misshapen or unrefined, or the most refined and well-born, it “shapes them to your feature;” it receives them after the manner in which the friend is made (“feature” is from *factura* = a making or creating) or frames them according to his countenance. The mind reshapes in the likeness of the friend the “most sweet-fauor or deformedst creature.” While the most monstrous creature (“deformedst” contrasting with “forme” above) is clear, “most sweet-fauor” is not. Either it qualifies “creature,” and then it should be read as ‘most sweet-favoured;’ or it is in opposition to “deformedst creature” and should read “sweet fauor” (‘to find favour in one’s sight’ was a biblical hebraism, as was the “sweete sauour” of an acceptable offering); “sweet” means attractive or shapely (compare Sonnet 114.6, “sweet selfe resemble”) and “fauor” intends a comely figure or countenance (‘the favour of one’s face’ was colloquial and the biblical adage, “Thine eye desireth fauour and beautie” (Ecclus. 40.22; *GV*) well known). If the poet’s mind’s eye sees the “mountaine,” or the “sea,” or the “day,” or the “night,” or the “Croe,” or the “Doue,” it configures them according to the friend’s shape.

The final couplet, like the preceding sonnet's, is problematic: attempts have been made to render "mine" as 'm'eyne,' but unsatisfactorily as eye is singular through the sonnet. Likewise adding 'eye' as in 'mine eye,' adds an eleventh syllable to the line – compare the last line of the following sonnet, "mine eye" – and requires that "maketh" become 'mak'th' as in 'mak'th mine eye vntrue." The line is best left, as in the *quarto*, with an implied "eye." Because everything in the poet's mind's eye has been reconfigured after the friend, the source of true delineation, and because it can take in no more ("Incapable of more") and is filled to capacity ("repleat with you"), it has become a "most true minde" (anticipating "the marriage of true mindes," three sonnets later). It contains no falsehood and shows up his physical eye as an organ that is not right-seeing, but deceptive and inconstant.

113.1. Evans 224.

Sonnet 114



114
OR whether doth my minde being crown’d with you
Drinke vp the monarks plague this flattery?
Or whether ſhall I ſay mine eie ſaith true,
And that your loue taught it this *Alcumie*?
To make of monſters,and things indigeſt,
Such cherubines as your ſweet ſelfe reſemble,
Creating euery bad a perfect beſt
As faſt as obiects to his beames aſſemble:
Oh tis the firſt, tis flatry in my ſeeing,
And my great minde moſt kingly drinkes it vp,
Mine eie well knowes what with his guſt is greeing,
And to his pallat doth prepare the cup.
If it be poiſon’d,tis the leſſer ſinne,
That mine eye loues it and doth firſt beginne.

114
OR whether doth my minde being crown’d with you
Drinke vp the monarks plague this flattery?
Or whether ſhall I ſay mine eie ſaith true,
And that your loue taught it this *Alcumie*?
To make of monſters, and things indigeſt,
Such cherubines as your ſweet ſelf reſemble,
Creating euery bad a perfect beſt
As faſt as obiects to his beames aſſemble:
Oh tis the firſt, tis flatry in my ſeeing,
And my great minde moſt kingly drinkes it vp,
Mine eie well knowes what with his guſt is greeing,
And to his pallat doth prepare the cup.
  If it be poiſon’d, tis the leſſer ſinne,
  That mine eye loues it and doth firſt beginne.

In Sonnet 114, as in Sonnet 113, the mind’s eye continues to take precedence over the physical eye. Its first eight lines comprise a long, torturous question in which two alternatives are proposed. Does the mind’s eye of the poet, perfectly figured by the friend (“crowned by you”), receive a distorted representation just as the mind of a monarch might be distorted by flattery, which is the scourge of monarchs (“Drinke vp the monarks plague this flattery”)? The action of drinking up or swallowing largely such “flattery” is associated with Sonnet 112’s use of Ps. 58.4 with its headnote’s allusion to “flatterers” and its verse, “They haue poyson [within them].” The allusions add a further reading, ‘Is mind’s eye of the poet poisoned by the friend’s crowning in the same way that flattery, the scourge of monarchs, poisons their minds?’ (Poison becomes explicit later in the sonnet.) Alternatively, ought the poet state that his eye expresses what is true (“mine eie saith true") and that the friend's love "taught it this *Alcumie*." The alchemical is a favourite of Shakespeare and is the sonnet's secondary conceit, developed at length in Sonnet 119. [1] Alchemy sought to transmute base metals into gold (compare Sonnet 33.4, "Guilding pale streames with heauenly alcumy") and the sonnet works the conceit of refining "monsters" into pure spirits ("cherubines") by means of the alembic. The eye as an alchemical alembic was frequent among sonneteers (compare Lodge, *Phillis* 37.11, "The Limbique is mine eye that doth distill the same"). The poet asks whether his eye functions as a distillatory, "To make of monsters, and things indigest, / Such cherubines as your sweet selfe resemble?" "monsters" are shapeless beings without form; "things indigest" recalls Sonnet 89's use of Ovid's definition of chaos, "Quem dixere chaos, rudis indigestaque moles," which Shakespeare used in *King John* ("To set a forme on that indigest / Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude"), and which Sandys later rendered as "They *Chaos* nam'd: / An vndigested lump." [2] Here "indigest" is conflated with the biblical account of creation from chaos where "In the beginning . . the earth was without forme," which the Geneva Version glosses as, "As a rude lumpe and without any creature" (compare Sonnet 113.9, "rud'st . . sight") and later as a "confused heape."

The poet, playing with the etymology of 'digest' (*di* + *gerere*, to separate out), asks if his eye has been "taught" by the friend to distil angelic shapes from "things indigest" or things not yet distilled. Digestion was the technical process of applying heat in an alembic to refine through distillation as in Sonnet 119.1, "What potions . . Distil'd from Lymbecks." (The alembic technically was the head or 'crown' of the apparatus - compare "crown'd" above.) George Baker explains that through distillation "is a substance drawne forth, rather better digested, and purer." [3] "Such Cheribines as your sweet selfe resemble" expands Sonnet 113's use of the *Benedicite* of a God that "sittest vpon the Cherubins," while "sweet selfe" parallels its "sweet-fauor." Does the eye through the alchemy of love, by making all things resemble the youth's angelic form, create out of "euery bad" a "perfect best" as "fast as obiects to his beames assemble" or amass?

The sestet decides for the "minde:" "Oh tis the first." It is the mind's eye, distorted by the eye ("flatry in my seeing") which is a "greate minde," one that is "repleat" with the friend

– as a woman is great with child – although the sense of "greate" meaning 'raw' or 'undigested' is also present. Like a king, whose potion would have been pre-tasted, the mind quaffs down the flattery ("most kingly drinkes it vp"). The "eye" now becomes the courtly Taster who has proved the draught, for the eye knows what the mind's taste ("gust") finds agreeable ("greeing" is an aphetized "agreeing") and so prepares the cup to suit the mind's palate ("pallat"). Whether the draught is poisoned or not remains open: "If it be poison'd" draws together earlier strands: the "strong infection" or poison of Sonnet 111.10, the "flatterer" as poison in Ps. 58 and Sonnet 112.12, and the contemporary connection between infection, poison and cup in Elizabethan dictionaries, most of which cite Vergil, "Inficere pocula veneno. Vir. To poyson cuppes." [4] If the cup be poisoned, the eye's sin is of less severity ("'tis the lesser sinne"), because the eye loves the potion and either tests it first ("first beginne") or uses it as a toast the friend; 'to begin' meant 'to propose a toast' or 'raise one's glass' as a Taster might on taking a first sip (*Huloets Dictionarie* translates the Latin "Propino" ('to toast someone's health') as "Bring good lucke in drinking, to beginne to one"). [5] Because the eye configures the world as the friend prior to the mind's receiving it from the eye, it becomes a toast or pledge to love itself ("mine eye loues it").

114.1. See *JC* 1.3.158-60, "that which would appeare Offence in vs, / His Countenance, like richest Alchymie, / Will change to Vertue."

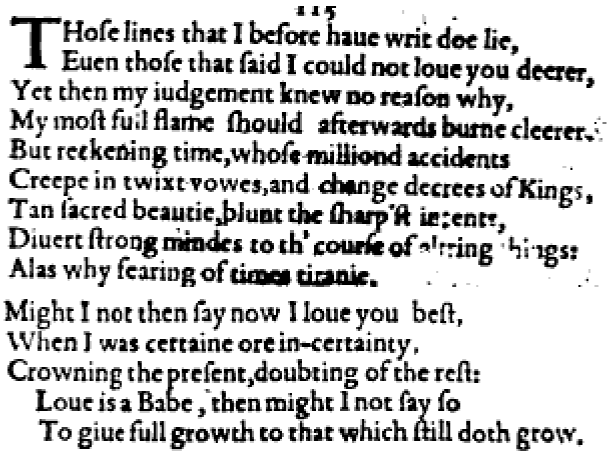
114.2. Ovid, *Met.* 1.7; *KJ* 5.7.26; George Sandys, *Ovid's Metamorphoses Englished by G.S.* (London: William Stansby, 1626) 1.7.

114.3. Konrad Gesner, *The newe Iewell of Health, wherein is contayned the most excellent Secretes of Phisicke and Philosophie . . Faithfully corrected and published in Englishe, by George Baker* (London: Henry Denham, 1576) B2^r.

114.4. Cooper, *Thesaurus* inficio.

114.5. See Richard Huloet, *Huloets Dictionarie, newelye corrected, amended, Set in Order and Enlarged* (London: Thomas Marsh, 1572) bring.

Sonnet 115



115
THoſe lines that I before haue writ doe lie,
Euen thoſe that ſaid I could not loue you deerer,
Yet then my iudgement knew no reaſon why,
My moſt full flame ſhould afterwards burne cleerer.
But reckening time,whoſe milliond accidents
Creepe in twixt vowes,and change decrees of Kings,
Tan ſacred beautie,blunt the ſharp'ſt intents,
Diuert ſtrong mindes to th' courſe of altring things:
Alas why fearing of times tiranie,
Might I not then ſay now I loue you beſt,
When I was certaine ore in-certainty,
Crowning the preſent,doubting of the reſt:
Loue is a Babe, then might I not ſay ſo
To giue full growth to that which ſtill doth grow.

115
THoſe lines that I before haue writ doe lie,
Euen thoſe that ſaid I could not loue you deerer,
Yet then my iudgement knew no reaſon why,
My moſt full flame ſhould afterwards burne cleerer.
But reckening time, whoſe milliond accidents
Creepe in twixt vowes, and change decrees of Kings,
Tan ſacred beautie, blunt the ſharp'ſt intents,
Diuert ſtrong mindes to th' courſe of altring things:
Alas why fearing of times tiranie,
Might I not then ſay now I loue you beſt,
When I was certaine ore in-certainty,
Crowning the preſent, doubting of the reſt:
  Loue is a Babe, then might I not ſay ſo
  To giue full growth to that which ſtill doth grow.

Sonnet 115 opens by acknowledging that the poet's earlier expressions of love have been inadequate ("Those lines that I before haue writ doe lie"), even those which stated that he could not love the youth more dearly. Yet the poet did not then know that the flame of love, seeming then to burn at the highest intensity ("most full flame"), should later burn even more brightly ("burne cleerer"). The poet then is not culpable, although "reckening time" is. (Elizabethans would have made a connection between a "full flame" and "reckening," a 'recken' being the hook above the fire's flame from which a pot was hung.)

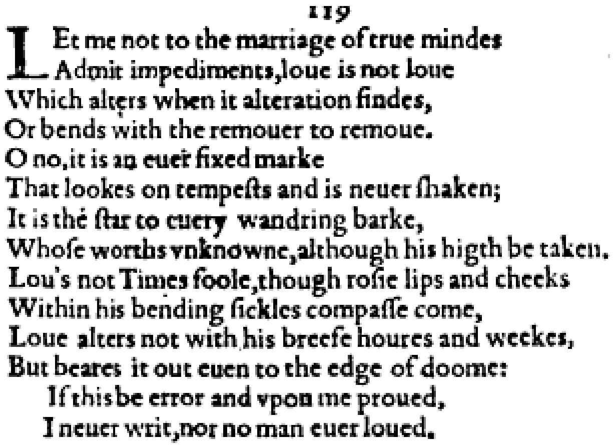
Time that reckons is time that calculatingly calls all to account. It is characterized by “milliond accidents,” where “milliond” intends numberless and “accidents” are the unpredictable results it brings. (The *quarto*’s second quatrain is a series of subordinate clauses and lacks a predicate.) Like an interloper the effects of time threaten affirmations of love (“creepe in twixt vowes”); they cause “decrees of Kings” to be modified; they “Tan sacred beautie,” where Tan” means to make brown or leathery a beauty once held precious; they make the keenest resolve lose its edge (“blunt the sharp’st intents”). Time causes the most resolute minds to turn aside (“Diuert,” from *de* + *vertere* = turn aside) in the direction of changeableness (“to th’ course of altring things”). The final “altring” anticipates the “alters” and “alteration” of Sonnet 116, while “diuert th’ course” anticipates its navigational *topos*.

Given time’s despotic nature (“times tiranie”), the poet asks himself why, to thwart time’s unseen effects, he doesn’t seize the moment and immediately utter the words, “Now I loue you best,” now while he is secure in the face of uncertainty (“certain ore in-certainty”). The present would be the crowning moment (“Crowning the present”), while any future uncertainty would be ignored (“doubting all the rest”).

The couplet is awkward: while, “Loue is a Babe,” might suggest Cupid, who is often depicted as a babe and remains so without growth, it is not the primary meaning here. [1] Rather, since “Loue” is a babe always waiting to be crowned with further maturity, the poet echoes his earlier question (“Might I not then say”) by asking, “might I not say so:” might it be prudent for him not to say, “Now I loue you best,” because to do so would be to award “full growth” to something (love) which is “still” in the process of growing and thus arrest any further flowering.

115.1. Compare Michael Drayton’s *Idea* 25.5 & 9, “Loues still a Baby, playes with gaudes and toyes . . He still as young as when he first was borne” (*The Barrons Wars* P5^{v}).

Sonnet 116


119
LEt me not to the marriage of true mindes
Admit impediments,loue is not loue
Which alters when it alteration findes,
Or bends with the remouer to remoue.
O no,it is an euer fixed marke
That lookes on tempeſts and is neuer ſhaken;
It is the ſtar to euery wandring barke,
Whoſe worths vnknowne,although his higth be taken.
Lou's not Times foole,though roſie lips and cheeks
Within his bending ſickles compaſſe come,
Loue alters not with his breefe houres and weekes,
But beares it out euen to the edge of doome:
If this be error and vpon me proued,
I neuer writ,nor no man euer loued.

119 116 (*Bodleian Wright*)
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But beares it out euen to the edge of doome:
  If this be error and vpon me proued,
  I neuer writ, nor no man euer loued.

Sonnet 116 is among the more celebrated of Shakespeare's sonnets (Wordsworth acclaimed it his "best"), even if it has been much misconstrued and misevaluated. It draws heavily on the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "The Fourme of solemnization of Matrimonie" for its opening and closing sets of lines. The solemnization is preceded by the publishing of "Banes," which "must be asked three several Sundayes" and are said to be forbidden, if a formal objection based on "cause or iust impediment" to the marriage is issued. At the ceremony itself a charge is issued firstly to the whole congregation, then to the couple to be married, each followed by a rubric:

> Therefore if any man can shew any iust cause, why they may not lawfully bee ioyned together, let him nowe speake, or els hereafter for euer hold his peace.

> And also speaking to the persons that shall be married, he shall say.
>
> I require & charge you (as you will answere at the dreadfull day of iudgement, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed) that if either of you doe knowe any impediment why you may not be lawfully ioyned together in Matrimonie, that ye confesse it. For be ye well assured, that so many as be coupled together, otherwise then Gods word doeth allowe, are not ioyned together by God, neither is their Matrimonie lawfull.
>
> At which day of marriage, if any man do alledge and declare any impediment, why they may not bee coupled together in Matrimonie by Gods Law, or the Lawes of this Realme, and will be bound, & sufficient suerties [sic] with him to the parties, or els put in a caution to the full value of such charges as the persons to be married doe susteine, to proue his allegation: then the solemnization must be deferred vnto such time as the trueth be tried. If no impediment be alledged, then shall the Curate say vnto the man . .

Shakespeare has taken a number of elements from the rite for his sonnet: “Let me not to the marriage of true mindes / Admit impediments,” echoes the charge made to the couple, “if either of you doe knowe any impediment why you may not be lawfully ioyned together in Matrimonie.” The charge’s context of “the dreadfull day of iudgement” is reflected in the “edge of doome” later in the sonnet. The final rubric is also pertinent: if “any man” were to “alledge and declare any impediment,” then a ‘surety’ or a ‘bond of caution’ would be required of him until he “proue his allegation.”

The poet’s opening “admit” indicates that he will not admit to the charge of an impediment. It is not that he is alleging an impediment, as “any man” might against prospective spouses, but that in response to any charge of impediment he will admit to none. The poet’s role, then, is one of defence and the sonnet comprises a defence against issued “charges.” Furthermore, if the poet’s counter-assertions about the truth of love are to be “tried,” then the period of deferment extends “to the edge of doome:” they stand without contradiction until doomsday and so forever. There will be no further time for the poet’s rebuttals to be countered, the one issuing the charge of impediment having no time to respond; since no error can be proved against the poet (“vpon me proued”), the rebuttals remain always true.

Shakespeare’s impediments are not impediments to marriage but to “the marriage of true mindes.” (The impediments to marriage, based on “Gods Law, or the Lawes of this

Realme," included the degrees of affinity and consanguinity that had to be observed and temporal restrictions, those times, when, Richard Hooker states, "the libertie of mariage is restrained." Citing Ecclesiastes, "*There is a time for althings*, a time to laugh and a time to mourne" as authority, he argued that "a wedding on the day of a publique fast" was contradictory. He also disallowed weddings during the terms of Advent and Lent.) [1]

Shakespeare has chosen also to define love not only within legal parameters but through the figure of *distributor* or *merismus*, which involves the defining of an entire object through its parts either positively or negatively. Shakespeare knew the figure from *The Arte of English Poesie*, where Puttenham states it sets forth a thing not in "one entier . . proposition" but "peecemeale and by distribution of euery part for amplification sake." He cites Chaucer and a Wyatt translation of Petrarch as examples of a positive *merismus* and as an example of a "*merismus* in the negatiue for the better grace," his own verses to the Queen, concluding, "This figure serues for amplification, and also for ornament, and to enforce perswasion mightely." [2] (The biblical precedent for the figure was 1 Corinthians 13, the Pauline hymn to love which, the Geneva Version note explains, defines the "nature of charitie, partly by a comparison of contraries, and partly by the effectes of it selfe.")

The poet's first rebuttal is that, "loue is not loue / Which alters when it alteration findes." The line's balance, pivoting on the polyptoton "alters" / "alteration," comprises a figure which Puttenham identifies as *traductio* and for which he gives the example, "*Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire, hoc sciat alter*;" [3] to "alter" means to 'change,' and "alteration" a changed circumstance: 'love does not change according to the circumstance in which it finds itself.' The next rejoinder is that "loue is not loue / Which . . / . . bends with the remouer to remoue." Love remains upright and unbending in the face of a "remouer," one who changes or is inconstant, and will not disappear ("remoue"). The phrase sustains a legal echo, since impediments are technically 'removed,' and anticipates the image of the "compasse," a common emblem for love that is constant yet changing, with an unmoving "fixed" foot, which "bends" toward a removing, circumscribing one. A compass, upright with its two feet together (its etymon is *cum* + *passus* = with steps or feet together), doesn't incline or 'bend' and so is constant. In Sonnet 25.14, "Where I may not remoue, nor be remoued," the poet's solace rests on the astronomical separation known as a "remoue;" their love will not be subject to the unfixedness or vagaries of the stars.

The rhetoric of pleas is reflected in the exclamatory, "O no," which introduces the *topos* of the storm-tossed galley, popular with sonneteers from Petrarch onwards. [4] Love is "an euer fixed marke, / That lookes on tempests and is neuer shaken." The "marke" is a sea-mark like that in *Coriolanus*, "a great Sea-marke . . sauing those that eye thee"; [5] love stands above vagaries ("tempests") and remains always steadfast ("euer fixed . . neuer shaken"). It is "the star to euery wandring barke, / Whose worths vnknowne, although his highth be taken." The star is the cynosure or polestar (Ursa Minor), which appears near the north pole of the heavens. It was a favourite of Petrarch's, was Spenser's "*Helice*" and "lodestar," and its constancy was invoked by Caesar, "I am constant as the Northerne Starre, / Of whose true fixt, and resting quality, / There is no fellow in the Firmament." [6] From it mariners, to establish their position, took sightings by calculating its height above the horizon with an astrolabe (and a mariner's compass). Every "wandering barke" is both every ship and person travelling without direction. [7] The height of love can be measured, although only inexactly, because plotting a position still lacked clocks to provide sufficiently precise time, but the "worth" of love remains unknown, even if it might be established astrologically by a star.

The poet contends, "Lou's not Times foole." Love is not the fondling or plaything of time, echoing the rich tradition of persecuted fools, even if "rosie lips and cheeks / Within his bending sickles compasse come." Rosy "lips and cheeks" are those naturally suffused with blood or those artificially enhanced through cosmetics: fucus was used extensively at court to redden the cheeks and the lips of courtesans and fools and on the stage by players and jesters. (In Sonnet 82 the poet allows that "grosse painting" should be used not on the youth but only "Where cheekes need blood.") The line's "bending" suggests the 'bend' in the sickle's curve, or the bend in the arc the sickle cuts, or the action of time 'bending' as he cuts with the sickle, all of which contrast with the unbending nature of love in line 4; "compasse" recalls the earlier allusion to the mariner's compass, but here is the arc which is the outer bound of the sickle's swathe (compare Sonnet 60.12, "sieth" and Sonnet 100.14, "sieth, and crooked knife").

In the poet's final disclaimer, "Loue alters not with his breefe houres and weekes, / But beares it out euen to the edge of doome," the possessive, "his," can belong either to time, as earlier in the sonnet, or love; if time, then the disclaimer recapitulates line 3: love remains constant and impervious to time's divisions; if love, then love remains constant within its own span of time. Love "beares it out," or 'endures,' evoking 1 Corinthians 13, where love "endureth all thynges . . loue falleth neuer away" (*BB*). The "edge of doome," the day of final judgement when time ceases, reverts back to the words of the initial charge of impediment, "as you will answere at the dreadfull day of iudgement," and introduces the poet's summing up.

The poet's defences cannot be contradicted because arguments and judgement must be "deferred vnto such time as the trueth be tried" in this case the "edge of doome." No error can be proued against the poet (vpon me proued"). The couplet is a rhetorical, legal flourish. If the poet's refutations are "error" (and they are not), if they are "proued" an error against him (and they can not be), then the poet hasn't written (which he has) and no man has ever loved (which is patently false). The "allegations" and "charges" issued against him, which he has so forthrightly contested, cannot be defended, because the deferral of judgement outwits time.

116.1. Hooker, *Politie* (1597) 215.

116.2. Puttenham, 185-87 *passim*. That Shakespeare knew the figure from Puttenham is apparent from Hamlet's reaction to the "definement" of Laertes, where he admits that "to deuide him inuentorially would dosie th' arithmatike of memory," and makes him ask "why doe we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?" (*Ham*. 5.2.111-21 *passim*). The passage parodies Puttenham's example of *merismus*, his verses to the Queen, which he admits are inadequate "to wrap vp all her most excellent parts in a few words them entierly comprehending."

116.3. Puttenham 170.

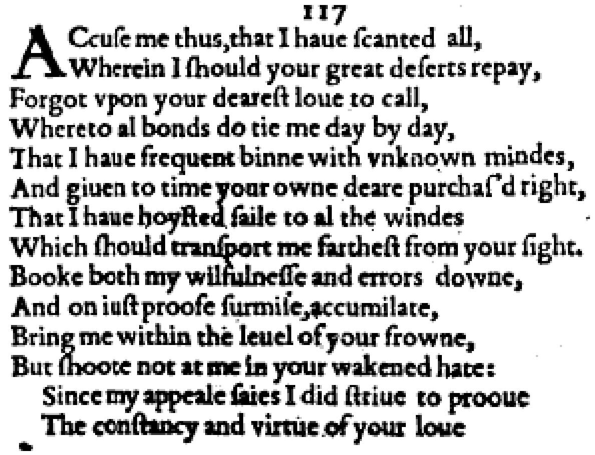
116.4. See Petrarch 189, “Passa la nave mia.” which Wyatt translated; Spenser begins *Amoretti* 34 with, “Lyke as a ship that through the Ocean wyde / by conduct of some star doth make her way,” while Whitney associates constancy with an imperilled bark in his emblem for *Constantia comes victoriae* (Whitney 137).

116.5. *Cor*. 5.3.74-5.

116.6. See Petrarch 33.2-3, “stella . . nel septentrïone;” Spenser, *Amoretti* 34.10; *JC* 3.1.60-62.

116.7. The Latin *errare* = to wander is the etymon of “error.”

Sonnet 117



117
ACcuſe me thus,that I haue ſcanted all,
Wherein I ſhould your great deſerts repay,
Forgot vpon your deareſt loue to call,
Whereto al bonds do tie me day by day,
That I haue frequent binne with vnknown mindes,
And giuen to time your owne deare purchaſ'd right,
That I haue hoyſted ſaile to al the windes
Which ſhould tranſport me fartheſt from your ſight.
Booke both my wilfulneſſe and errors downe,
And on iuſt proofe ſurmiſe,accumilate,
Bring me within the leuel of your frowne,
But ſhoote not at me in your wakened hate:
Since my appeale ſaies I did ſtriue to prooue
The conſtancy and virtue of your loue

117
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Forgot vpon your deareſt loue to call,
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The conſtancy and virtue of your loue

Sonnet 117 is the adversative to Sonnet 116 and its argument a subsequence or appeal: beyond the earlier charges of impediment, which in Sonnet 116 were dismissed as groundless, the poet now allows five grounds of accusation ("Accuse me thus") that might be levelled, that he has "scanted all," "Forgot . . to call," "frequent binne," "giuen to time" and "hoysted saile." In the first accusation, "that I haue scanted all, / Wherein I should your great deserts repay," "scanted" means 'restricted' or 'neglected,' but, when used specifically of a legal 'surety,' means 'defaulted upon,' or 'withheld,' a fee or bond being said to be "abridged, scanted or curtelled." [1] The poet has not requited the beloved for his "great deserts," that which is owed him in recompense. In the context of the impediments alleged in Sonnet 116 the poet has been dilatory in repaying the 'bond of caution’ lodged as “full value of such charges as the persons to be married doe susteine” (see Sonnet 116; the nautical sense of “scanted” is brought out in line 7).

The second ground for appeal admits that the poet has “Forgot vpon your dearest loue to call / Whereto al bonds do tie me day by day.” To ‘call a bond’ was to advise a date when it would be paid and a ‘bond of caution’ would include a due day when it would be cancelled. But, since the poet’s case extends to “the edge of doome,” the “day by day” extends in perpetuity unabrogated. The poet admits to having failed to pay back to the youth’s love, both precious and costly, the surety which makes him indebted until the end of time.

Thirdly the poet has “frequent binne with vnknown mindes.” He admits to having consorted with strangers, not then having shared in a “marriage of true mindes.” Fourthly he has ceded to casual encounters (“giuen to time”) the rite of love, which is the beloved’s “right” and has been “deare purchas’d.” Since Paul, famously, condemned “fornication” because “ye are dearely bought” (1 Cor. 6.20; *BB*), the poet has squandered a right/rite that was holy.

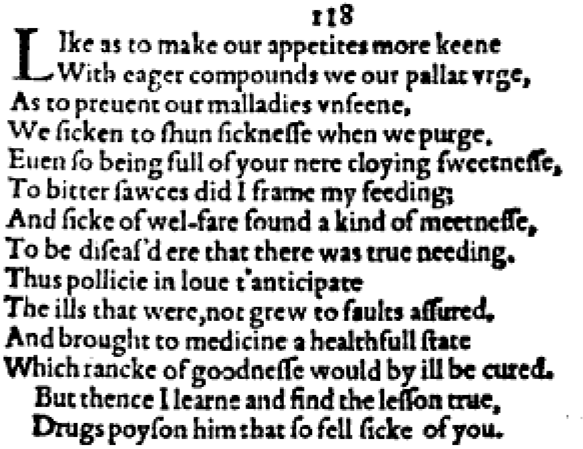
The fifth ground picks up the “wandring barke” of Sonnet 116 and combines it with the nautical meaning of “scanted:” “I haue hoysted saile to all the windes / Which should transport me farthest from your sight.” He has been open to whimsies or temptations from every quarter of the compass (he hasn’t “scanted” or sailed too close to the wind and lost weigh) as they have carried him fartherest from the beloved’s “sight,” beyond what the beloved could see or beyond the beloved’s aim or scope.

The sestet contains five instructions that the poet issues to the youth. Errors discovered during legal proceedings were inscribed in a Register to be the basis for future appeal. The poet, having provided cause for appeal, now instructs the youth to record in a register (“Booke . . downe”) both the “errors” admitted above and his own stubbornness (“wilfulnesse”). The youth must formally submit them (the original, legal sense of “surmise”) as correct and already conceded grounds (“iust proofe”) for appeal. He must heap them up cause upon cause ("accumilate;" a Latinism from *causas accumulare*, 'to heap cause upon cause'). [2] He must "Bring me within the leuel of your frowne," an archery conceit, where to "shoot compass" is to adjust the level above the eyes to allow for the curve in flight; by transference it was used of an astrolabe or backstaff when shooting the sun or polestar with the instrument's level or sight. The youth must eye up or encompass the poet within the quadrant of his "frown," his disapproval, but must resist the impulse to "shoote" at the poet out of new found "hate." He justifies his action ("appeal"), because it was brought to prove the steadfastness and force ("virtue") of the one who loves the youth or of the youth's own love ("to prooue / The constancy and virtue of your loue").

117.1. Cowell, *Interpreter* Bb3v *Entayle*, "And the reason is manifest, because fee-tayle in the law, is nothing but fee abridged, scanted or curtelled, (as you would say,)."

117.2. Cooper, *Thesaurus* accumulo.

Sonnet 118


118
LIke as to make our appetites more keene
With eager compounds we our pallat vrge,
As to preuent our malladies vnſeene,
We ſicken to ſhun ſickneſſe when we purge.
Euen ſo being full of your nere cloying ſweetneſſe,
To bitter ſawces did I frame my feeding;
And ſicke of wel-fare found a kind of meetneſſe,
To be diſeaſ'd ere that there was true needing.
Thus pollicie in loue t'anticipate
The ills that were,not grew to faults aſſured,
And brought to medicine a healthfull ſtate
Which rancke of goodneſſe would by ill be cured.
But thence I learne and find the leſſon true,
Drugs poyſon him that ſo fell ſicke of you.

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And brought to medicine a healthfull ſtate
Which rancke of goodneſſe would by ill be cured.
But thence I learne and find the leſſon true,
Drugs poyson him that so fell sicke of you.

Traditionally the administering of emetics, the trope worked in Sonnet 118, had three purposes: to renew the palate, to forestall the onset of sickness, and to counteract poison. Emetics were derived from various plants: Gerard, for example, writes that squill can be made into “vineger of Squill” and then into “an Oxymel . . to be used in vomits,” while scammony can be boiled with quince to form a sweet electuary to be used emetically. [1] Shakespeare, however, in Sonnet 118 seems to have had in mind hellebore, whose root, Gerard asserts, “procureth vomite mightily” and is “good against . . poison, and against all cold diseases that bee of hard curation.” [2] For his source Shakespeare could have drawn on common lore, on any number of apothecary sources, or even on Pliny’s discourse on hellebore in his *Natural History* (which Holland had rendered into English in 1601 and to which Shakespeare had recourse for *Othello*). According to Pliny white hellebore “by vomit upwards . . doth evacuate the offensive humours which cause diseases.” He reports that the philosopher, Carneades, was known to have “prepared his wits and quickened his spirits, by purging his head with this Ellebore.” Because the “best white Ellebore . . in tast is hot and biting at the tongues end,” it can be “given in any sweet liquor” as an oxymel or “drunke in some sweet wine.” Prior to taking it, “the Patient is to eat tart and sharpe meats and poignant sauces . . to assay by little and little to vomit gently.” [3]

Sonnet 118’s octet comprises a common Shakespearean parallel construction with “Like as to” and “As to’ each introducing a couplet, and each couplet being balanced against corresponding couplets beginning “Euen so” and “And.” The sonnet also picks up the motif of “pallat,” “cup,” and “poison,” left off at the end of Sonnet 114. The first pair of lines point to the way “we our pallat vrge;” “vrge” means ‘intensify’ or ‘sharpen’ the taste, but the word was used also of distillations which are ‘urged’ to a degree that a compound is yielded. “Appetites” are sharpened or made more acute (“more keene”) with “eager compounds.” A ‘compound’ is a medicinal concoction (an emetic, because it has been boiled or distilled, is a compound and not a simple medicine), in this case one that is sharp or “biting” like Sonnet 111’s “Eysell” or vin-egar, a wine that is made ‘eager’ or sharp. The second pair of lines treats of emetics that are taken (“we purge”) to ward off beforehand (“preuent”) illnesses yet to come (“malladies vnseen”). Emetics make us sick through vomit (“sicken”), so that we might avoid ailments (“shun sicknesse”).

The second quatrain applies the first’s general principles: “being full of your nere cloying sweetnesse, / To bitter sawces did I frame my feeding;” “nere” firstly means ‘ne’er’ or never (“nere” being a spelling of ‘ne’er’ in Sonnets 17.8, 19.14 & 144.13), thus the poet is never sated by the youth’s sweetness (he can’t get enough of him). But “nere” meaning “near’ or ‘almost’ can’t be ignored: the poet’s palate is “full” of the friend’s sweetness, that is nearly rich enough to cause gagging (“cloying”). To refresh his palate the poet has designed his diet to include “bitter sawces,” so observing Pliny’s instruction to “eat . . poignant sauces.” Secondly the poet has found himself inoculated against future ailments.

He has been made "sick of welfare;" 'welfare of meat and drink' was standard, but the poet, made sick because of the friend's wel-fare (with its connotations of good-eating), has found it appropriate ("a kind of meetnesse," with echoes of 'meat') that he has become ill ("To be diseased"), before there was any cause to be so ("ere that there was true needing").

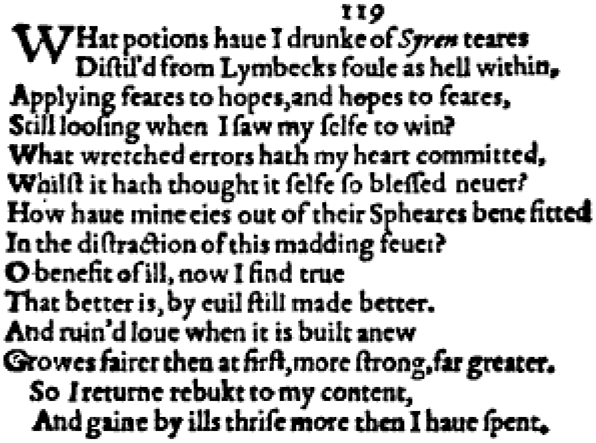
The sestet applies the emetical trope to love: "Thus pollicie in love;" a "pollicie" is a course of prudent action: love, to be prudent and to forestall ailings ("t'anticipate / The ills that were, not"), acquainted itself ahead of time with transgressions ("grew to faults assured"), which are to operate like a curative vomit. In so doing love submitted to medicine ("brought to medicine") "a healthfull state," a state reeking of goodness ("rancke of goodnesse," which suggests the offensive smell of vomit as well as virulence, thus anticipating "poison"). The "healthful state," with its surfeit of goodness, "would by ill be cured," would as if by an initial, induced sickness be cured, clearly something not meet. The moral the poet has learnt and has proved by bitter experience ("thence I learne and find the lesson true") is that "Drugs poyson him that so fell sicke of you." The poet, love-sick for the friend, learns that potions ("Drugs," in this case transgressions), rather than acting as an antidote to the disease of love, only act to poison love.

118.1. Gerard, *Herball* (1633) 174 & 868-9.

118.2. Gerard, *Herball* (1633) 441.

118.3. Pliny, *The Historie of the Word. Commonly called, The Naturall Historie of C. Plinius Secundus. Translated into English by Philemon Holland* (London: Adam Islip, 1601) 217-9 *passim*.

Sonnet 119



119
WHat potions haue I drunke of Syren teares
Diſtil'd from Lymbecks foule as hell within,
Applying feares to hopes, and hopes to feares,
Still looſing when I ſaw my ſelfe to win?
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilſt it hath thought it ſelfe ſo bleſſed neuer?
How haue mine eies out of their Spheares been fitted
In the diſtraction of this madding feuer?
O benefit of ill, now I find true
That better is, by euil ſtill made better.
And ruin'd loue when it is built anew
Growes fairer then at firſt, more ſtrong, far greater.
  So I returne rebukt to my content,
  And gaine by ills thriſe more then I haue ſpent.

The "*Syren* teares," with which Sonnet 119 begins, allude to the classical Sirens, mythical sisters, who on Italy's southern coast allured seamen to their death through song. They were originally two in Sophocles and in Homer's *Odyssey*, but their number was expanded to eight by Plato, for whom they represented the music of the spheres: Plutarch explains that, "for as touching the motions and revolutions of the eight heavenly Sphaeres, hee [Plato] hath attributed as presidents unto them so many Syrenes in number, and not Muses," to which Menephylus the Peripatetic objected, claiming that, "Syrenes are daemons, or powers not verie kinde and good, nor beneficiall." The Sirens were associated with the underworld because, having drowned themselves after the escape of Ulysses, their "song and musicke . . imprinteth in the soules which depart from hence . .

[and] wander in that other world after death, a vehement affection to divine and celestiall things;" [1] they were also identified through Isaiah's "sirenae" (13.22; Vulgate) with agents of destruction. Since the Greeks often put figures of Sirens on tombs to represent mourners, they were associated with tears and grief; compare Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde*, 192, where the choosing of a friend is fraught, because "Syrens *teares doe threaten mickle griefe*." [2] In Francis Meres translation of Luis de Granada's *A Sinners Guide* "the singing of Syrens . . [is] sweet, but a deadly potion." [3]

It is with a "potion" that Shakespeare opens the sonnet: "What Potions haue I drunke of *Syren* teares / Distil'd from Lymbecks foule as hell within." In the process of distilling the alchemical apparatus comprised a bottom cucurbit or glass sphere which was heated, and which was surmounted by a glass vessel, the "still" or "Head" (properly the alembic or limbeck), through whose "nose" the distillation was received. The two parts were "fitted" together and sealed by 'lute of wisdom.' The result was a 'spirit of first extraction.' The conceit of the eye as a limbeck that distills tears of love heated from the furnace of the poet's heart was standard among poets and sonneteers; Thomas Lodge in *Phillis* develops the whole metaphor: "My loue doth serue for fire, my hart the fornace is, / The aperries of my sighes augment the burning flame, / The Limbique is mine eye that doth distill the same," while Robert Tofte's *Alba* talks of, "what my sad eye / Distils from Lymbeck of a bleeding Hart," and Barnabe Barnes, having termed his love a "Syren," exclaims, "From my loues lymbeck still still'd teares, oh teares!" [4]

As in Sonnet 111, where "Potions of Eysell" are taken as antidotes to bitterness, here the poet has drunk "potions" of bitter grief, distilled through the eyes as limbecks from a globular cucurbit, which within is "foule as hell," hell being an infernal sphere full of foul spirits and the dwelling place of the Sirens. [5] Potions are draughts taken as remedies: the poet uses fear as an antidote to hope and hope as an antidote to allay fear. Whatever was thought a gain remains a loss always ("still;" with a hint of "still" as an alembic). He sees his heart, the cucurbit, guilty of "wretched errors," hellish mistakes, which it "committed," even as it thought itself never "so blessed." How, he finally asks, have the eyes "out of their Spheares bene fitted / In the distraction of this madding feuer?" The shape of "bene fitted" anticipates the shape and meaning of "benefit" (line 9). Firstly the eyes have been pressured from their sockets ("spheares") by a high temperature "within," that causes "distraction" and delirium ("madding feuer"). [6] Secondly the eyes (limbecks) are not matched ("fitted") to their sphere, the cucurbit of the heart, since they are distracted by a "madding feuer." Thirdly the eyes have been "fitted" or placed out of their orbits which are the spheres of the Sirens, resulting in distraction and madness. Finally, since the Sirens' music of the spheres causes the heart to fall into "most ardent and furious fits of love," the effect on the poet is a state of distraction and madness. [7] While a "distraction" is a madness, it suggests a faulty 'extraction' in the process of distilling: the poet's "distraction" is the first extraction of his "madding feuer," which is the heavier element contained in his heart as cucurbit.

The sestet's exclamation, "O benefit of ill," is a paradox based on *bene* + *fit* = well made: something evil makes something good. It was a lesson learned in the last lines of the prior Sonnet 118, "but thence I learne and find the lesson true, / Drugs poyson him: that so fell sicke of you." Here the poet finds confirmed the truth, "That better is, by euil still made better;" either "better" can be made even ("still") better through evil, or "better" can, through the "still" or limbeck of evil, be made even better. The consolation is that love that is broken down ("ruin'd"), when "built anew," is found purer ("Growes fairer") as well as "more strong, far greater." The couplet sees the poet turning himself about ("returne") as he uses the lesson learned to chastise himself ("rebukt" with its allied sense of 'rebouked' or 'rebulked,' grown larger). His "content," his 'happiness' as well as 'that which is contained in him,' is the larger, because he has gained through "ills" a threefold "return" of "fairer," "more strong" and "far greater," than he has "spent."

119.1. Plato, *Republic* 617, B.C; Plutarch, *The Philosophie, commonlie called, the Morals Written by the learned Philosopher Plutarch of Chaerona. Translated out of Greeke into English, and conferred with the Latine translations and the French by Philemon Holland* (London: Arnold Hatfield, 1603) 797-8 *passim*.

119.2. Lodge, *Rosalynde* B2^{r}.

119.3. Luis de Granada, *The Sinners Guyde. A Worke Containing the whole regiment of a Christian life, deuided into two Bookes: Wherein Sinners are Reclaimed from the By-path* *of vice and destruction, and brought vnto the high-way of euer-lasting happinesse . . nowe perused, and digested into English, by Francis Meres* (London: James Roberts: 1598) 347.

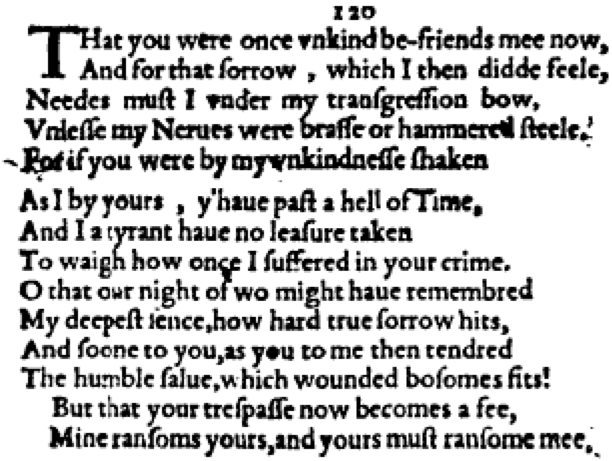
119.4. Lodge, *Phillis* 37.9-11; Robert Tofte, *Alba. The Months Minde of a Melancholy Lover, diuided into three parts: By R.T. Gentleman* (London: Felix Kingston, 1598) A2^{r}; Barnes, *Parthenophil* 49.9.

119.5. Compare *LC* 288-9, "what a hell of witch-craft lies / In the small orb of one perticular teare."

119.6. Compare *Ham*. 1.5.17, "Make thy two eyes like Starres, start from their Spheres."

119.7. Plutarch, *Morals* 798.

Sonnet 120



120
THat you were once vnkind be-friends mee now,
And for that ſorrow, which I then didde feele,
Needes muſt I vnder my tranſgreſſion bow,
Vnleſſe my Nerues were braſſe or hammered ſteele.
For if you were by my vnkindneſſe ſhaken
As I by yours, y’haue paſt a hell of Time,
And I a tyrant haue no leaſure taken
To waigh how once I ſuffered in your crime.
O that our night of wo might haue remembred
My deepeſt ſence, how hard true ſorrow hits,
And ſoone to you, as you to me then tendred
The humble ſalue, which wounded boſomes fits!
  But that your treſpaſſe now becomes a fee,
  Mine ranſoms yours, and yours muſt ranſome mee.

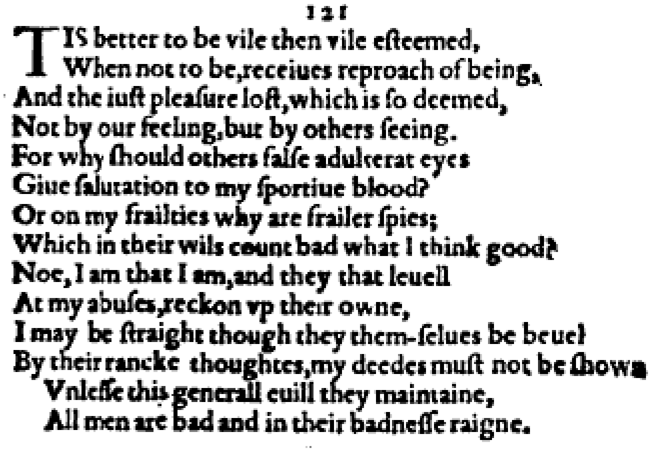
Sonnet 120 looks back to Sonnets 33-35, especially Sonnet 34. The “once” of its opening, “That you were once vnkind,” intends ‘in the past’ rather than a singular act, while “vnkinde” carries its standard double meaning of ‘hurtful’ and ‘out of character.’ The unkindness now gives the poet solace (“be-friends mee now”): because of the sorrow he once felt, he would now be beaten down or become bent (“bow”) under the weight of his offence (“transgression”), if his sinews and muscles (“Nerues”) weren’t made of brass or beaten (“hammered”) steel. ‘A man of steel’ was proverbial (compare Antony’s farewell, “Ile leaue thee, / Now like a man of Steele”) and Shakespeare uses “hammerd steele” of antiquity in *The Rape of Lucrece*. [1]

If his friend were to be disturbed ("shaken") by the poet's "vnkindnesse," as the poet has been by his friend's, then the friend too would have undergone ("past") a time of unending pain ("a hell of Time," a paradox because hell like heaven has no time). Taking to himself time's role as a "tyrant" (compare Sonnet 16.2, "bloudie tirant time"), the poet would work ceaselessly (without "leasure") to remember ("weigh") how he was once hurt by the friend's offence ("your crime"). His wish is that their shared "night of woe," the dark period of present sorrow rather than a moment of earlier transgression, might remind his innermost "sense" (of the five inner senses) how fiercely sorrow hammers ("hits") one as on an anvil. As once the youth offered his sorrow to the poet, so the poet's sorrowfulness ("woe") must quickly offer to the youth relief ("humble salue"), which suits or treats well ("fits") afflicted hearts ("wounded bosomes"); "tendred" means 'offered' as well as 'applied' to a wound, while a "humble salue" is a household balm as well as the balm of humility, that softens a proud wound. The youth's earlier offence recalls that of Sonnet 34 with its christic subtext: "For no man well of such a salue can speake, / That heales the wound, and cures not the disgrace . . Ah but those teares are pearle . . And they are ritch, and ransome all ill deeds." [2] Here the youth's offence becomes the means ("fee"), which enables the poet to accept his sorrow and forgive or redeem his debt to him ("ransome," a contraction of *redemptionem* or a buying-back). Reciprocally the youth must accept the poet's sorrow and offer him atonement.

120.1. *Ant*. 4.4.33-34; *Luc*. 951.

120.2. See Sonnet 34.7-14, commentary.

Sonnet 121



121
TIS better to be vile then vile eſteemed,
When not to be,receiues reproach of being,
And the iuſt pleaſure loſt,which is ſo deemed,
Not by our feeling,but by others ſeeing.
For why ſhould others falſe adulterat eyes
Giue ſalutation to my ſportiue blood?
Or on my frailties why are frailer ſpies;
Which in their wils count bad what I think good?
Noe,I am that I am,and they that leuell
At my abuſes,reckon vp their owne,
I may be ſtraight though they them-ſelues be beuel
By their rancke thoughtes,my deedes muſt not be ſhown
Vnleſſe this generall euill they maintaine,
All men are bad and in their badneſſe raigne.

121
TIS better to be vile then vile eſteemed,
When not to be, receiues reproach of being,
And the iuſt pleaſure loſt, which is ſo deemed,
Not by our feeling, but by others ſeeing.
For why ſhould others falſe adulterat eyes
Giue ſalutation to my ſportiue blood?
Or on my frailties why are frailer ſpies;
Which in their wils count bad what I think good?
Noe, I am that I am, and they that leuell
At my abuſes, reckon vp their owne,
I may be ſtraight though they them-ſelues be beuel
By their rancke thoughtes, my deedes muſt not be ſhown
  Vnleſſe this generall euill they maintaine,
  All men are bad and in their badneſſe raigne.

Sonnet 121 opens with a maxim, “Tis better to be vile then vile esteemed:” ‘it is better to be of a depraved or base nature than to be thought depraved or of little worth.’ To the Elizabethan the line would have evoked Isaiah’s words of the suffering servant or ‘man of sorrows:’ “when we loke vpon hym, there shalbe no fairenesse, we shall haue no lust vnto hym. He is dispised and abhorred of men . . We haue reckened hym so vile, that we hyd our faces from hym” (53.2-3; *BB*). The adage is true, since ‘not being vile’ (“not to be”) already suffers the slur (“reproach”) of being vile: compare the psalmist’s complaint identified with the servant, “I am become also a reproche vnto them: they gase vpon me [and] they shake their head” (Ps. 109.25; *BB*). It is true also, because licit (“iust”) pleasure is lost, which is adjudged vile (“which is so deemed”) not by experience of it, but in the view of others (“but by others seeing”).

Why, the poet asks, should eyes that are “false” and “adulterat,” those given to seeing things as adulterous or spurious, greet (“Giue salutation to”) his “sportiue blood,” his sexual appetite, which they presume vile or adulterous? (The semi-homophone of ‘eye,’ ‘’ey,’ the Elizabethan ‘hey’ or ‘aye’ of salutation is probably also present; Florio gives as a “Coniunction Of Calling,” “Oh or Hey.”) [2] Why, finally, should morally weaker eyes (“frailer spies”), whose desire (“in their wills”) is to account as bad what the poet values as “good,” spy on his weaknesses?

In response the poet firmly asserts, “Noe, I am that I am,” less a citing of God’s self-definition to Moses, “I AM THAT I AM” (Exod. 3.14; *BB*) than of Paul’s celebrated use of the phrase as an affirmation of honesty, “For I am the least of the Apostles . . by the grace of God, I am that I am” (1 Cor. 15.10; *BB*), a verse much cited by preachers, for example, Gervase Babington, the Bishop of Exeter, “Shall I hoyse sayle and looke bigge vpon others, when onely by grace I am that I am?” [3] The poet is similarly straightforward and clear-sighted in contrast with those who look upon his misdeeds (“leuell / At my abuses;” to ‘level the eye’ was to direct the eye towards), or who take aim or get the poet’s misdeeds in their sights (“leuell / At”), or even those who ‘guess at’ his misdeeds (compare *Ant*. 5.2.333, “She leuell’d at our purposes”). They should tally up (“reckon vp”) their own abuses.

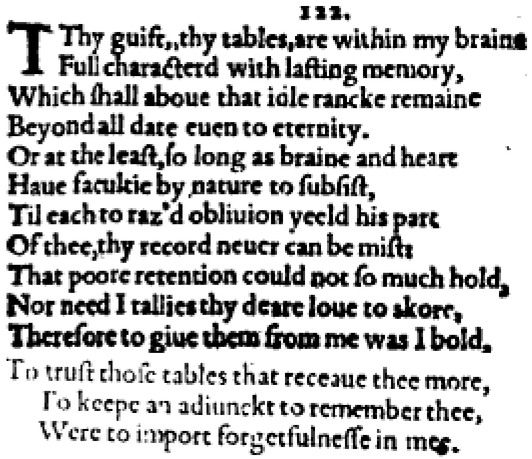
While the poet may be “straight,” not misaligned or mis-sighted, his detractors are “beuel / By their rancke thoughtes.” A bevel, like a “leuell” which measures straightness, is a mason’s or carpenter’s tool made up of a level rule and a moving tongue, which is used to set angles or bends in wood or stone and to inscribe lines or ranks. (The Geneva Version’s sidenote to Matt. 19.9 contrasts the commandment against adultery with law “that boweth and bendeth as the carpenters Beuell.”) The poet’s slanderers are presented as standing out from a plane, distorted by or bowed under by their gross or “rancke thoughtes.” The poet’s actions, however, because straight, need not be disclosed (“shown”), except in the case that they are used to support (“maintaine”) the general axiom about man’s sinful state, “All men are bad and in their badnesse raigne,” or, ‘all men are fallen and in their fallen state thrive.’

121.1. Compare *Err*. 2.2.142, "I am possest with an adulterate blot, / My bloud is mingled with the crime of lust."

121.2. John Florio, *His firste Fruites: which yeelde familiar speech, merie Prouerbes, wittie Sentences, and golden sayings* (London: Thomas Dawson, 1578) 155^{r}.

121.3. Gervase Babington, *A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse the second Sunday in Mychaelmas tearme last. 1590* (London: Thomas Este, 1591) 19. Its reverse, "I am not that I am," was quoted by Iago (*Oth*. 1.1.65) and loosely by Viola (*TN* 3.1.139.

Sonnet 122


122.
TThy guift,,thy tables,are within my braine
Full characterd with laſting memory,
Which ſhall aboue that idle rancke remaine
Beyond all date euen to eternity.
Or at the leaſt,ſo long as braine and heart
Haue facultie by nature to ſubſiſt,
Til each to raz'd obliuion yeeld his part
Of thee,thy record neuer can be miſt:
That poore retention could not ſo much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy deare loue to skore,
Therefore to giue them from me was I bold,
To truſt thoſe tables that receaue thee more,
  To keepe an adiunckt to remember thee,
  Were to import forgetfulneſſe in mee.

122
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Full characterd with laſting memory,
Which ſhall aboue that idle rancke remaine
Beyond all date euen to eternity.
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  To keepe an adiunckt to remember thee,
  Were to import forgetfulneſſe in mee.

Sonnet 122, like Sonnet 77, is built on the difference between the natural and the artifical or local memory for the practice of which "tables" of characters were essential. "Naturall memorie," Wilson observes in *The Art of Rhetorique*, "is when without any precepts or lessons, by the onely aptnesse of nature, we beare away such thinges as we heare." [1] He contrasts the natural with "the other kinde of memorie called artificiall," which is assisted by "*the art of memorie*," a system of associative mnemonics, by which things to be remembered were attached either to a familiar place or to familiarized lists of characters or names. Guglielmo Gratarolo in *The Castel of Memorie* gives this definition:

> Artificiall Memorie is a disposyng or placing of sensible thinges in the mynde by imagination, wherevnto the natural Memorie hauing respect, is by them admonished that it maye he hable to call to mynde more easely and distinctly such thinges as are to be remembred: and (as Cicero saith in his seconde to Herennius) it consisteth of

> pieces as it were of waxe or tables, and of Images as of fygures & letters. For so it commeth to passe that such thynges as we haue heard or learned, we rehearse againe euen as though we read them. [2]

The pseudo-ciceronian *Ad Herennium* prescribed a familiar house or theatre as a place, memorized in detail, with which things to be remembered were associated. Renaissance practitioners of the "Arte Memoratiue" also proposed familiarized lists of characters organized on a page or table in rows or ranks to which, once memorized, the mind could attach or set things to be remembered (see Sonnet 77 for further detail). Wilson gives as an example those who "gather their places & Images out of the Crosse rowe, beginning euery Letter with the name of some Beast," while William Colson published his French grammar under the title, *The First Part of the French Grammar, Artifically reduced into Tables, by Arte locall, called the Arte of Memorie*," in which tables of words are used as mnemonics. [3]

More particularly the "Arte Memoratiue" was identified with young men through the example teachers such as Gratarolo and Petrus Ravenna always gave when explaining a further familiarized list based on the names of friends to which things to be remembered could be "set." Petrus Ravenna specifies the adolescent connection:

> as I was some tyme beynge yonge adolescent in the company of sondry noble men. It was proposed of them to recyte names of men, that one of the assystents shulde say I denye nat that. And these be the names that folowe. I dyd set in the fyrst place a certayne frende of myne hauynge the same name. In the seconde place lykewyse, and as names dyd I colloke & set in place as they had named, and they thus collocated were by me recyted afterwarde. And let the collocatoure aduyse him to set alway his frende doynge the thynge that he is accustomed to do comynly, and procede this conclusion clerely, and names knowen. And yf the frende be knowen haue suche a name Boxdrab, Zorobabell, than set the same thinge that is spoken or named in his place. [4]

Generally the superior memory was thought to be the natural and it is around this superiority that Shakespeare constructs Sonnet 122, his natural memory being full of the youth and not subject to forgetfulness.

The gift that the poet pictures the youth offering ("Thy guift") are "tables" on which his record or memory might be inscribed. ('Tables' were often portable aide memoires.) But, the poet claims, the record of the youth is more firmly imprinted in his brain than any record ingraved in a table of artificial memory, because "tables" held their information only temporarily like a palimpsest: their surface would be smoothed or scraped over and the ingraved characters or images erased (a *tabula rasa* = a table scraped clean). In his brain the friend's record is "Full characterd with lasting memory." It is not a *tabula rasa* but is replete with characters that will endure or it is ingraved as a table might be in "full" letters that will last. 'Full' or 'great' characters were large letters in upper case to emphasize their importance and weighty durability. Customarily God's self-definition to Moses, "I am that I am," which occurs *literatim* in the preceding Sonnet 121, was printed in such characters, "I AM THAT I AM," as were the precepts of the decalogue, which were "the writing of God, grauen in the tables" (Exod. 3.14 & 32.16; *BB*). In the poet's natural memory the youth's record is so impressed that it will be enduringly remembered and remain "aboue that idle rancke," either superior to that which is engraved in wax or surviving beyond the wax tables' surface temporality. An "idle ranck" is an unfilled rank or row serving no purpose ("idle" or void was used of a table), hence the empty impressions of the original "tables." [5] What is impressed on the poet's brain, however, will last "Beyond all date euen to eternity," beyond any limit and to the end of time.

But, having claimed eternity for his table, the poet immediately qualifies it ("Or at the least"): the record of the youth will stand forth ("thy record neuer can be mist"), only so long as the place where it is scored, the poet's "braine and heart," has the ability or power ("facultie") that nature gives to remain in existence ("subsist"), until such time, then, as each gives up what is etched in it to "raz'd obliuion," to "forgetfulnesse" and to forgottenness, caused by being scraped over or obliterated. Shakespeare's choice of "subsist" is deliberate: meaning 'to stand under' (compare Florio, "Sostare . . to stand vnder, to subsist") it was used of earlier impressions in the wax that, once the wax was smoothed over, were thought to continue 'to stand under' the new surface.

The proferred artifical table, identified now as a thing that retains things poorly ("That poor retention"), when compared with the poet's brain, is limited in what it can contain ("could not hold so much"). Nor does the poet need "tallies," on which he might record ("skore") his "deare loue." A 'tally' was originally a stick on which credits and debits were recorded by notches which were scored out on either side ("skore" and "tallies" also carry the sense of 'reckon up'). Having no need of any device the poet is emboldened ("was I bold") to give up or back the friend's "tables" and to place his trust in the "tables" fully graved in his mind which more amply record the friend ("that receaue thee more"). Indeed, if the poet were to keep an aid ("adiunckt," defined by William Perkins as a "helping cause"), [6] by which to remember the friend, if he were to practice the "Arte Memoratiue," that would imply that the youth could be forgotten ("to import forgetfulnesse in mee").

122.1. Wilson 214.

122.2. Gratarolo G6^{v}. Gratarolo (H6^{r}) insists, as do all practitioners from the author of the *Ad Herennium* onwards, that the memory tables should be as graphic and memorable as possible: "Again you shall not forget that in placing or setting of the images or figures in their places the thing is alwaies to be placed with a mery, a merueilous or cruel act, or some other vnaccustomed maner: for mery cruell, iniurious, merueilous, excellently faire, or excedingly foule things do change & moue the senses, & better styrre vp the Memorie, when y^{e} minde is much occupied about such things."

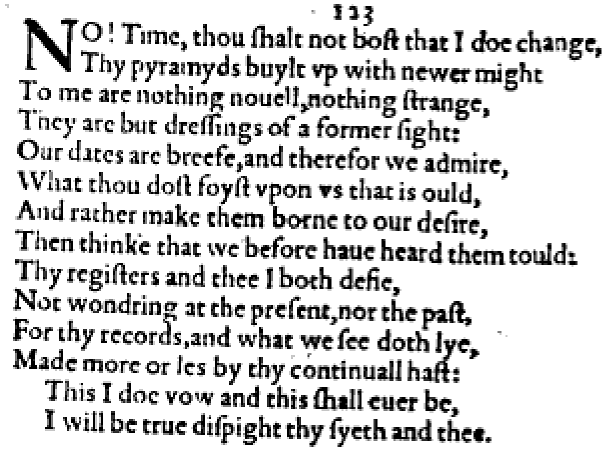
122.3. Wilson 218; William Colson, *The First Part of the French Grammar, Artifically reduced into Tables, by Arte locall, called the Arte of Memorie* (London, W. Stansby for Iohn Parker, 1620).

122.4. Ravenna A7^{v}.

122.5. Cooper, *Thesaurus* inanis.

122.6. William Perkins, *The Arte of Prophecying*: *or A Treatise Concerning the sacred and onely true manner and methode or Preaching* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1607) 55.

Sonnet 123


123
NO! Time, thou ſhalt not boſt that I doe change,
Thy pyramyds buylt vp with newer might
To me are nothing nouell,nothing ſtrange,
They are but dreſſings of a former ſight:
Our dates are breefe,and therefor we admire,
What thou doſt foyſt vpon vs that is ould,
And rather make them borne to our deſire,
Then thinke that we before haue heard them tould:
Thy regiſters and thee I both defie,
Not wondring at the preſent,nor the paſt,
For thy records,and what we ſee doth lye,
Made more or les by thy continuall haſt:
This I doe vow and this ſhall euer be,
I will be true diſpight thy ſyeth and thee.

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Not wondring at the preſent, nor the paſt,
For thy records, and what we ſee doth lye,
Made more or les by thy continuall haſt:
  This I doe vow and this ſhall euer be,
  I will be true diſpight thy ſyeth and thee.

Sonnets 123-125, like Sonnet 107, point to events outside the sequence, which occurred in the period after the death of Elizabeth I on 24 March 1603, specifically the Coronation of James I on 25 July 1603 (Sonnet 125), the Catholic “Bye” and “Main” plots against James and their aftermath from May to December 1603 (Sonnet 124), and the triumphal procession of James through London, postponed until 15 March 1604 because of the plague (Sonnet 123).

Sonnet 123’s conceit is built upon the image of “pyramyds,” a term used in the 16th and early 17th century not only of the pyramids of Egypt but of any tall structure tapering to an apex like an obelisk or spire. They were a feature of the archs, through which James I passed on the Ides of March. Several accounts of the procession are extant including those of Stephen Harrison, the overall superintendent of the event and builder of some of the arches, Ben Jonson, whose arch was the final one, and Thomas Dekker, whose account is the most detailed. All three managed to rush their accounts into print by the end of the year. Harrison uses the term, pyramid, for the ornamental obelisks that dressed or “garnished” the structures he designed. He writes in *The Arches of Triumph* of “the beauty of *Pyramids* . . and many other enrichments,” of “Shapes that were erected in most liuely colours, together with *Pyramides*, long Streamers, Galleries, and all other inrichments,” and of “Other Garnishments . . that gaue illustration and beauty to this building, as *Columnes, Pyramids, &c*. whose proportions your eye may measure.” Harrison acknowledges that his “Monuments . . were built neuer so strongly, yet now their lastningnes should liue but in the tongues and memories of men,” and has therefore published his volume to ensure that, because these newly built pyramids had now been disassembled and had disappeared as equally as had the old, they might stand in his account, “as perpetuall monuments, not to be shaken in peeces, or to be broken downe, by the malice of that enuious destroyer of all things, *Time*.” [1]

Two arches were recognized for their grandeur, the fourth arch contrasting the new with the old Arabia and Jonson’s final arch. Dekker describes the fourth with its “two Portals that jetted out before these Posternes [which] had their sides open foure seuerall ways, and serued as Pedestalles (of Rusticke) to support two *Pyramides*, which stood vpon foure great Balles, and foare great Lions: the Pedestalles, Balles, and *Pyramides*, deuowring in their full vpright height, from the ground line to the top, iust 60. foote” (Harrison provides an illustration of all the arches). The inscription over the frieze in capitals read, “NOVA FAELIX ARABIA,” whose significance Dekker expands: “Vnder that shape of *Arabia*, this Iland being figured: which two names of *New*, and *Happie*, the Countrey could by no merit in it selfe.” A Chorister from St. Paul’s interpreted the arch’s symbolisms, glossing “*Arabia Britannica*” as

> Beames from thine eyes
> So vertually shyning, that they bring,
> To *England* new *Arabia*, a new Spring:
> For ioy whereof, *Nimphes*, *Sences*, *Houres*, and *Fame*,

> Eccho loud Hymme, to his imperiall name. [2]

Beyond Harrison's last Arch, 'The Temple of Janus,' was a further celebrated pair of pyramids, only visible to the King once the Gate of Janus had been shut, not mentioned by Harrison, but which Ben Jonson claimed as his. Jonson boasts that his "*Pegme* in the Strand [was] a worke thought on, begun, and perfected in twelue dayes" and acclaims its "*Mechanick* part yet standing." Its Invention, "a Raine-bow, the Moone, Sunne, and those seauen Starres" was "aduanced" or suspended in the air "betweene two Magnificent Pyramid's of 70. foote in height." On these pyramids were inscribed or registered "his Maiesties seuerall pedigrees *Eng*. and *Scot*." [3] In his passage the King was addressed in a speech written by Jonson, which condemned courtly corruption ("The base and guiltie bribes of guiltier men") and courtly artifice ("Thy Court be free / No lesse from Enuie, then from Flatterie"). [4] The Venetian Ambassador to England, Nicolo Molin, describes the festivities and their preparation in detail, the releasing of prisoners, the removal "to another prison" of the four conspirators of the "Main Plot," who had been spared by the King's clemency, the passage of the cortège up the Thames and the procession of the King through the city, "preceded by all the magistrates of the City, the Court functionaries, the clergy, Bishops and Archbishops, Earls, Marquises, Barons and knights, superbly apparelled and clad in silk of gold, with pearl embroideries; a right royal show." [5] Since the "King's Men," which had been licensed on 19 May 1603 and of which Shakespeare was a principal member, were allocated four yards of red cloth for the occasion, he may well have been part of the procession, which is reported to have extended some three miles.

Sonnet 123 opens with a firm remonstrance to time ("No! Time"), forbidding it to brag that the poet is subject to change ("thou shalt not bost that I doe change"). Although pyramids were built in antiquity as memorials to defy time, they become, despite their original purpose, registers of time. Any contemporary pyramids, that have been "buylt vp with newer might," either constructed with a more recent strength or with Jonson's more recent "*Mechanick*" expertise, are to the poet "nothing nouell, nothing strange." They are the "dressings of a former sight:" they merely re-present in a new garb or garnish that which was seen in the past.

The assertion, "Our dates are breefe," broadens the sonnet's scope. The limited lease on life awarded to humans has a short-term date; "breefe" (from *brevis* = brief) is associated with registers through its plural form, *brevia* = register, so anticipating time's "registers" below. [6] Given human transience, "we admire, / What thou dost foyst vpon vs that is ould." To "foyst" is to 'trick,' as in a sleight of hand; hence humans admire the way time deceives them with older things. Humans make "them," either "dates" or old things, "borne to our desire:" either they refashion, as in bearing a child again, old things into what they want them to be, or they record old things ("borne" as in 'witness borne') as they want them to be. They do this in preference to thinking they have already heard these things "told," either talked about or 'counted' as in a record.

The poet adamantly resists both time and time's "registers" (from *regestum* or *re* + *gerere* = to carry back). [7] The "registers" the poet rejects are firstly the pyramids but also all records or writings found both on ancient and especially on modern pyramids like Jonson's. He dismisses both the present and the past and the earlier admiration of them ("Not wondring at the present, nor the past"), because both time's "records" and the records now seen ("what we see") are false ("doth lie"). All things are made of relative worth by time's quick passing ("thy continuall hast"): both past and present records are variably received according to time. The poet's final avowal ("This I doe vow") is that he "will be true dispight thy syeth and thee." His truth is in contrast to the fickle lying of time's records. While time's scythe is operated by the same hand that palmed off old things earlier, the implement that the poet here scorns is much more savage.

123.1. Stephen Harrison, *The Archs of Triumph Erected in honor of the High and mighty prince. James. the first of that name. King, of England. and sixt of Scotland. at his Maiesties Entrance and passage through his Honorable Citty & Chamber of London vpon the 15 day of March 1603* (London: John Windet, 1604) C1^{r}, D1^{r}, E1^{r}, B1^{r}, K1^{r}.

123.2. Thomas Dekker, *The Whole Magnifycent Entertainment: Given to King James, Queene Anne his wife, and Henry Frederick the Prince; upon the day of his majesties Triumphant Passage (from the Tower) through his Honorable Citie (and Chamber) of London, the 15. of March, 1603* (London: E[dward] Allde, 1604) E2$^{r\text{-}v}$ & F1^{r}.

123.3. Ben Jonson, *B. Jon: His Part of King James his Royall and Magnificent Entertainement through his Honorable Cittie of London, Thurseday the 15. of March. 1603* (London: Edward Blount, 1604) D3^{v}-D4^{r}.

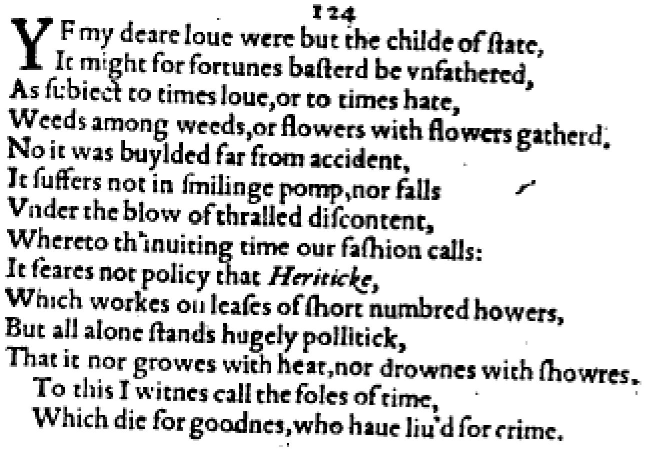
123.4. Jonson, *Entertainement* E1^{r-v}.

123.5. Brown 139.

123.6. *Huloets Dictionarie* gives for "Registers," "Tabulae . . Breuia."

123.7. See Thomas, *Dictionarium* regero, "*To carry againe . . to put in writing that which one hath read or heard*."

Sonnet 124



124
YF my deare loue were but the childe of ſtate,
It might for fortunes baſterd be vnfathered,
As ſubiect to times loue,or to times hate,
Weeds among weeds,or flowers with flowers gatherd.
No it was buylded far from accident,
It ſuffers not in ſmilinge pomp,nor falls
Vnder the blow of thralled diſcontent,
Whereto th'inuiting time our faſhion calls:
It feares not policy that *Heriticke*,
Which workes on leaſes of ſhort numbred howers,
But all alone ſtands hugely pollitick,
That it nor growes with heat,nor drownes with ſhowres.
  To this I witnes call the foles of time,
  Which die for goodnes,who haue liu'd for crime.

124
YF my deare loue were but the childe of ſtate,
It might for fortunes baſterd be vnfathered,
As ſubiect to times loue, or to times hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gatherd.
No it was buylded far from accident,
It ſuffers not in ſmilinge pomp, nor falls
Vnder the blow of thralled diſcontent,
Whereto th'inuiting time our faſhion calls;
It feares not policy that *Heriticke*,
Which workes on leaſes of ſhort numbred howers,
But al alone ſtands hugely pollitick,
That it not growes with heat, nor drownes with ſhowres.
  To this I witnes call the foles of time,
  Which die for goodnes, who haue liu'd for crime.

Sonnet 124 is often presented as one of the more beautiful yet intractable of the sequence, because of difficulties defining the "childe of state" of its first line and the "foles of time" of its couplet. The opening "childe of state," with which the poet's love might be identified, is Shakespeare's rendering of *filius populi*, a child of the people or state, a bastard, in Latin a *nothus* (see *Huloets Dictionarie*, "Bastarde. Filius populi, Nothus, thi, Vulgo conceptus"). The term carried the sense not only of 'base-born' but also of 'not genuine' (see Thomas, *Dictionarium* nothus, "Base borne, a bastarde: not lawfull, counterfeit") and was used as a recrimination: Anthony Copley, who appears later in this commentary, accuses the Jesuit, Robert Parsons, of being "a bastard, he is (as you know) *filius populi*, and consequently . . of more names than one." [1]

If, the poet hypothesizes, his love were merely ("but") a love 'born out of wedlock,' a bastard love, then it might be disowned by the friend, its begetter ("vnfatherd"). (Juridically Shakespeare is correct: a *nothus* or "childe of state" was one born out of wedlock but of a known father; one born out of wedlock and of an unknown father was a *spurius*. To 'unfather' a "*Heriticke*" was a polemical trope: Arthur Dent, for example, calls on English recusants, who are "made drunken with heresie," to "vnfather him [the Pope] of such hatefull blasphemies.")[2] The poet's love would then become a child or bastard of fortune ("fortunes basterd"). The epithet, 'child of fortune,' was a well-known Latinism, awarded to Horace by those envious of his closeness to Maecenas, his friend and patron, as they watched and paraded about together during public triumphs and spectacles:

> Between seven and eight years have now passed since Maecenas began to number me among his friends . . Through all this time, through every hour and every day, I have been subjected to such envy: our "child of fortune," they all say, watches public spectacles and triumphs ("ludi") and sports together ("luserat") with Maecenas in the Campus Martius.[3]

The poet thus associates himself with his Maecenas between sonnets which allude to similar public processions and triumphs (Sonnet 123) and a royal Coronation (Sonnet 125). As in Sonnet 55 he plays on the relationship with his friend and patron: if his love were a bastard love, which it is not, it might be disowned by the friend and become not fortune's child, as was the Horace-Maecenas relationship, but "fortunes basterd." His love would be the result of, and possessed by, the wilfulness of time, cast as an unstable, even tyrannical father, who vacillates between love and hate: "subiect to times loue, or to times hate." While echoing Eccles. 3.8, "A tyme to loue, and a tyme to hate," the line points to the pressures, to which fickleness submits the poet's love: if it were base-born, it would be harvested, as by time's scythe, as a weed from among weeds; if it were not, it would be reaped as a flower from among flowers ("Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gatherd"). The poet denies his love is "fortunes basterd," disowned or "vnfathered," and prey to whim or accident.

The sonnet's sestet, after the manner of 1 Corinthians 13, defines love "by comparison of contraries" (1 Cor. 13.4; *GV*, sidenote). "No," exclaims the poet, his love was "buylded far from accident;" it does not come about by chance (an etymological pun, since "accident" comes from *accidens* = a falling down; the *GV* sidenote to 1 Cor. 13.8 affirms that love is "necessarie for the building vp of the Church"). Where Paul affirms that "Loue suffreth long," the poet claims his love "suffers not in smilinge pomp:" his love remains impervious when public display or advantage is showered upon it. Where Paul asserts that "Loue doeth neuer fall away" (Vulgate, "non excidit"), the poet's love never "falls / Vnder the blow of thralled discontent." His love doesn't succumb to any discontent that might imprison or captivate it, even though discontent (or imprisonment) is something to which the present time entices men as attractive ("Whereto th' inuiting time our fashion calls").

The poet's love is not susceptible to short-term expediency ("feares not policy"), which it terms a "*Heriticke*," because it forsakes what is true (religion) and is based on temporary commitments ("leases of short numbred howers," recalling Sonnet 123.5, "Our dates are breef"). Rather his love, by itself and without debt to others, stands forth as massively iudicious or prudent ("all alone stands hugely pollitick"); it is not subject to increase ("nor growes with heat") nor to extinction ("nor drownes with showres"), both metaphors recalling the earlier "weeds" and "flowers." Finally the poet invokes as witnesses to his claims, "the foles of time" (recalling Sonnet 116, "Lou's not Times foole"), those 'children of state,' who are born from and into the sinfulness of bastardry ("who haue liu'd for crime") and are prey to capricious time's love or hate. They are innocents ("foles") because, subject to time and punished as heretics, they bear witness to the "pollitick" nature of love ("die for goodness").

These last lines, "To this I witnes call the foles of time, / Which die for goodness, who haue liued for crime," have proven enigmatic. While they appear aphoristic, they seem to point to more. Frequent attempts have been made to identify the fools of time, who might have borne witness: the Protestant martyrs under Mary, Jesuits under Elizabeth, the Earl of Essex and his co-conspirators of 1599-1601 (see Sonnet 107), Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. But, given Sonnet 124's placement between sonnets that allude to the Coronation of James on 25 July 1603 (Sonnet 125) and the Triumphal Procession of 15 March 1604 (Sonnet 123), the closest and most likely set of events to have given rise to any allusion are the interwoven conspiracies, the “Bye Plot” and “Main Plot,” that unfolded during the period, June - December 1603, particularly their final outcome, all of which were the subject of much speculation and popular excitement. The “Bye Plot” involved two Catholic priests, William Watson and William Clarke, together with a dissatisfied courtier, George Brooke, the brother of Lord Cobham, in a hopeless scheme to capture James I, confine the Privy Council to the Tower, and pressure the King to appoint Catholics to positions of authority. [4] Two further agents were engaged, Sir Griffin Markham and Anthony Copley.

Word of the plot soon got out. On 2 July 1603 the King issued a “publicke declaration,” which was widely circulated and posted through the land, charging all agents of the Crown to search out “Anthony Copley [who] hath dealt with some to be of a conspiracie to vse some violence vpon our Person.” Copley remained at large only briefly, because on the 16 July a further proclamation informed the public that he had “bene apprehended,” but with further news that his apprehension had “brought us withall, cause of further griefe, in that by the said Copleys confession, there is discouered a conspiracie of a great number of others to have made an attempt not only dangerous to our person, but to our whole State: Whereof some principall Gentlemen of qualitie are already apprehended.” Attached to the proclamation were descriptions of Markham, Watson and Clarke.

Copley, on being captured, had turned informer, being suborned by an offer of freedom outside the realm. He had revealed details of a further (“Main”) plot involving “twelve gentlemen” including George Brooke, Lord Cobham, Lord Grey of Wilton, and Sir Walter Ralegh, who intended to advance the interests of papal Spain and put Lady Arabella Stuart on the throne. Giovanni Scaramelli, the Venetian ambassador to England, reports on 30 July 1603 that

> Immediately after Anthony Copley’s proclamation as a rebel he was arrested, and soon after his arrest, in the hope of saving himself, he betrayed a plot of twelve gentlemen to kill the King and some of the Council. [5]

The conspirators were arrested during the fortnight leading up to the King's Coronation and held in the Tower, including Ralegh, whose despair according to Sacramelli caused him to try "to plunge a knife into his heart; it glanced off one of his ribs, and so saved his life, for his Jailors prevented him from repeating the blow." [6] On Copley's evidence Ralegh, though innocent, would be confined to the Tower for another 13 years.

Evidence against the conspirators was considered by judges meeting in early September in Maidenhead; Sir Thomas Edmonds reported to the Earl of Shrewsbury on 11 September that the case against Ralegh seemed a weak one ("The Judges have of late mett at Maydenhedd, to consider of the crymes of the psoners; and, as I understand, they make noe question of fynding them all culpable, save onlie S^{r} Walter Rawleigh, agaynst whom it is sayd that the proofes are not so pregnant.") [7] The conspirators were arraigned initially on 15-29 October, but had to be removed from London, because "the rifeness of the Plague in London rendered it impossible to hold the Court of Justice there, his Majesty removed them to Winchester." [8] A large and colourful entourage accompanied them from the Tower to Bagshot between 7-11 November and from Bagshot to Winchester between 9-12 November, where they were again arraigned on the 15 November. Milner records that

> In the month of November the City of Winchester became the scene of much public business of great notoriety . . by the middle of the month, Winchester was crowded, not only with the Crown Officers, but also with the Peers of the Realm . . for now matters of the utmost importance were to be discussed, which equally required the attendance of the latter as of the former. This was no other than the trial of the pretended Conspirators, for what was called Sir Walter Raleigh's Conspiracy. [9]

The procedings were the subject of high interest. "Whilst these transactions were carrying on, the eyes of the whole Kingdom were directed towards Winchester, where the conflux of great personages, and the expenditure that this must have occasioned, exhibited some faint image of its former consequence. It appears also that the King himself was sometimes at Winchester." [10] The conspirators were all found guilty in a spectacular trial and "the two Priests were executed on Tuesday the 29. of Nouember, and Master *George Brooke* on Munday following." On the same day, 5 December, the King "signed three Warants, for the Execution of the late Lord *Cobham*, L. *Gray*, and Sir *Gryffin Marckham*

Knight, with particular direction to the Sheriffe, to performe it on Friday after before ten a clocke in the morning." [11]

The denouement occurred on 9 December and was theatrical. Nicolo Molin, Scaramelli's successor, gives an detailed account of the way events played out:

> in obedience to the King's orders, the conspirators were taken, one by one, to the place of execution. The first was Lord Cobham; he mounted the scaffold, and, after briefly commending his soul to God and asking pardon of the King and of many others he kneeled down and laid his head on the block to await the fatal stroke. The headsman had lifted the axe to strike off his head, when there sprang upon the scaffold two emissaries of the King, and raising the body of Lord Cobham, an inert mass, more dead than alive, they carried him into a neighbouring house. Then came the second Lord, Baron Grey; he ascended the scaffold under the firm conviction that Lord Cohham was dead, but received pardon in the same fashion. A like scene was enacted with the others. His Majesty resolved to grant them grace, but in such a way that they may be said to have looked death in the face, and will retain for ever a memory of the danger they were in. Thus of the eleven prisoners only the two priests and another have been executed, one has been acquitted, the others granted their lives. [12]

A different tone is provided by Nichols, "It seems, that after an insulting farce of bringing the convicted Conspirators to the scaffold, and after an inexpressible aggravation of cruelty in the ceremony of the preparation for execution, and in minute expectation of the catastrophe, the tragedy being worked up to the highest point, a pardon, as to their lives, was produced." [13]

Within days an official version of events was rushed into circulation. By 23 December Sir Thomas Edmonds had already inquired of the Earl of Shrewbury, "whether yo^{r} L. have alreadie or no receaved the booke w^{ch} is published concerning the mercie shewed by the K.'s Ma^{tie} in respyting the execution of the prsoners at Winchester. I thought good to send yo^{r} L. this, which was bestowed on me by my Lord Cecyll." [14] The book he received from Cecil and forwarded was *The Copie of a Letter Written from Master T.M. neere Salisbury, to Master H.A. at London, concerning the proceeding at Winchester; Where the late L. Cobham, L. Gray, and Sir Griffin Marckham, all Attainted of hie Treason were ready to be executed on Friday the 9 of December 1603: At which time His Maiesties Warrant, all written with his owne hand, whereof the true Copy is here annexed, was* *deliuered to sir Beniamin Tichbourne high Sheriffe of Hampshire, commanding him to suspend their execution till further order*. It was produced by Robert Barker, publisher to the King, comprised 12 pages and was dated 1603. The author, either “T.M.” or “C.S.,” depending on which of two editions, claimed to be the cousin of the High Sheriff of Hampshire, Benjamin Tichborne, but is otherwise anonymous. His account was designed to enhance the King’s munificent wisdom and goodness by giving an official report of what occurred, the author avowing that, “You will thanke me more, for suffering the trueth to shew it selfe vnclothed, then if I had laboured to haue deliuered you a Tale well painted with curious words and fine phrases.” [15] The King designed the theatrics, because of his “speciall desire, that euery one of them (being seuerally brought vpon the Scaffold) might quietly breath foorth their last wordes, and true confession of his secretest conscience.” [16] The author gives a detailed acount of the King’s actions, his use of an unknown, imported Scotsman to go secretly to Winchester, who early mingled with the crowd, stood close to the scaffold and, as the axe was raised, shouted to the Sheriff that he carried a new warrant from the King, so setting in train the piece of theatre. T.M. concludes,

> my relation may rather seeme to be a description of some ancient History, expressed in a well acted Comedy, then that it was euer possible for any other man, to represent at one time, in a matter of this consequence, so many liuely figures of Iustice & Mercy in a King, of Terror & Penitence in offendors, & of so great admiration & applause in all others, as appeared in this Action, caried only & wholy by his Maiesties owne direction. [17]

The report’s final intent was to act as a caution to the people, that they should never “lift vp their hearts or hands against a Prince, from whom they receive so true effects of Iustice and goodnesse.” [18] On the 15 December 1603 those who had been spared were returned to the Tower. [19]

The conspirators, particularly Copley and Clarke, had a history of being acclaimed fools and their activities traiterous follies. During the 1590s Copley had attacked his Jesuit co-religionists as “*poore fooles, conspiring companions*” for defending schisms and had in turn been excoriated in 1602 by Robert Parsons in a libel whose title *A Manifestation of the Great Folly* drew on Copley’s insult. Parson’s subtitle is, “2 Tim.3. Their folly shalbe manifest to all men." Parsons divided his book into chapters each beginning, "Their Folly," and finally washes his hands of Copley,

> *In breef, if he haue byn a Iudas to Gods church and his countrey, to the disparage of the Seminaryes, &c*. And now where yow fynd such vngrateful trayterous and Iudas-like natures to them that haue byn benefical to him and so profitable to Gods Church and his countrey as this man hath byn, what disputing is there with him? [20]

(The "Bye Plot," Copley claimed, was betrayed to the authorities by the Jesuits.) [21] Clarke later responded to Parsons in *A Replie vnto a certaine Libell, latelie set foorth by Fa: Parsons, in the name of vnited Priests, intitutled, A manifestation of the great folly and bad spirit, of certaine in England, calling themselues seculer Priestes*, published in 1603. His *Replie* attempts to counter all accusations of folly and all uses of the title fool, showing that "Fa: *Parsons* extenuating the worke, (thereby to giue a touch vnto the author:) sheweth apparently vnto all the world, that passion, partiality, and emulation hath weakned, or cleane darkned his iudgement; or else you must needs say, that onely Fa: *Parsons* is wise, and all men else are sots, and fooles." [22]

The conspiracies thus involved Catholic heretics who been publicly exposed and acclaimed as fools, and who were prosecuted for crimes which were their lives' purpose or for which they were prepared to give their lives ("who haue liued for crime"). In the end they either bore witness as fools mistakenly believing their self-offering something good or, being spared and having "looked death in the face," they were made examples by the King for the sake of or to display in T.M.'s words the "true effects of . . goodnesse." To Shakespeare's contemporaries such "foles of time" were parodies of the true fools of Christ, the early martyrs who bore witness so that they might claim Paul's title, "We are fooles for Christes sake," because, Paul explains, "I thinke that God hath set forth vs the last Apostles, as men appointed to death" (1 Cor. 4.9-10).

124.1. Anthony Copley, *Another letter of Mr. A.C. to his dis-Iesuited kinseman, concerning the appeale, state, Iesuites Also a third letter of his, apologeticall for himselfe against the calumnies contained against him in a certaine Iesuiticall libell, intituled, A manifestation of folly and bad spirit, &c.* (London: R. Field, 1602) 51. Parsons was notorious for disguising his authorship under cyphers, see Introduction.

124.2. Arthur Dent, *An earnest perswasion to a Worshipfull Gentleman, and his good friend to continew constant in Christian Religion, and to loath and detest the flights of Superstitious Papistry* attached to *The Opening of Heauen gates, or The ready way to euer-lasting life* (London: John Wright, 1610) 102-03.

124.3. Horace, *Satires* 2.6.40-43; 47-49:
septimus octavo propior iam fugerit annus,
ex quo Maecenas me coepit habere suorum
in numero . . .
per totum hoc tempus subiectior in diem et horam
invidiae noster. ludos spectaverat, una
luserat in campo: 'fortunae filius' omnes.

124.4. See Brown 26, where Giovanni Scaramelli, the Venetian Secretary in England, reports on 15 May 1603 (the date would seem wrong) that, "Three Englishmen, charged with complicity in a conspiracy of the Catholics, have been arrested. The plot was to murder the King ten days after his coronation in case he should refuse to grant the petition . . to allow the Catholics to employ the Latin rite."

124.5. Brown 70.

124.6. Brown 82.

124.7. Nichols 258.

124.8. Nichols 292.

124.9. Milner's Winchester I. 390. 396 in Nichols 292-93.

124.10. Milner's Winchester I. 390. 396 in Nichols 293.

124.11. T.M. (or C. S.), *The Copie of a Letter Written from Master T.M. neere Salisbury, to Master H.A. at London, concerning the proceeding at Winchester; Where the late L. Cobham, L. Gray, and Sir Griffin Marckham, all Attainted of hie Treason were ready to be executed on Friday the 9 of December 1603: At which time His Maiesties Warrant, all written with his owne hand, whereof the true Copy is here annexed, was deliuered to sir Beniamin Tichbourne high Sheriffe of Hampshire, commanding him to suspend their execution till further order* (London: R[obert] B[arker], 1603) 3.

124.12. Brown 126.

124.13. Nichols 229.

124.14. Nichols 302.

124.15. T.M., *Copie of a Letter* 2.

124.16. T.M., *Copie of a Letter* 4.

124.17. T.M., *Copie of a Letter* 7.

124.18. T.M., *Copie of a Letter* 8.

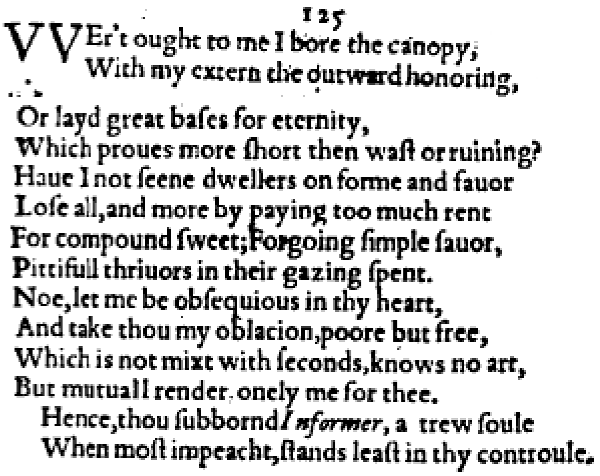
124.19. Nichols 300.

124.20. Robert Parsons, *A Manifestation of the Great Folly and Bad Spirit of certayne in England calling themselues secular priestes* (Antwerp: A. Conincx, 1602) 98^{v}. Copley’s reply, *Another letter of Mr. A.C. to his dis-Iesuited kinseman*, is cited earlier.

124.21. Scaramelli, however, was of a view that since “the information was laid by a Frenchman, who put in intercepted letters . . the whole affair may have been got up by the French” (Brown 66).

124.22. William Clarke, *A Replie vnto a certaine Libell, latelie set foorth by Fa*: *Parsons, in the name of vnited Priests, intituled, A manifestation of the great folly and bad spirit, of certaine in England, calling themselues seculer Priestes. With an addition of a Table of such vncharitable words and phrases, as by him are vttered in the said Treatise, aswell against our parsons [sic], as our bookes, actions, and proceedings* (London: James Roberts, 1603) 95^{r}.

Sonnet 125



125
VVEr’t ought to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honoring,
Or layd great baſes for eternity,
Which proues more ſhort then waſt or ruining?
Haue I not ſeene dwellers on forme and fauor
Loſe all,and more by paying too much rent
For compound ſweet;Forgoing ſimple ſauor,
Pittifull thriuors in their gazing ſpent.
Noe,let me be obſequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblacion,poore but free,
Which is not mixt with ſeconds,knows no art,
But mutuall render.onely me for thee.
Hence,thou ſubbornd *Informer*, a trew ſoule
When moſt impeacht,ſtands leaſt in thy controule.

125
VVEr’t ought to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honoring,
Or layd great baſes for eternity,
Which proues more ſhort then waſt or ruining?
Haue I not ſeene dwellers on forme and fauor
Loſe all, and more by paying too much rent
For compound ſweet; Forgoing ſimple ſauor,
Pittifull thriuors in their gazing ſpent.
Noe, let me be obſequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblacion, poore but free,
Which is not mixt with ſeconds, knows no art,
But mutuall render, onely me for thee.
  Hence, thou ſubbornd *Informer*, a trew ſoule
  When moſt impeacht, ſtands leaſt in thy controule.

A canopy or pall was a large, often ornate covering carried on poles in a procession over a dignatory. It had once been a familiar sight in religious liturgies and processions, especially those of the Eucharistic host. Its use had been proscribed by the Reformers and by Shakespeare’s time it survived principally as a courtly trapping. A canopy, however, was used in a Eucharistic context on a single early 17th century occasion, the Coronation of James I on 25 July 1603 for two linked reasons. The Coronation Rite, established by the *Liber Regalis* of 1382, was always inserted into the *Book of Common Prayer*’s “Order of Holy Communion,” a practice followed for the Coronations of Edward VI and Elizabeth I, and one insisted upon by James I. [1] James also followed the practice of his Protestant predecessors and insisted on the inclusion in the Coronation Rite of the ritual of Anointing, despite considerable opposition from even moderate divines and the public at large. He did this, according to Giovanni Scaramelli, the Venetian ambassador to England, to assert his right to be King of France, monarchs becoming Kings of France by anointing. [2] During the Enunction, the first ritual of the Coronation, a canopy was held over the King by four Knights of the Garter, chosen by their companion Knights for the honour. (See Introduction for further detail). Such a combination of circumstances uniquely allowed a canopy to be used in the setting of an oblation. A feature of Sonnet 125 is the contrast between an external ritual such as bearing a canopy, a role the poet finds of little consequence, and an “oblacion” of the whole self, identified with the Eucharistic *commercium* (“onely me for thee”) and hence as a piece of central liturgy.

The poet’s opening conditional question, “Wer’t ought to me I bore the canopy,” presumes a negative reply: ‘Would it have been anything to the poet that he bore the canopy?’ or ‘Would it have meant anything to him if he’d borne the canopy?’ The implied answer is ‘no, it would have meant nothing to him,’ although it may have meant something to someone who had borne it. For the poet performing such an outward ritual is nothing compared to the interior service he would observe through oblation of self. He disparages the functionary nature of the role (“With my extern the outward honoring”), “outward honoring” being typical of ritualistic but not deeply involved behaviour.

Lines 3-4 depend on, “Wer’t ought to me.” ‘Would it have meant anything to the poet if he had “layd great bases for eternity?”’ The “great bases” (either ‘bases’ or ‘basis’) are pedestals such as might support an arch of triumph or, more pertinently, a canopy of state. [3] A requirement of James’ coronation was the large, square stage erected beside the altar and between the bases of the four large pillars in the Abbey. It was covered over with tapestry and its rails were richly adorned. [4] The structure was a temporary structure lasting only for the occasion. Though designed to presage eternity (“layd . . for eternity”), the bases would last all too “short” a time, less indeed than might be caused by “wast or ruining.” Again the required answer to the poet’s involvement with such an exterior edifice is a negative.

The poet next focusses on the ritual of courtly behaviour: “dwellers on forme and fauor” are those who ‘hang upon’ or ‘have their attention fixed upon’ what is considered outwardly decorous (“forme”) and upon dispensed patronage (“fauor”). The poet has seen them “Lose all, and more,” everything therefore, by outlaying too much (“paying too much rent”) through emoluments and subornings. They seek a “compound sweet” over a “simple sauor;” “simple” and “compound,” normally applied to medicines, here suggest payments for the procurement of advanced favours rather than straightforward “simple” requital. The context of flattery is also relevant: a “compound” is an elaborate phrase, while something “simple” is forthright speaking.[5] Later such “compounds” are found to be false. The poet pities these “thriuors,” whom Bacon in 1601 defines as those “fortunate in the queen’s service,” because they wear themselves out in looking either on their patron or themselves.[6]

The sestet is either an exhortation to the self, “let me,” or a prayer to the beloved, “let me be obsequious in thy heart;” “obsequious” (from *ob* + *sequor* = to follow) retains both its Latinate sense of ‘to be in the service of’ and its oblatory sense of ‘offer oneself up’ (“obsequium,” as at Rom. 15.31, “oblatio obsequii mei” (‘my obsequious oblation’), was always rendered as “my seruice which I haue to doe”). The poet’s desire ‘to be of service in the youth’s heart’ or to ‘offer himself up to the youth’s heart’ is an interior not an exterior service. His prayer is that the youth will accept his oblation of self.

The introduction of “oblacion” gives the sonnet its further ritualistic focus, that of the oblations that occur in the Communion Service, of which there are two. The first is an offering of “oblations,” which are “almes giuen to the poore” and are “put into the poore mens boxe.” Hence the poet’s oblation is “poore but free,” to be used properly as alms and not as emoluments or bribes. The Communion Service’s principal use of “oblation” is in the central Prayer of Consecration, which acknowledges Christ’s “one oblation of himselfe once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation.” The poet’s oblation is also of himself and recalls Leviticus’ archetypical “oblation made by fire for a sweete sauour vnto the Lorde” (1.17 (*BB*); compare the “simple sauour” above which should take precedence). Being “free,” his oblation is not like those who “pay too much rent / For compound sweet,” but is in keeping with the psalmist’s oblation, “*Then* I will sacrifice freely vnto thee” (54.6; (*GV*), to which is attached, “For hypocrites serue God for feare, or vpon conditions”).

The poet’s oblation “is not mixt with seconds;” “seconds” refers to the quality, particularly of flour, which is of a grade inferior to the best. Oblations cannot be made of second grade flour and the *Book of Common Prayer*’s rubric lays down that the oblation should be of a “bread such as is . . the best & purest wheat bread that conueniently may be gotten.” The poet’s oblation “knows no art, / But mutuall render;” to ‘render an oblation’ was correct terminology (compare Shakespeare’s only other use of ‘oblation,’ *LC* 221-4: “where I my selfe must render . . your oblations . / Since I their Aulter, you enpatrone me”). His oblation is a “mutuall” one. Essential to an oblation is the element of *commercium*, an exchange or returning (‘render’ is from *rendere* = to give back). The poet’s offering, “onely me for thee,” is firstly one of himself not to the youth but for the sake of the youth (“for”), but also one that seeks the beloved’s offering himself in return (compare Sonnet 108. “thou mine, I thine”); “onely” imitates the Consecratory Prayer’s “one oblation of himselfe once offered,” itself an echo of Christ’s discourse at the Last Supper where he prayed that “they all may bee one, as thou . . *art* in me, and I in thee” (John 17.21; *GV*), which was followed immediately by the betrayal of Judas.

The identity of the final couplet’s outburst, “Hence, thou subbornd *Informer*,” remains shadowy. A ‘common informer’ was one who laid information against an accused, not necessarily falsely or for money; a ‘suborned’ informer was one who had been induced by bribery to give false evidence or to betray. Various identifications are possible: he could be an informant quite external to the sequence and in the Introduction a case is made for this to be Anthony Copley, whom Robert Parsons entitled a Judas (“*a Iudas to Gods church and his countrey*”), and had included among those with “vngrateful trayterous and Iudas-like natures.” Copley was suborned into informing on the plotters of the “Bye” and “Main” plots of 1603, which saw Ralegh, for example, confined again to the Tower for many more years). Or the informant could be someone closer to the sequence, an informant who has betrayed the poet, or the beloved himself who has acted treacherously, or possibly even Time itself. But, in the context of "oblation," the "*Informer*" carries strong echoes of the archetypical "subbornd *Informer*," Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the offerer of the original perfect oblation and whom Satan "enterd," who was bid, "Hence." The informer is banished from the poet's presence with the final claim that "a trew soule / When most impeacht, stands least in thy controule." The poet's soul is "trew," because it renders a true "oblation." The more extensively truth is distorted, or the greater the disparagement, or the more grievous the accusations of treason ("When most impeacht"), the greater the "trew soule" remains impervious and unaffected ("stands least in thy controule"). The identity of the "trew soule" remains equally shadowy, either the poet, or the beloved, or a case can probably be made for a figure external to the sequence, Sir Walter Ralegh, of whom the Pembroke circle was a staunch defender, both the Countess and her sons making representations to the King on 27 November 1603 on Ralegh's behalf prior to the execution of the conspirators of the "Main" plot. [7]

125.1. The Copy of the Coronation Service had been delivered to the King by the Archbishop of Canterbury who, "faithfully observed the forme sett downe in the auncient Booke kept among the Records at Westminster" (Nichols 231).

125.2. Brown 44, "so as not to loose this prerogative, which belongs to the Kings of England as Kings of France."

125.3. Harrison K1^r; Dekker, *Entertainment* B4^r.

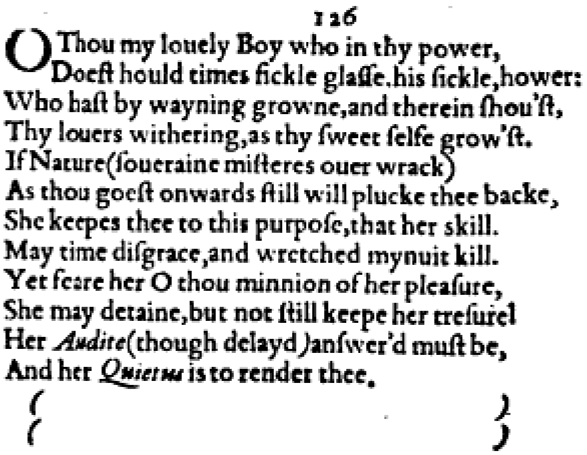
125.4. See Church of England, *Coronation of King James* 10: "There is a Stage set up, square, close to the four high Pillars, between the Quire and the Altar, Railed about, which Stage is to be spread with Tapistry, and the Rails of it to be Richly covered."

125.5. *OED* simple 5; compare Sonnet 76.4, "compounds strange."

125.6. *OED* thriver.

125.7. See Hannay 123 & 187.

Sonnet 126



126
O Thou my louely Boy who in thy power,
Doeſt hould times fickle glaſſe,his ſickle,hower:
Who haſt by wayning growne,and therein ſhou’ſt,
Thy louers withering,as thy ſweet ſelfe grow’ſt.
If Nature(ſoueraine miſteres ouer wrack)
As thou goeſt onwards ſtill will plucke thee backe,
She keepes thee to this purpoſe,that her ſkill.
May time diſgrace,and wretched mynuit kill.
Yet feare her O thou minnion of her pleaſure,
She may detaine,but not ſtill keepe her treſure!
Her *Audite*(though delayd)anſwer’d muſt be,
And her *Quietus* is to render thee.
(   )
(   )

126
O Thou my louely Boy who in thy power,
Doeſt hould times fickle glaſſe, his ſickle, hower:
Who haſt by wayning growne, and therein ſhou’ſt,
Thy louers withering, as thy ſweet ſelfe grow’ſt.
If Nature (ſoueraine miſteres ouer wrack)
As thou goeſt onwards ſtill will plucke thee backe,
She keepes thee to this purpoſe, that her ſkill.
May time diſgrace, and wretched mynuit kill.
Yet feare her O thou minnion of her pleaſure,
She may detaine, but not ſtill keepe her treſure!
Her *Audite* (though delayd) anſwer’d muſt be,
And her *Quietus* is to render thee.
(   )
(   )

Sonnet 126 is the last poem in the series addressed to the young man. It is incomplete with 12 lines of rhyming pentameter couplets. The *quarto* signals that two further lines were required by including two sets of sickle-shaped parentheses where lines 13 and 14 would have been found. The voids extend the length of a customary line. The poem is also a farewell prayer to the friend as beloved and patron and is shaped like a *Book of Common Prayer* collect with an invocation and attributive subordinate clauses. If the first eight lines are punctuated as relative clauses, then the petitionary section of the orizon begins with the cautionary “feare her.” [1]

The invocation, "O Thou my louely Boy," is particularly apposite: having begun the series with a set of sonnets which indict the youth's narcissism and his unacceptable lack of issue at nature's audit, Shakespeare closes it with a "*Quietus* [est]" and with the last words Ovid gives Narcissus when in the moment of dying he farewells himself as 'lovely boy' ("dilecte puer"). Golding renders the passage:

> these are the wordes that last
> Out of his lippes beholding still his woonted ymage past.
> Alas sweete boy belovde in vaine, farewell. [2]

The image of himself, on which he gazes, is in Golding a "fickle image," a translation of Ovid's "simulacra fugacia" (from *fugax* = fleeting). [3]

The "louely Boy" holds in his sway ("in thy power") "times fickle glasse," possibly an hourglass but more likely a mirror. Although in antiquity time, fortune and "fickle glasse" had occasionally been identified ("Some others againe [fashioned fortune] of fine, and brittle glasse, because she was so fickle"), it was not a common Renaissance association. [4] However Robert Greene in *A Maidens Dreame* laments that passing "delights are fickle like to glasse" and transfers the simile to his mistress in *Greenes Morning Garment*, "And she as fickle as the brittle glasse," as does William Barkstead in *Mirrha The Mother of Adonis*, "women like to fortune still are fickle, / Their constancie like glasse, hollow and brittle." [5] The Countess of Pembroke famously translated Ps. 103.14-15, as

> Our potter he
> Knowes how his vessells we
> In earthy matter lodg'd this fickle forme:
> Fickle as glasse
> As flowres, that fading passe,
> And vanish soe. [6]

Fickle, then, suggested brittle and easily broken glass, hence transient and fleeting.

The punctuation of line 2 makes definite sense difficult: certainly the youth holds by apposition 'time's fickle glass and time's sickle,' traditional instruments of time; "hower" could either be a third instrument of time, 'and time's hour,' or it could, by apposition, be identified with sickle, 'time's sickle hour' or 'the hour when time's sickle operates.' The lines recall Spenser’s personal resolution about time and nature in the final words of *The Faerie Queene*:

> yet very sooth to say
> In all things else she [Mutabilitie] beares the greatest sway.
> Which makes me loath this state of life so tickle,
> And loue of things so vaine to cast away;
> Whose flowring pride, so fading and so fickle,
> Short Time shall soon cut down with his consuming sickle. [7]

For Shakespeare time’s fickleness is contained in the paradox of growing and waning, “Who hast by wayning growne.” Narcissus, while wasting away, grew as a youth, a reversal of the normal adage found, for example, in George Peele’s farewell for Sir Henry Lee, the Queen’s Champion, “Youth waineth by increasing,” a reflection of older men looking back on youth. [8] By so growing the youth “shou’st, / Thy louers withering,” where “louers” again lacks punctuation: either ‘lovers’ withering’ (least likely) or ‘lover’s withering’ (the poet’s withering, in keeping with much of the sequence) or finally ‘lovers withering:’ in growing the “sweet” boy shows lovers withering.

Nature is the “soueraine misteres ouer wrack;” she holds “wrack” and ruin under her supreme rule. If she were to snatch the youth from the edge of doom (“still” can qualify “onwards,” ‘as you continue to go onwards,’ or “pluck,” ‘will continue to pluck you from the brink’), she protects or guards (”keepes”) him for this purpose: that her prowess (“skill”) might defeat time (“time disgrace”) and destroy time’s paltry instruments (“wretched minuits kill”).

The salutary admonition, “feare her O thou minnion of her pleasure,” is addressed to the youth as nature’s darling, in whom she takes pleasure (in Sonnet 20.10 he is one on whom nature “fell a dotinge”). Nature may temporarily protect the beloved from time (“detaine”), but not preserve him forever (“still keepe”). The couplet returns to the accounting *topos* of Sonnets 4 and 49. In the end nature must submit her account for audit (“*Audite*”) and, that the books might be balanced, the youth’s death will need to be entered. Since the shape of the *quarto*’s “*Audite*” strongly evokes ‘audite,’ the Latin imperative of *audire* = to hear, from which audit derives, either an imprecatory ‘Hear’ of a prayer or the "Hear" of the summons to the solemn rendering of accounts at the Day of Judgement is suggested (compare Philip Stubbes, "the great audite when all flesh shall appeare before thy tribunall seate;" an audit was originally an oral hearing). [9] Nature, then, will need, sometime but not yet ("though delayd"), to "render" up the young man, so that the receipts may be signed off; "render" was used in the settling of a debt, but keeps its sense of 'offer,' as in 'render praise' in a prayer or 'render an oblation' as in the previous sonnet. The final signing off of receited accounts was with a *Quietus est*, 'he is quit [of his debts].' "*Quietus*" calls to mind the settlement that death and a quiet grave might bring Hamlet, "When he himselfe might his *Quietus* make / With a bare Bodkin" (3.1.75-6). That Nature might obtain a signing off, she will need to render up the youth to death and final judgement (customarily thought to occur "a space" after death, hence "delayd"). (The two blank lines of Sonnet 126 are visually suggestive of an account, empty and still to be finalized. The parentheses themselves suggest either the nicks balanced on each side of a tally representing the detail of a closing debt or payment scored but waiting to be paid, or a space awaiting a signing off, or, indeed, one signed off anonymously.)

(If Hamlet's *quietus* is tallied up and squared off at the end of the play as an "O,o,o,o," then the two blank lines of Sonnet 126 visually suggest an account, empty and yet to be finalized. The parentheses suggest either the nicks balanced on each side of a tally representing the detail of a closing debt or payment scored but waiting to be paid, or a space awaiting a signing off, or, indeed, one signed off anonymously.)

126.1. Compare Spenser's *Amoretti* 68, for Easter Sunday, which reflects the prayer structure perfectly.

126.2. Golding 3.625-7; Ovid, *Met*. 3.500-1, "'heu frustra dilecte puer!' totidemque remisit / verba locus, dictoque vale 'vale' inquit et Echo."

126.3. Golding 3.543; Ovid, *Met*. 3.432.

126.4. See Pedro Mexâia, *The foreste or Collection of histories no lesse profitable, then pleasant and necessarie, dooen out of Frenche into Englishe, by Thomas Fortescue* (London: Ihon [sic] Kingston, 1571) 103^{v}.

126.5. Robert Greene, *A Maidens Dreame. Vpon the Death of the right honorable Sir Christopher Hatton* (London: Thomas Scarlet, 1591) B3^r; *Greenes Morning Garment, Giuen him by repentance at the funerals of Loue, which he presentes for a fauour to all young Gentlemen that wish to weane themselues from wanton desires* (London: J[ohn] Wolfe, 1590) 56; William Barkstead, *Mirrha The Mother of Adonis: Or, Lustes Prodegies* (London: E9dward] A[llde], 1607) E3^v.

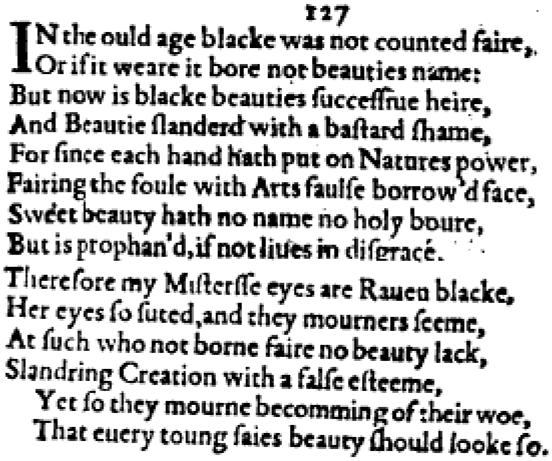
126.6. See Philip Sidney and Mary Sidney, *Psalms* 103.65-70. Coverdale's version runs, "For he knoweth whereof we be made: he remembeth that we are but dust. The dayes of man are but as grasse: for he florisheth as a flowre of the fielde." John Boys, later, seems to have know the Pembrokian rendering: "It sheweth our dignity, though a man be dust & dung, fading like grasse, fickle like glass, like a thing of naught" (*An Exposition of the Festivall Epistles and Gospels vsed in our English Liturgie. Together with a reason why the Church did chuse the same* (London: Edward Griffin for William Aspley, 1615) 438).

126.7. Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 7.8.1.4-9.

126.8. Peele, *Polyhymnia* B4^v. The sonnet was set to music by John Dowland, *The First Booke of Songes or Ayres* (London: Peter Short, 1597) n.18. Compare Segar 198, "youth waineth by encreasing."

126.9. Philip Stubbes, *A perfect Pathway to Felicitie* (London: Richard Yardley, 1592) L5^v.

Sonnet 127



127
IN the ould age blacke was not counted faire,
Or if it weare it bore not beauties name:
But now is blacke beauties ſucceſſiue heire,
And Beautie ſlanderd with a baſtard ſhame,
For ſince each hand hath put on Natures power,
Fairing the foule with Arts faulſe borrow'd face,
Sweet beauty hath no name no holy boure,
But is prophan'd,if not liues in diſgrace.
Therefore my Miſterſſe eyes are Rauen blacke,
Her eyes ſo ſuted,and they mourners ſeeme,
At ſuch who not borne faire no beauty lack,
Slandring Creation with a falſe eſteeme,
  Yet ſo they mourne becomming of their woe,
  That euery toung ſaies beauty ſhould looke ſo.

127
IN the ould age blacke was not counted faire,
Or if it weare it bore not beauties name:
But now is blacke beauties ſucceſſiue heire,
And Beautie ſlanderd with a baſtard ſhame,
For ſince each hand hath put on Natures power,
Fairing the foule with Arts faulſe borrow'd face,
Sweet beauty hath no name no holy boure,
But is prophan'd, if not liues in diſgrace.
Therefore my Miſterſſe eyes are Rauen blacke, Miſtreſſe
Her eyes ſo ſuted, and they mourners ſeeme,
At ſuch who not borne faire no beauty lack,
Slandring Creation with a falſe eſteeme,
  Yet ſo they mourne becomming of their woe,
  That euery toung ſaies beauty ſhould looke ſo.

Sonnet 127, the first of the sonnets concerned with the poet's mistress, lacks anything that might mark it as an initial sonnet. It works a conventional conceit, the black and the fair, found elsewhere in Shakespeare, for example Berowne's reference to cosmetic painting,

> O if in blacke my Ladies browes be deckt,
> It mournes, that painting vsurping haire
> Should rauish doters with a false aspect:
> And therfore is she borne to make blacke, faire. (*LLL* 4.3.254-261)

Mistresses in sonnet sequences from Petrarch onwards had fair skin (and hair) and generally dark eyes. [1]

The sonnet opens with the claim that "In the ould age blacke was not counted faire." The "ould age," it becomes clear in the sestet, is the classical age as well as the biblical. The spouse of the Song of Songs sings, "I am blacke . . but yet fayre," and commands, "Marueyle not at me that I am so blacke, for why? the sunne hath shined vpon me: my mothers chyldren haue euyll wyll at me" (1.4-5; *BB*, with its sidenote, "Blacke, thorowe the spottes of sinne"). Black, thus, was associated with the foul and sinful and "was not counted faire." If black were adjudged "faire," it did not carry the title or was not the legitimate heir of beauty ("it bore not beauties name"). But in this present time black has succeeded to beauty or become its heir, now that beauty is dead ("now is blacke beauties successiue heire"). Similarly the name of beauty is disgraced or defamed ("slanderd") by an illegitimate usurping ("bastard shame"): black has appropriated the name of beauty. (The thought occurs earlier in Sonnet 68, where the prelapsarian past is an age, "Before these bastard signes of faire were borne," and the youth's complexion is preserved in order "To shew faulse Art what beauty was of yore.")

But now every hand ("each hand") has dressed itself in or taken to itself the creativity that belongs to nature ("hath put on Natures power;" the image is a cosmetic one), and has made of the foul something fair ("Fairing the foule") with "Arts faulse borrow'd face." A "borrow'd face" is one that is laid on artfully and falsely. Consequently beauty has been escheated or disposessed of its title ("beauty hath no name"); nor has it a "holy boure," a sanctum of the face, in which it might dwell. Bowers were frequent in times of yore, for example, Spenser's "Bowre of blisse," where, falsely, "nature had for wantonesse ensude / Art, and that Art at nature did repine." [2] Now beauty is "prophan'd," 'desecrated' or 'abused;' as in Sonnet 142.6 'profane' hints at its origin (*pro* + *fanum* = outside the temple); hence beauty has been cast out from the bower or paradise, where it should dwell; cast out from the garden, it now "lives in disgrace," a fallen creature.

The sestet's "Therefore" applies the generalized argument of the fair becoming black and foul to the eyes: "my Mistresse eyes are Rauen blacke." The phrase 'raven black' was proverbial, but in making the eyes "Rauen blacke" Shakespeare has had recourse to the *locus classicus* of the fair turning foul, Ovid's account of the raven, which according to fable was in olden times fair, but whose prattling tongue ("corve loquax") caused it to be turned black. In his translation of the passage from the *Metamorphoses*, Golding, speaking of "blazing eyes," compares them to the

> prating rauen white by nature being bred,
> Hadst on thy feathers iustly late a colie colour spred,
> For this same bird in ancient time had feathers faire and whight
> As euer was the driuen snow, or siluer cleare and bright . . .
> His toong was cause of all his harme, his tatling toong did make
> His colour which before was white became so foule and blake. [3]

By implication the mistress' eyes, born fair, have like all things become fallen and been turned dark. Her eyes are "so suted;" either 'covered in soot' or darkened (Golding's "colie colour," where 'colly' or 'coaly' means 'sooty;" in *Lucrece* the crow's wings are "coale blacke"), or they 'belong to a set' ('suited') or they are 'attired' ('suited') in widow's weeds, which give them the appearance of mourners ("mourners seeme"). [4] Her eyes appear to grieve at such who, not being born fair, still claim a misnamed beauty ("lack no beauty"), as they malign what nature has given them ("Slandring Creation") by valuing false beauty ("with a false esteeme"). The repetition of "slanderd" and "Slandring" is pivotal. So the eyes mourn and their mourning befits the sorrow they feel ("becoming of their woe"), because common report ("euery toung"), like the raven's "toong" which caused it to fall into darkness (in Ovid, "lingua fuit damno"), now states that beauty should appear black or false ("that beauty should looke so"). The choice of "looke" rather than 'be' emphasizes the falsity of cosmetic appearance.

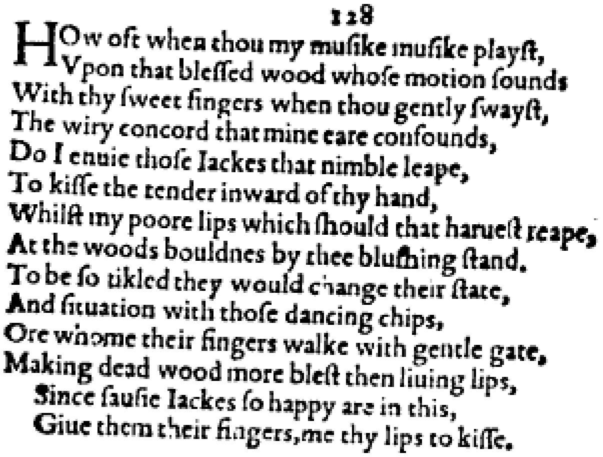
127.1. Shakespeare may well have had in mind Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* 7, with its tropes of black eyes, black as contrary to beauty, eyes as mourners, and references to art.

127.2. Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 2.12.59.3-4.

127.3. Golding 2.667-76, *passim*; Ovid, *Met*. 2.534-541, *passim*, "cum candidus ante fuisses, / corve loquax, subito nigrantis versus in alas. / nam fuit haec quondam niveis argentea pennis / ales . . lingua fuit damno: lingua faciente loquaci / qui color albus erat, nunc est contrarius albo."

127.4. *Luc*. 1009.

Sonnet 128



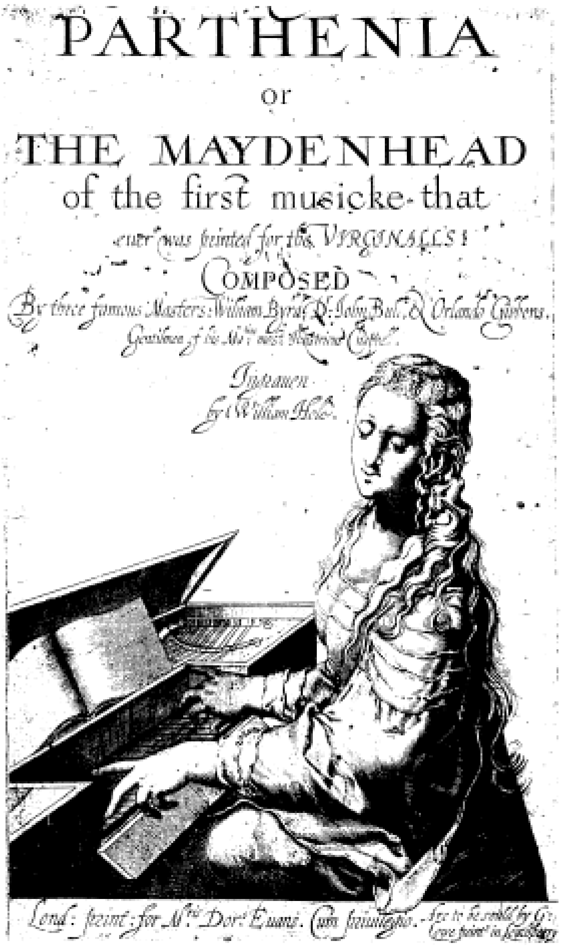
128

HOw oft when thou my muſike muſike playſt,
Vpon that bleſſed wood whoſe motion ſounds
With thy ſweet fingers when thou gently ſwayſt,
The wiry concord that mine eare confounds,
Do I enuie thoſe Iackes that nimble leape,
To kiſſe the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilſt my poore lips which ſhould that harueſt reape,
At the woods bouldnes by thee bluſhing ſtand.
To be ſo tikled they would change their ſtate,
And ſituation with thoſe dancing chips,
Ore whome their fingers walke with gentle gate,
Making dead wood more bleſt then liuing lips,
Since ſauſie Iackes ſo happy are in this,
Giue them their fingers,me thy lips to kiſſe.

128	
HOw oft when thou my muſike muſike playſt,	deere, deer'st (R)
Vpon that bleſſed wood whoſe motion ſounds	motions (R)
With thy ſweet fingers when thou gently ſwayſt,	swaies (R))
The wiry concord that mine eare confounds,	conſoun[d]es (Rawl)
Do I enuie thoſe Iackes that nimble leape,	o how / kies / leapes (R)
To kiſſe the tender inward of thy hand,	
Whilſt my poore lips which ſhould that harueſt reape,	reped (R)
At the woods bouldnes by thee bluſhing ſtand.	wood (Rawl)
To be ſo tikled they would change their ſtate,	touched the faine (R)
And ſituation with thoſe dancing chips,	
Ore whome their fingers walke with gentle gate,	thy (Q misreading); youre (R)
Making dead wood more bleſt then liuing lips,	
Since ſauſie Iackes ſo happy are in this,	then those keyes (R)
Giue them their fingers, me thy lips to kiſſe.	thy (Q misreading); youre (R)

There exists another version of Sonnet 128 (Bodleian Rawlinson MS. Poetry 152, Fol. 34^{r}; the variants are signally above as (R)), which, Kerrigan and Taylor convincingly argue, is of a date earlier than the 1609 *quarto*. Two features stand out: the manuscript's use at line 11 of "youre," which antecedes the mistaken "their" of the *quarto*. (In the series of sonnets 127-154 the mistress is always addressed as "thou;" the possibly early Sonnet 145 uses "you," but of the poet not the mistress.) The other feature is the change in lines 5 and 13 from "keies" to "Iackes."

The sonnet pictures the poet's mistress playing on the virginals, an instrument like a spinet, contained in a box, sometimes with and occasionally without legs as depicted in the frontispiece to *Parthenia or The Maydenhead of the first musicke that euer was printed for the Virginalls,* a compendium of music by Byrd, Bull and Gibbons: [1]


PARTHENIA
or
THE MAYDENHEAD
of the first musicke that
euer was printed for the VIRGINALLS
COMPOSED
By three famous Masters: William Byrd, Dr. John Bull, & Orlando Gibbons,
Ingrauen
by William Hole.
Lond: print: for Mris. Dor: Euans. Cum priuilegio.

The strings of the virginal were plucked by jacks; a jack was a piece of wood (in Latin *virga* = a wooden twig, hence ‘virginal’) fitted with a plectrum or quill, which plucked (but didn’t strike) the wire string as the jack rose while a key was being pressed down. By transference jacks came to be used of the keyes themselves. [2] The sexual suggestiveness of “Iackes that nimble leape” was already hackneyed: besides the play on virginals, Shakespeare would need go no further than Florio who gives the Italian for jack as “Saltarelli, *the iacks of a paire of virginals*.” Shakespeare’s “leape” echoes Florio’s derivation of “Saltarelli” from “Saltare, *to leape . . or leape on another as males do on the females in the act of generation*.” The associative word-play was extensive: Florio further defines a spinet as “Spinetta, *a paire of virginals . . also a prick*.” Playing the virginal and the conceit of the virginal’s jacks kissing the palm of the hand that plays them were familiar tropes: see Leontes’ outburst against Hermione, “But to be padling Palmes, and pinching Fingers, / As now they are,” and his subsequent aside, “Still Virginalling / Vpon his Palme?” (*WT* 1.2.115-6 & 125-6) or the picture of Lavinia whose “Lilly hands, / Tremble like Aspen leaues vpon a Lute, / And make the silken strings delight to kisse them” (*Tit*. 2.4.44-7). [3]

The sonnet’s opening quasi-chiastic line, replicates the structure of Sonnet 8’s opening, which addresses the youth as “Musick to heare.” Here the mistress is “my musike.” (The two sonnets share the same vocabulary.) She is playing “Vpon that blessed wood,” either the wooden virginal itself or its wooden keys. The wood is made “blessed,” both ‘holy’ and ‘fortunate,’ because of her touch (the explanation is found in line 12, where her fingers make “dead wood more blest then liuing lips”). The movement of the keys (“motion”) that produces the music (“sounds”) is the result of her “sweet fingers” as she “gently,” ‘without force’ and ‘with decorum,’ “swayst / The wiry concord;” “swayst” gives an initial impression of the mistress swaying back and forth as she plays, an impression immediately qualified by the transitive use of ‘sway’ meaning to control or have mastery over the “concord” that is produced. As in Sonnet 8 “concord” means ‘with cords or strings together,’ though its primary meaning is harmony (*con* + *corda* = with hearts together). The “concord” is “wiry,” both emanating from the virginal’s wires, and ‘wiry-sounding,’ since the sound produced by lutes and virginals was considered twangy, as in Hortensio’s “twangling Iacke” (*Shr*. 2.1.157). On such occasions the poet feels jealous of the jacks (“Do I enuie those Iackes that nimble leape”) as they agilely spring back up to “kisse the tender inward of thy hand.” (There is no evidence the nursery rhyme “Jack be nimble” existed in Shakespeare’s time, but ‘nimble jacks leaping’ as in virginals was current; see Thomas Dekker, who in *The Guls Horne-booke* compares the chattering of teeth from the cold: “so that thy teeth as if thou wert singing prick-song, stand coldly quauering in thy head, and leap vp and downe like the nimble Iackes of a paire of Virginals”) [4] While “blushing” is natural to lips (and cheeks), the poet’s “blushing” grows from embarrassment at the jacks’ effrontery (“at the woods bouldnes”). Musically a chord or note was said to “stand” in a score, compare Barley, “in what line or space each note . . dothe stande.” [5]

That the poet's lips might be "so tikled" they would change places with the virginal's keys or "dancing chips." To 'tickle' or play an instrument was normal (a quill was sometimes used to strike the strings) and was used often bawdily; Saviolina is pictured in Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour* playing on the *viol de gambo*: "You see the subject of her sweet fingers there? Oh shee tickles it so, that shee makes it laugh most Diuinely . . I haue wisht my selfe to bee that Instrument." [6] Over the "chips" the mistress' fingers walk with a refined gait ("gentle gate"), which makes "dead wood more blest than liuing lips." The impudence of jacks ("sausie Iackes") was conventional, a 'jack' being a common or unrefined fellow. Since the jacks find happiness in being kissed by the mistress' fingers, the poet requires that she should "Giue them their (thy) fingers," but offer her lips to the poet, "me thy lips to kisse."

128.1. William Byrd, John Bull, and Orlando Gibbons, *Parthenia or The Maydenhead of the first musicke that euer was printed for the Virginalls* (London: Dorothy Evans, 1613-6).

128.2. The Oxford English Dictionary wrongly claims that Shakespeare "erroneously" applied the term 'jack' to the key: see the quotation from Dekker above, where the term is also transferred to the keys.

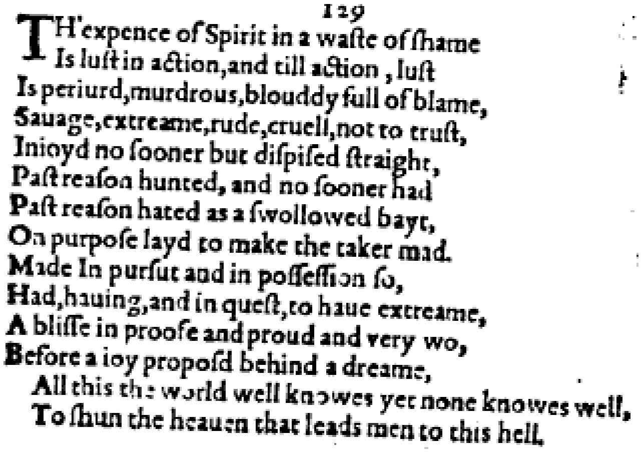
128.3. For Shakespeare the palm of the hand seems to have been particularly erogenous, see also Iago's question, "Didst thou not see her paddle with the palme of his hand?" (*Oth*. 2.1.259).

128.4. Thomas Dekker, *The Guls Horne-booke* (London: Nicholas Oakes, 1609) C3^r.

128.5. Barley A2^r. Compare Morley 72, "and so by marking where the notes stand."

128.4. Jonson, *Euery Man Out Of His Humour* 3.3.102-4.

Sonnet 129


129
TH'expence of Spirit in a waſte of ſhame
Is luſt in action,and till action , luſt
Is periurd,murdrous,blouddy full of blame,
Sauage,extreame,rude,cruell,not to truſt,
Inioyd no ſooner but diſpiſed ſtraight,
Paſt reaſon hunted, and no ſooner had
Paſt reaſon hated as a ſwollowed bayt,
On purpoſe layd to make the taker mad.
Made In purſut and in poſſeſſion ſo,
Had,hauing,and in queſt,to haue extreame,
A bliſſe in proofe and proud and very wo,
Before a ioy propoſd behind a dreame,
All this the world well knowes yet none knowes well,
To ſhun the heauen that leads men to this hell.

129
TH'expence of Spirit in a waſte of ſhame
Is luſt in action, and till action, luſt
Is periurd, murdrous, blouddy full of blame,
Sauage, extreame, rude, cruell, not to truſt,
Inioyed no ſooner but diſpiſed ſtraight,
Paſt reaſon hunted, and no ſooner had
Paſt reaſon hated as a ſwollowed bayt,
On purpoſe layd to make the taker mad.
Made In purſut and in poſſeſſion ſo, Mad
Had, hauing, and in queſt, to haue extreame,
A bliſſe in proofe and proud and very wo, a
Before a ioy propoſd behind a dreame,
All this the world well knowes yet none knowes well,
To ſhun the heauen that leads men to this hell.

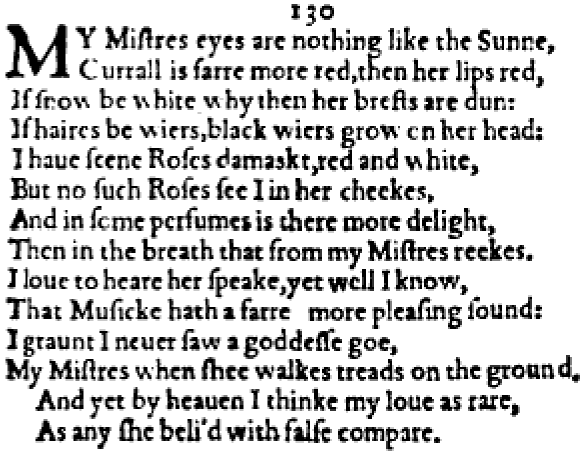
Technically Sonnet 129 is a fine exercise in rhetoric, indebted to types and examples found in primers such as Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorike*. In Shakespeare's hands it rises above the purely rhetorical, becoming together with Sonnet 116 one of his most celebrated and diversely treated sonnets. It opens with an inversion: the subject of the sentence's first part is "lust," defined as "Th'expense of Spirit in a waste of shame;" "expense" intends outpouring as well as waste; "Spirit" is the generative or life force which keeps the body alive and which, as an essence, was identified with semen and, as a 'spright' or pole (Latin = *contus*), with an erect phallus (as in Mercutio's line, "To raise a spirit in his Mistresse circle," [*Rom.* 2.1.24]); "waste" intends 'useless expenditure,' but is suggestive also of an expanse of land (desert) and ocean (a watery waste); "shame" introduces to the sonnet a sense of guilt. Lust is thus defined as the outpouring of vital forces in a shameful excess; or it is the expending of semen wastefully (for no generative purpose) and excessively; or it is the emission from the phallus extravagantly and shamefully; and finally with the pun on waste/waist, all the above, the emission being into a waist full of shame (compare Lear's outburst, "Downe from the waste they are Centaures, though Women all aboue: but to the Girdle do the Gods inherit, beneath is all the Fiends. There's hell, there's darkenes").[1] Lust, furthermore, is essentially a (sexual) act ("in action"), "action" being the ninth of the measures (or Aristotelian and logical categories), by which a thing's nature is classified.

The opening inversion allows the next line to comprise a near-perfect rhetorical chiasmus, "lust . . action / action . . lust." Until enacted ("till action"), lust is categorized as given to, or as the cause of, or the result of the breaking of an oath ("periurd"); it gives rise to or results in murder and blood-letting ("murdrous, blouddy"); it is "full of blame:" it carries with it deep guilt or leads to recrimination. Lust before its physical enactment is "Sauage," wild, without reason and reckless; "extreame," not moderate; "rude," lacking civility, even violent; "cruell," inflicting hurt and suffering; lust is "not to trust," not to be trusted. As soon as lust is indulged ("Inioyd;" to enjoy a woman was to have one's will of her), it brings directly with it loathing, of the act, of the self, of the other ("dispised straight"). Lust is to be by "Past reason hunted," sought by earlier justification or pursued beyond ("Past") reason (lust is not governed by reason). But once "had," as one might 'have' sexually, it brings disgust of any earlier justification ("Past reason") or disgust beyond reasonableness and hinting at madness. Such disgust is like a swallowed bait – continuing the hunting phrase, 'to take the bait' – laid down with specific purpose "to make the taker mad." Lust seemingly is not solitary, but requires the collaboration of a futher agent. (Note the alternating consonants of "make the taker mad" and compare the similar structure used of infected reason in Sonnet 137.9-11, "Past cure I am, now Reason is past care, /And frantick madde with euer-more vnrest, / My thoughts and my discourse as mad mens are.")

The "mad" of the octet's conclusion is repeated at the start of the sestet in the inaccurate *quarto* printing, "Made In pursuit." Lust in the pursuit of its object is reckless and blind to reason. It is uncontrolled "in possession so," evoking the frenzy of dogs in the moment of capture and pointing to the frenzy of physical orgasm. "Had, hauing, and in quest, to haue," is an example of the Latin figure, *compressio*: whether a past possession, or a present or future one, lust is "extreame," immoderate and without right reason (a "quest" was used of dogs in a hunt). Lust is an ecstasy in the experiencing of it ("blisse in proofe") and, having been experienced ("proud" = 'prov'd'), turns to a "very woe." (The *quarto*'s "and" should be amended to 'a;' the spelling of 'prov'd' as "proud" is common in the sequence, compare Sonnets 67.12 and 75.5.) Lust before its enactment is a blissful prospect ("a ioy proposed") and in retrospect a mirage, the subject of phantasy and reliving. The couplet turns from definition to lament: "All this the world well knowes." But no one will heed the lesson ("yet none knowes well") to loathe or avoid ("shun") the paradox: the "heauen that leads men to this hell." The heaven is the paradise or garden of bliss that lust affords; the "hell" is both the torment that is its consequence and the female pudenda, Lear's "waste," about which he exclaims, "There's hell."

129.1. *Lr*. 4.6.124 ff.

Sonnet 130



130
MY Miſtres eyes are nothing like the Sunne,
Currall is farre more red,then her lips red,
If ſnow be white why then her breſts are dun:
If haires be wiers,black wiers grow on her head:
I haue ſeene Roſes damaskt,red and white,
But no ſuch Roſes ſee I in her cheekes,
And in ſome perfumes is there more delight,
Then in the breath that from my Miſtres reekes.
I loue to heare her ſpeake,yet well I know,
That Muſicke hath a farre more pleaſing ſound:
I graunt I neuer ſaw a goddeſſe goe,
My Miſtres when ſhee walkes treads on the ground,
And yet by heauen I thinke my loue as rare,
As any ſhe beli'd with falſe compare.

130
MY Miſtres eyes are nothing like the Sunne,
Currall is farre more red, then her lips red,
If ſnow be white why then her breſts are dun:
If haires be wiers, black wiers grow on her head:
I haue ſeene Roſes damaskt, red and white,
But no ſuch Roſes ſee I in her cheekes,
And in ſome perfumes is there more delight,
Then in the breath that from my Miſtres reekes.
I loue to heare her ſpeake, yet well I know,
That Muſicke hath a farre more pleaſing ſound:
I graunt I neuer ſaw a goddeſſe goe,
My Miſtres when ſhee walkes treads on the ground.
  And yet by heauen I thinke my loue as rare,
  As any ſhe beli'd with falſe compare.

Sonnet 130 is a *blason*, an example of which is found in most sonnet sequences. Its rules were laid down in in the 13th century by Geoffrey de Vinsauf and required that the parts of a mistress' beauty be praised in order, from hair to feet, and emblematically often through biblical *topoi* such as the Song of Solomon 5.10-16 and 7.1-10. More specifically, Shakespeare's sonnet is part of the later 16th century fashion of the *contreblason*, which originated with Clément Marot's *Sensuiuent les blasons anatomiques du corps femenin, ensemble les contreblasons de nouueau composez* and which celebrated a woman's parts, including her most intimate, in a parodic and sometimes lewd way: Marot has one devoted to a woman's "Con" complete with illustration. [1] While there is no evidence linking Shakespeare to Marot's volume or the French mode, the *contreblason* became a familiar feature of Elizabethan sonnet sequences and Marot was known and translated by Spenser. Shakespeare’s version, though famous, is very much an academic exercise: its details parallel the details of other *blasons* to a degree that influences become impossible to determine.

As good an example of a *blason*, which Shakespeare could have known, is that cited by Kerrigan: Thomas Watson’s *Hekatompathia* 7, whose details, Watson observes, derive from such a range of authors that it may be called a ‘parasitic praise’ (“ἄινη παρασιτικη”). He explains that, “This passion of loue is liuely expressed by the Authour, in that he lauishlie praiseth the person and beautifull ornamentes of his loue, one after an other as they lie in order.” The lines relevant to Sonnet 130 are,

> Harke you that list to heare what sainte I serue:
> Her yellowe lockes exceede the beaten goulde;
> Her sparkeling eies in heau’n a place deserue . .
>   Her wordes are musicke all of siluer sounde . .
> On either cheeke a *Rose* and *Lillie* lies;
> Her breath is sweete perfume, or hollie flame;
>   Her lips more red then any *Corall* Stone . .
> Her vertues all so great as make me mute:

Like Spenser who refuses to compare his mistress’ “powrefull eies . . to the Sun” (*Amoretti* 9.2-5), so also Shakespeare exclaims, “My Mistres eyes are nothing like the Sunne.” In *blasons* eyes were compared to any heavenly body, whether stars or sun. Shakespeare neglects the *blason*’s normal order and next introduces the lips: “Curral is farre more red, then her lips red.” Coral lips, as in Watson above, or Richard Linche’s “sweete lyps of Corrall hue” (*Diella* 31.2), were commonplace, although the lips of William Percy’s *contreblason*, *Coelia* 12, are “ruddie plumes embrew’d with heauenly foods, / When I would sucke them turne to driest currall.” [2] The line contrasting the snow’s whiteness with the brown or grey (“dun”) of the mistress’ breasts is a Shakespearean invention – skin was customarily snowy white. “If haires be wiers, black wiers grow on her head,” parodies the sonneteers’ repeated comparison of hair with wires, a comparison informed by the Elizabethan practice of crisping the hair so that it became hard like wire (Constance’s hair is called “wiery” in *Jn*. 3.4.64), as well as the fashion of using gold filaments either as a frame to hold hair in place place (known as a “tire,” see Sonnet 53.8) or as threads through the hair (see Barnes, *Parthenophil* 48.10-

11, "Her heires no grace of golden wyres want / Pure pearles with perfect Rubines are inset"). The damask rose, of which Henry Lyte says "the verie colour of the Floures . . be neyther red nor white, but of a mixt colour betwixt red and white, almost carnation colour," was the standard simile for the cheeks (see Viola's "damaske cheek" in *TN* 2.4.15 or Linche, *Diella* 31.5, "Faire cheekes of purest Roses red and white") and was used emblematically of Elizabeth I (see Fulke Greville, *Caelica* 81.1-2, "Vnder a Throne I saw a Virgin sit, / The red, and white Rose quarter'd in her face"). [3] Shakespeare's, "damaskt, red and white," draws on a feature of the Song of Solomon, where the nose is compared to "the towre of Libanus, which loketh towarde Damascus," (7.5; *BB*), points to the mixing of red and white in the damask rose, and recalls the red and white fuci combined on the cheeks of Elizabethan woman, especially that of mercury sublimate which in the words of Thomas Tuke caused a "rotting of the teeth" and "vnsauorie breath." [4] The breath of Shakespeare's mistress lacks the clichéd sweetness of customary mistress' breath, for example, Richard Linche's, "sweet breath that breaths incomparable sweetnes" (*Diella* 31.4) or Emaricdulf's "Her hony breath, but more then hony sweete, / Exceeds the odours of Arabia" (15.9-10). The breath of Shakespeare's mistress lacks such perfumery and there is less delight to be taken from the breath that "in her reekes." As in Sonnet 54, "perfumes" (*per* + *fumare* = to smoke through) is associated with smoke, as is "reekes" which is to smoke (Florio has "Fumare, *to smoke, to reeke*"), often with pestilent connotations. While the voice of the mistress was always musick (for example, Griffin, *Fidessa* 39.9, "The Spheares her voyce," or Watson, above, "Her wordes are musicke all of siluer sounde"), Shakespeare is more realistic: music has a "farre more pleasing sound" than her voice. The title of "goddesse" was commonly afforded mistresses (compare Drayton, *Ideas Mirrour* 43.12, "Now call her Goddesse," or Spenser, *Amoretti* 22.13, "O goddesse," a translation of Desportes, *Diane* 39.3, "Déesse;" the appellation was frequent among the French). Shakespeare is equally down to earth when it comes to his mistress' walking, admitting to not having seen a goddess walking; his mistress, when she walks, has her feet firmly on the ground ("treads on the ground"). The couplet's "by heauen" is either an interjection or a calling on heaven as witness. The poet claims his mistress, now "my loue," is as esteemed and uncommon ("rare") as any woman ("she") who is misrepresented or seen to be false ("belied") by "false compare." The *contreblason* is thus partly turned on itself, becoming, in an ambiguous final couplet, either a double negative that compounds falsity or one where the negatives cancel out each other to confirm her rarity.

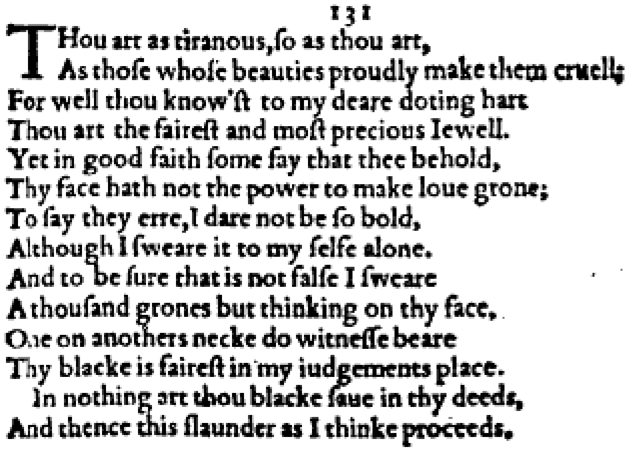
130.1. Clément Marot, *Sensuiuent les blasons anatomiques du corps femenin, ensemble les contreblasons de nouueau composez, & additionez, auec les figures, le tout mis par ordre: composez par plusieurs poetes contemporains* (Paris: Charles Langelier, 1543); the volume was the result of a competition and was expanded and rearranged in later editions.

130.2. Richard Percy, *Sonnets to the Fairest Coelia* (London: Adam Islip, 1594) 12.8-9.

130.3. Rembert Dodoens, *A New Herbal or Historie of Plants*. . *now first translated out of French into English by Henry Lyte Esquire* (London, Edward Griffin, 1619) 470.

130.4. Tuke B4^{v}.

Sonnet 131



131
Thou art as tiranous,ſo as thou art,
As thoſe whoſe beauties proudly make them cruell;
For well thou know'ſt to my deare doting hart
Thou art the faireſt and moſt precious Iewell.
Yet in good faith ſome ſay that thee behold,
Thy face hath not the power to make loue grone;
To ſay they erre,I dare not be ſo bold,
Although I ſweare it to my ſelfe alone.
And to be ſure that is not falſe I ſweare
A thouſand grones but thinking on thy face,
One on anothers necke do witneſſe beare
Thy blacke is faireſt in my iudgements place.
In nothing art thou blacke ſaue in thy deeds,
And thence this ſlaunder as I thinke proceeds.

131
Thou art as tiranous, ſo as thou art,
As thoſe whoſe beauties proudly make them cruell;
For well thou know’ſt to my deare doting hart
Thou art the faireſt and moſt precious Iewell.
Yet in good faith ſome ſay that thee behold,
Thy face hath not the power to make loue grone;
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Although I ſweare it to my ſelfe alone.
And to be ſure that is not falſe I ſweare
A thouſand grones but thinking on thy face,
One on anothers necke do witneſſe beare
Thy blacke is faireſt in my iudgements place.
  In nothing art thou blacke ſaue in thy deeds,
  And thence this ſlaunder as I thinke proceeds.

Titling the mistress a proud and cruel tyranness was a petrarchist commonplace. [1] Shakespeare’s mistress is “tiranous” with the futher intensifier, “so as thou art;” it is her nature so to be. She is as tyrannous as all similiar mistresses, whose haughty beauty makes them cruel (Petrarch’s “crudele”). She is cruel, because she well knows that to the poet’s heart, which is infatuated with her (“deare doting”), she is the most translucent (“fairest”) and most valued (“precious”) jewel. Again casting the mistress as a jewel was standard among sonneteers. [2] If Shakespeare had in mind here the same image as Sonnet 27.11-12 with its “iewell” that “Makes blacke night beautious, and her old face new,” then the “most precious Iewell” is associated with blackness and the *manes,* the shades of the night, which are seen as hags and which are scarcely "fairest," fair-complexioned or beautiful.

Yet, claims the poet, some who look on the mistress ("that thee behold") say that her face lacks the force to make an unrequited lover breathe out his groans ("the power to make loue grone"), sighs and groans being the stock response of plaintive lovers. They say this "in food faith," the phrase being either an interjection or a statement sincerely made so that it cannot constitute a slander. The poet, in response, is full of propriety not daring publicly to accuse them of error ("To say they erre, I dare not be so bold"), even if he will swear privately to himself that it is ("Although I sweare it to my selfe alone"). To reassure himself that what he swears is true, he gives voice to a thousand groans ("I sweare / A thousand grones"), the customary number of sighs or groans deriving from Petrarch's "mille sospiri." [3] His groans, totally focussed on the mistress' face ("but thinking on thy face"), follow quickly one on another ("One on anothers necke" was a 16th century expression meaning 'one after another') in bearing witness that, "Thy blacke is fairest," with its clear echo of the Song of Solomon, "I am blacke . . but yet fayre" (1.4; *BB*). His groans in bearing witness preempt the place of his judgement ("in my iudgements place").

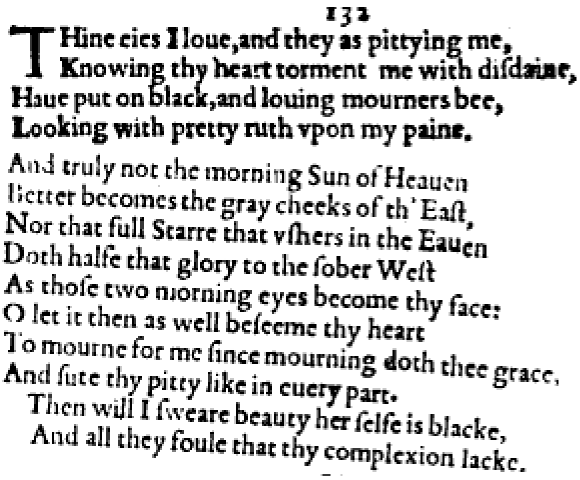
The couplet is more heavily toned: "In nothing art thou blacke saue in thy deeds." The mistress is dark in her actions only and not in her being and it is from her foul deeds, the poet presumes ("I thinke"), that there arises "this slaunder," the falsehood contained in line 6 that, "Thy face hath not the power to make loue grone." If it is a slander, then those who expressed the view cannot have been "in good faith," because slander requires malice; "in good faith," then, can only be an interjection on the part of the poet, similar to that beginning Sonnet 141, "In faith."

131.1. Compare Spenser *Amoretti* 10.4-9: "See how the Tyrannesse doth ioy to see / the huge massacres which her eyes do make: / and humbled harts brings captiues vnto thee / . . But her proud hart doe thou a little shake."

131.2. Compare Spenser *Amoretti* 15.7-9: “if Saphyres, loe her eies be Saphyres plaine, / if Rubies, loe hir lips be Rubies sound: / If Pearles, hir teeth be pearles both pure and round.”

131.3. Petrarch 131.2.

Sonnet 132



132
THine eies I loue,and they as pittying me,
Knowing thy heart torment me with diſdaine,
Haue put on black,and louing mourners bee,
Looking with pretty ruth vpon my paine.
And truly not the morning Sun of Heauen
Better becomes the gray cheeks of th' Eaſt,
Nor that full Starre that vſhers in the Eauen
Doth halfe that glory to the ſober Weſt
As thoſe two morning eyes become thy face:
O let it then as well beſeeme thy heart
To mourne for me ſince mourning doth thee grace,
And ſute thy pitty like in euery part.
Then will I ſweare beauty her ſelfe is blacke,
And all they foule that thy complexion lacke.

132
THine eies I loue, and they as pittying me,
Knowing thy heart torment me with diſdaine,
Haue put on black, and louing mourners bee,
Looking with pretty ruth vpon my paine.
And truly not the morning Sun of Heauen
Better becomes the gray cheeks of th’ Eaſt,
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As thoſe two morning eyes become thy face:
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To mourne for me ſince mourning doth thee grace,
And ſute thy pitty like in euery part.
  Then will I ſweare beauty her ſelfe is blacke,
  And all they foule that thy complexion lacke.

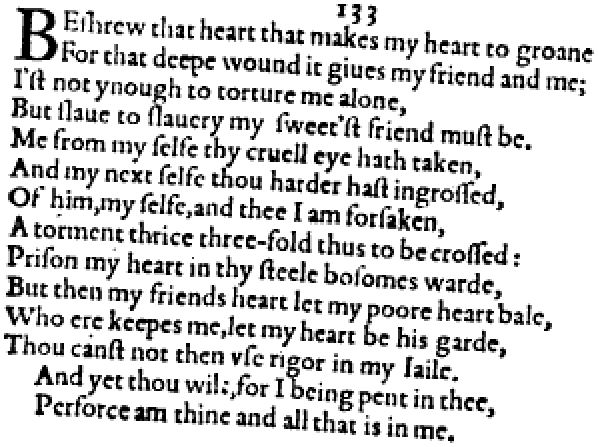
Sonnet 132 in its treatment of the mistress’ eyes is not dissimiliar to Sonnet 127, while its terms, “torment,” “disdaine,” “ruth,” “pittying,” and “paine,” are customarily ascribed by sonneteers to their mistresses. Its first two lines are contracted and awkward. The poet begins bluntly by stating that he loves the mistress’ eyes (“Thine eyes I loue”). Her eyes, as if to pity him, and knowing that her heart treats him with scorn, have dressed themselves in black (“Haue put on black”). Attired in the black of mourning, they become “louing mourners” (in Sonnet 127.10 they only “mourners seeme”), as they look down on the poet’s pain with pleasing or proper pity (“pretty ruth”).

The second section, comprising 5 lines and not a quatrain, compares the extent to which the mistress' eyes befit her face with the extent to which the "morning" sun and the "Eauen" star fit their backgrounds, with the morning/mourning pun always present ("As those two morning eyes become thy face"). The rising "Sun of Heauen" less befits the pale grey light of early morning, pictured as the sun's cheeks ("gray cheeks of th'East;" compare *Rom*. 2.3.1-2, "The gray ey'd morne smiles on the frowning night, / Checkring the Easterne Clouds with streakes of light"). Nor does Hesperus, the bright evening star ("full Starre"), which brings in the evening ("vshers in the Eauen"), divide (Halfe") its glory with the darkly-hued west ("sober West") to the same degree.

Since the mistress' eyes and heart are known to each other, the poet's prayer is that her heart might find it equally fitting ("as well beseeme") to grieve for him ("To mourne for me"), since mourning attires or befits her ("doth thee grace"). She is asked to "sute thy pitty like in euery part:" to make her pity suitable to every part; to dress ("suit") her every part with pity; to set out or distribute ("suit") her pity through ("like") every part; finally to 'soot' ("suit") or blacken her every part ("like") with pity cannot be ignored. Then the poet will avow ("sweare") that "beauty her selfe is blacke;" beauty, as is *pulchritudo*, is feminine (compare Greene's *Gwydonius*, "beautie her selfe was the victorie I meant to vaunt of;" see also Sonnet 20.2), because it is either dressed in or imbued with black. He will also declare dark ("foule") anything that doesn't display the same dark complexion as the mistress ("that thy complexion lacke").

132.1. Robert Greene, *Gwydonius* (London: William Ponsonby, 1584) 27.

Sonnet 133



133
BEſhrew that heart that makes my heart to groane
For that deepe wound it giues my friend and me;
I'ſt not ynough to torture me alone,
But ſlaue to ſlauery my ſweet'ſt friend muſt be.
Me from my ſelfe thy cruell eye hath taken,
And my next ſelfe thou harder haſt ingroſſed,
Of him,my ſelfe,and thee I am forſaken,
A torment thrice three-fold thus to be croſſed:
Priſon my heart in thy ſteele boſomes warde,
But then my friends heart let my poore heart bale,
Who ere keepes me,let my heart be his garde,
Thou canſt not then vſe rigor in my Iaile.
And yet thou wil:,for I being pent in thee,
Perforce am thine and all that is in me.

133
BEſhrew that heart that makes my heart to groane
For that deepe wound it giues my friend and me;
I'ſt not ynough to torture me alone,
But ſlaue to ſlauery my ſweet'ſt friend muſt be.
Me from my ſelfe thy cruell eye hath taken,
And my next ſelfe thou harder haſt ingroſſed,
Of him, my ſelfe, and thee I am forſaken,
A torment thrice three-fold thus to be croſſed:
Priſon my heart in thy ſteele boſomes warde,
But then my friends heart let my poore heart bale,
Who ere keepes me, let my heart be his garde,
Thou canſt not then vſe rigor in my Iaile.
  And yet thou wilt, for I being pent in thee,
  Perforce am thine and all that is in me.

Sonnets 133 and 134 treat of a triangle of characters, a motif first developed in Sonnets 39-42. Sonnet 133 is marked by a range of petrarchist conventions including, as in Sonnets 57 and 58, allusions to Cupid, figured as both slave and slavemaster ("slaue to slauery"), whose ability to wound deeply made him a master of groans (see Sonnet 57 for the trope's origin in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* and Shakespeare's depiction of Cupid as "soueraigne of sighes and groanes" [*LLL* 3.1.172]). Cupid and mistresses wounded lovers through eye-glances, such as those in Spenser's *Amoretti* 12.9, "The sweet eye-glaunces, that like arrowes glide," and 49.1-2, "Fayre cruell, why are ye so fierce and cruell? / Is it because your eyes haue powre to kill."

Sonnet 133’s opening, “Beshrew that heart,” is either a curse, ‘cursed be that heart,’ or something less severe, ‘mischief take thy heart,’ (compare *MND* 5.1.290, “Beshrew my heart, but I pittie the man”). The mistress’ heart has caused the poet’s “heart to groane,” not because it weighs down but because (“For that”) of a “deepe wound.” The wound must be non-physical because it attaches to both “my friend and me,” although it has been argued by Booth that the phrase describes the female sexual organ, that has been given to both poet and friend. The poet plaintively asks, “I’st not ynough to torture me alone,” the image of “torture” being continued through “torment,” “ingrossed,” “crossed,” “Prison,” and “warde.” As well the poet’s “sweet’st friend” has become a “slaue to slauery,” either to the mistress as slave-mistress or to Cupid as slave-master.

Her “cruell eye” has wrenched the poet from himself and has affected his “next selfe,” his friend, whom she “harder has[t] ingrossed.” To ‘ingross’ was to ‘monopolize’ or corner the market, so the mistress has wholly taken ownership of the friend. But to ‘ingross’ also meant to enlarge or thicken and was used physically, of melancholic humours that ingross the eyes or make them rheumy, and sexually. [1] In Marston’s *Parasitaster or The fawne*, Amorosus is accused of engrossing his loins with a variety of 17th century aphrodisiacs “And yet I heare sir *Amorosus*, you cherish your loynes with high art, the onely ingrosser of *Eringoes*, prepar'd *Cantharides*, *Cullesses* made of dissolued *Pearle*, and brus'd *Amber*.” To ‘ingross’ could also mean to ‘enclose’ as a grave encloses a body (compare Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 3.4.38.9, “then dead the graue selfe to engrosse”) or a mistress encloses her lover: Herod in Marston’s play cries out, “Faith some score or two of Ladies or so rauish mee among them, deuide my presents, and wold indeed ingrosse me.” [2] The mistress, then, has aroused the friend or made him “harder” or she has physically taken the friend to herself. Finally, and allusively, Florio defines ‘ingross’ as to ‘make big with child.’ Under the entry for “Ingrossare” he has “*to make great or bigge, to engrosse. Also as* Ingrauidare, *to swell*,” while the entry for “Ingrauidare” reads, “*to get with childe, to become big with childe*.”

The poet thereby is “Of him, my selfe, and thee . . forsaken;” he is beside himself and is bereft of friend and mistress, which is a “torment thrice three-fold thus to be crossed.”

Although 'three times three' was a superlative, Shakespeare may have been drawn to the number, because 'three' was linked with "ingrossed" though its original and most-used meaning of 'formally to inscribe' a document or parliamentary bill which, once "ingrossed," was required to be read three times. [3] The poet, thus separated, finds his torment triply to be "crossed," to be 'borne as a cross,' but with the suggestion of 'crucified' as on a rack or instrument of torture; "crossed" also anticipates the legal document of "bale" or forfeiture, which in being struck out was said to be "crossed."

The mistress is instructed to imprison the poet's heart in the keep or jail of her unyielding breast ("steele bosomes ward"). Kept there, his heart is to be allowed to "bale" the friend's heart, either 'enclose' it in his own or act as a surety or bond ("bale") to gain the friend's manumission. [4] (Or the subject of "bale" is "my friends heart," which must be allowed to 'confine' the poet's heart in his.) Whoever guards the poet, mistress or friend ("Who ere keepes me"), because his heart is confined in a prison, he must be allowed to govern the comings and goings as a guard on duty. The poet will be safe from the mistress applying "rigor," either the full force of the law or her unbending heart, while he is in care; "rigor" continues the sonnet's sexual inuendo being suggestive of an erect phallus (compare Puttenham's depiction of the epithalamial bridegroom as a "stiffe & rigorous young man"). [5]

The couplet, however, qualifies the thought: the mistress will hardheartedly bring to bear the fulness of the law and, since the poet is "pent" or shut up in her (compare Sonnet 5.10, "prisoner pent in walls"), he is through force ("perforce") possessed by her ("am thine"), together with everything that is enclosed in him, including his friend's heart.

133.1. Thomas Hill, *The Contemplation of Mankinde, contayning a singuler discourse after the Art of Phisiognomie, on all the members and partes of man, as from the heade to the foote* (London: Henry Denham, 1571) 80: "through the gathering togyther of grosse bloude and of the melancholike humour, in the eye liddes, and in the thinne skinnes compassing the eies, ingrossing or thikening them on such wise."

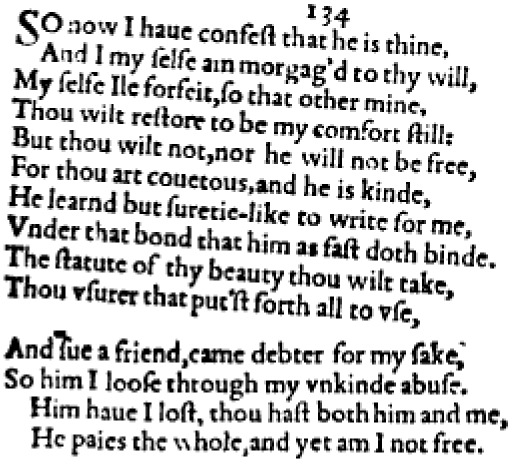
133.2. John Marston, *Parasitaster, or The fawne* (London: Thomas Purfoot, 1606) C2^{v} & F4^{v}.

133.3. See Spenser, *Amoretti* 74.3, "three times thrise happy." See Raphael Holinshed, *The First and second volumes of Chronicles, comprising 1 The description and historie of England, 2 The description and historie of Ireland, 3 The description and historie of Scotland* (London: Henry Denham, 1587) 123. The instruction to the Speaker runs, "All bils . . before they be ingrossed, and being read three times he must put the same to question."

133.4. *OED* bail v 3.

133.5. Puttenham 41.

Sonnet 134



134
SO now I haue confeſt that he is thine,
And I my ſelfe am morgag'd to thy will,
My ſelfe Ile forfeit,ſo that other mine,
Thou wilt reſtore to be my comfort ſtill:
But thou wilt not,nor he will not be free,
For thou art couetous,and he is kinde,
He learnd but ſuretie-like to write for me,
Vnder that bond that him as faſt doth binde.
The ſtatute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
Thou vſurer that put'ſt forth all to vſe,
And ſue a friend,came debter for my ſake,
So him I looſe through my vnkinde abuſe.
  Him haue I loſt, thou haſt both him and me,
  He paies the whole,and yet am I not free.

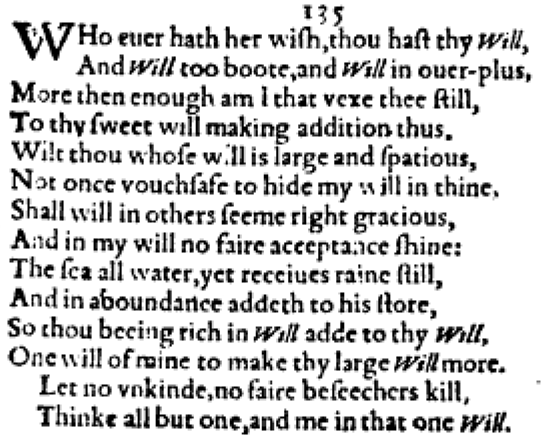
134
SO now I haue confeſt that he is thine,
And I my ſelfe am morgag'd to thy will,
My ſelfe Ile forfeit, ſo that other mine,
Thou wilt reſtore to be my comfort ſtill:
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou are couetous, and he is kinde,
He learnd but ſuretie-like to write for me,
Vnder that bond that him as faſt doth binde.
The ſtatute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
Thou vſurer that put'ſt forth all to vſe,
And ſue a friend, came debter for my ſake,
So him I looſe through my vnkinde abuſe.
  Him haue I loſt, thou haſt both him and me,
  He paies the whole, and yet I am not free.

Sonnet 134 takes up where the couplet of Sonnet 133 left off, admitting that the friend is possessed by the mistress ("So now I haue confest that he is thine"), a confession extracted under the pressure of imprisonment and force. He admits also that he is now "morgag'd to thy will." A mortgage (from *mort* = dead; *gage* = pledge) is a security that may be forfeited, if conditions are not fulfilled: if the gage is not repaid, it is dead to the debtor; if repaid, it is dead to the mortgagee. The poet has given himself up as "bale" or bond (he is both mortgagee and security) to gain the friend's liberty. He will, then, forfeit the security of himself to the mistress as mortgagor, so that she will release to him his friend ("that other mine"), who will become his "comfort."

The mistress, however, refuses to discharge or write off the mortgage (“But thou wilt not”) and the friend remains or chooses to remain in her possession (“nor he will not be free”). Her motive is possessiveness or greed (“For thou art couetous”); his being bound is because he is generous (“kinde”): when once acting on the poet’s behalf as his surety or guarantor (“suretie-like”), he learnt to affix the poet’s name to a contract (“to write for me”), only to find that its terms bound him just as tightly (“Vnder that bond that him as fast doth binde”). The implication is that the friend, while suing the mistress in the poet’s name, fell under her thrall and became as tightly enslaved to her.

The mercantile metaphor is retained in the sestet: “The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take.” A “statute,” particularly a ‘statute merchant,’ was a bond in which a creditor could retain a debtor’s property in case of default; hence the mistress will observe exactly the terms of the bond, which her beauty set up, including the forfeiture to her of the friend. She is a money-lender (“vsurer”) who puts her whole self to “vse,” to advantage, to gain the maximum interest, even to sexual use. She is prepared to “sue a friend,” either to seek legal redress for default against the friend, or to pursue the friend, or to lay suit or woo the friend, who only became indebted to her for the sake of the poet (“came debtor for my sake”). The result is that the poet ‘loses’ or, possibly, ‘lets go’ (“loose”) the friend through forfeiture to the mistress, an act characterized as an “vnkinde abuse” in contrast to the friend’s “kinde” nature. Finally the poet admits to loss of the friend (“Him haue I lost”) and to the mistress’ possession of both (“thou hast both him and me”). The friend has forfeited his whole self (“He paies the whole”), which should have lead to the poet’s release, but hasn’t: “yet I am not free.”

Sonnet 135



135
WHo euer hath her wiſh,thou haſt thy *Will*,
And *Will* too boote,and *Will* in ouer-plus,
More then enough am I that vexe thee ſtill,
To thy ſweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou whoſe will is large and ſpatious,
Not once vouchſafe to hide my will in thine,
Shall will in others ſeeme right gracious,
And in my will no faire acceptance ſhine:
The ſea all water,yet receiues raine ſtill,
And in aboundance addeth to his ſtore,
So thou beeing rich in *Will* adde to thy *Will*,
One will of mine to make thy large *Will* more.
Let no vnkinde,no faire beſeechers kill,
Thinke all but one,and me in that one *Will*.

135
WHo euer hath her wiſh, thou haſt thy *Will*,
And *Will* too boote, and *Will* in ouer-plus,
More then enough am I that vexe thee ſtill,
To thy ſweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou whoſe will is large and ſpatious,
Not once vouchſafe to hide my will in thine,
Shall will in others ſeeme right gracious,
And in my will no faire acceptance ſhine:
The ſea all water, yet receiues raine ſtill,
And in aboundance addeth to his ſtore,
So thou beeing rich in *Will* adde to thy *Will*,
One will of mine to make thy large *Will* more.
  Let no vnkinde, no faire beſeechers kill,
  Thinke all but one, and me in that one *Will*.

Sonnets 135 and 136 give the impression of being pieces of *juvenilia*, in which the bawdy sometimes threatens to overwhelm the wit. The sonnets’ primary pun lies with the word “*Will*” which can mean any, or any permutation of, the following: 1. desire; 2. physical desire or lust; 3. will, the future tense; 4. the vagina; 5. the penis; 6. the name William. The last meaning is the most problematic: if every time “*Will*” is used (the *quarto* randomly italicizes it), it conjures up a name, then the sonnet is populated by a number of Williams, including a William who is possibly the mistress’ lover, or her husband. Equally it might be argued that the only William involved is Shakespeare (although nothing autobiographical can be gleaned from the sonnets).

The sonnet opens, "Who euer hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*," which draws on the proverb, 'Women will have their wills.' [1] The poet claims that, 'whatever other woman may have obtained her desire,' the mistress has her "*Will*," her desire, her William, her vagina, the penis she possesses. She has "*Will* too boote," abundantly or additionally; she has "*Will* in ouer-plus," in surplus or over-supply (mathematically anticipating the sonnets' later counting motif). What is sufficient for her is the poet who continues to trouble ("vex") her by "making addition thus" to her "sweet will," her desire, possibly her William, certainly her vagina; "addition" is a shortening of the 'prick of addition,' a bawdy term from music and used of the penis, see the Maid's description of the youth in Nathan Field's *Amends for Ladies*, "all additions are conferr'd on him, / That may delight a woman." [2] (See also Sonnet 20 commentary).

The mistress is now questioned, "Wilt thou," a future tense. Her "will is large and spatious:" her desire is generous and accommodating, or her vagina is wide and all-embracing (compare *Lr*. 4.6.271 with its visually vaginal "O," "O indistinguish'd space of Womans will"). Will she not but once allow herself ("vouchsafe") secretly to enclose the poet's desire ("will") in hers or to hide his penis ("will") in her vagina ("in thine")? Shall "will in others," their desire or strength of will, appear more attractive ("seeme right gracious"), with a hint of 'phallically upright and erect' (the phrase, "As right as a rammes horne," was proverbial, see John Skelton, *a litle boke called Colyn Clout*, "They say many matters be borne / By the right of a rammes horne")? [3] Will "no faire acceptance," no welcoming reception, be bestowed on ("shine" on) his "will," his desire, his penis?

The ocean is cited as an example to be followed: although the sea is "all water," it continues to receive rain and "adds" to its store "in aboundance;" "aboundance" (from *abundo* (*ab* + *unda* = from a wave) is an overflowing from the ocean (see Sonnet 1.7 for its sexual significance). Similarly the mistress: she is "rich in *Will*," in desire, in lust, in penises, (in a man/men called William[?]), and should "adde" to her "*Will*," her desire, her lust, her vagina, "One will of mine," the poet's desire, lust, or penis (with a play on "One" as a figure of the phallus), thus making her "large *Will* more" as does the ocean.

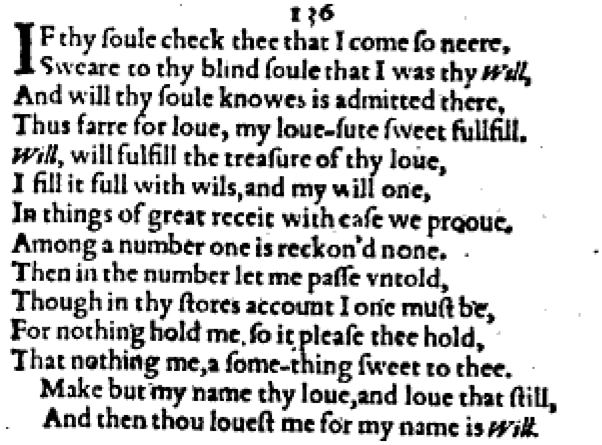
The couplet is imprecisely punctuated: "Let no vnkinde, no faire beseechers kill." Either 'let no unkind "no" kill faire beseechers,' or 'let no unkind no fair beseechers kill (i.e. 'let no unkind[ness] kill any beseechers'), or 'let no unkind "No" (the mistress as a nothing) kill faire beseechers.' The "faire beseechers" are suitors who seek "faire acceptance." Rather, concludes the poet, "Thinke all but one," think of all wills as one will, and so include me in "that one *Will*," that desire, lust, or vagina, or number him among her wills, those named William, thus anticipating the conclusion to Sonnet 136.

135.1. See Tilley W723.

135.2. Nathan Field, *Amends for Ladies. With the Humour of Roring* (London: George Eld, 1618) A4^{r}.

135.2. John Skelton, *Here after foloweth a litle boke called Colyn Clout compiled by master Skelton Poete Laureate* (London: John Day, 1558?) D5^{r}; compare, *Here after foloweth a litle booke, whiche hath to name why come ye not to courte, compiled by mayster Skelton Poete Laureate* (London: Robert Toy, 1554) A3^{v}, "As ryght as a rammes horne." See Tilley R28.

Sonnet 136



136
IF thy ſoule check thee that I come ſo neere,
Sweare to thy blind ſoule that I was thy *Will*,
And will thy ſoule knowes is admitted there,
Thus farre for loue, my loue-ſute ſweet fullfill.
Will, will fulfill the treaſure of thy loue,
I fill it full with wils,and my will one,
In things of great receit with eaſe we prooue,
Among a number one is reckon'd none.
Then in the number let me paſſe vntold,
Though in thy ſtores account I one muſt be,
For nothing hold me,ſo it pleaſe thee hold,
That nothing me,a ſome-thing ſweet to thee.
  Make but my name thy loue,and loue that ſtill,
  And then thou loueſt me for my name is *Will*.

136
IF thy ſoule check thee that I come ſo neere,
Sweare to thy blind ſoule that I was thy *Will*,
And will thy ſoule knowes is admitted there,
Thus farre for loue, my loue-ſute ſweet fullfill.
Will, will fulfill the treaſure of thy loue,
I fill it full with wils, and my will one,
In things of great receit with eaſe we prooue,
Among a number one is reckon'd none.
Then in the number let me paſſe vntold,
Though in thy ſtores account I one muſt be,
For nothing hold me, ſo it pleaſe thee hold,
That nothing me, a ſome-thing ſweet to thee.
  Make but my name thy loue, and loue that ſtill,
  And then thou loueſt me for my name is *Will*.

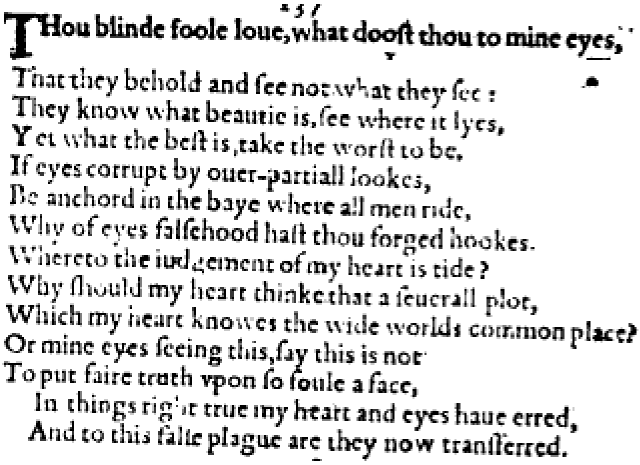
Sonnet 136 opens with a contingent instruction: "If thy soule check thee that I come so neere." The mistress' soul is her rational part, being comprised of reason and will. If it were to caution the mistress that the poet is too forward ("come so neere") either in pressing a suit (an Elizabethan expression), or in approaching too closely, or, obliquely, about to climax sexually ("come"), then she must "Sweare to thy blind soul," her unknowing or culpably ignorant reason (*caecus animi* was a Latinism), that the poet was her "Will," the object of her lust, the penis she possesses, a man named William. Her "soul" knows that "will," desire, lust, penis, is "admitted there," as a suit is admitted or received. So, to that extent ("Thus farre," positioned in the quatrain chiastically against "neere") and for the sake of love, she must satisfy, as a 'sweet person' or 'sweetly' ("sweet"), the poet's love-suit ("my loue-sute sweet fullfill," anticipating, "full it fill").

The word-play now verges on the contrived: "*Will*," either desire, penis, or William, will satisfy or complete the mistress' treasure-house of love ("the treasure of thy loue"). "I," while initially seeming the first person pronoun and evoking both the Roman numeral, I, and an erect phallus, is the 16th century spelling of either 'Ay' (yes) or 'Aye' (ever). She must fill her "treasure" full of wills and count the poet's will as "one" of them (with reference to 135.14, "Thinke all but one, and me in that one *Will*"). In "things of great receit," in things of great importance, or in things of large capacity, or in things that receive largely ("large and spatious" things), it can be easily shown that, "Among a number one is reckon'd none." The phrase reflects the standard aphorism that 'one is no number' or a nothing, in Culmann, "One man [is] no man," a rendering of "Unus vir, nullus vir" [1] A "thing" was jargon for both a penis and a vagina (Florio has "Cotale . . *a mans or womans priuities*. Cotalina, *a little pretie thing, or quaint*"). A 'nothing,' like 'naught,' 'nought,' and 'none,' because of a zero's shape (a recently introduced mathematical figure), was a bawdy term for a vagina, while 'O' and 'I' could be vagina and phallus, as in Sidney's intriguingly numbered *Astrophil and Stella* 69.1, "I I ô I." The poet thus argues that, even though the mistress will accommodate largely, if the poet is not numbered among the accommodated but is solitary, he is no man.

The poet asks that he be passed over as "untold," as uncounted, even though he must be numbered as one item in her stock-taking, her "stores account," with the standard pun on 'a-cunt' (compared Sonnet 20.2, "acquainted" or 'a-cunted'). If the number is a "none" into which he must "passe," the sexual becomes even more explicit. She must consider him worthless ("nothing hold me"), but in considering his suit think that worthless nothing (that "nothing me") a thing of some value to herself ("a some-thing"); or, if it pleases her, she must embrace the organ that is his as a something sweet to her. She must but make his name her love ("Make but"), even her continuous love ("still"), and then she will have loved him because of his name, William.

136.1. Culmann, *Sententiae* (1612) 19 and *Sententiae* (1637) 17. Compare Marlowe, *Hero and Leander* 255-6, "One is no number, mayds are nothing then, / Without the sweet societie of men.

Sonnet 137


THou blinde foole loue,what dooſt thou to mine eyes,
That they behold and ſee not what they ſee:
They know what beautie is,ſee where it lyes,
Yet what the beſt is,take the worſt to be.
If eyes corrupt by ouer-partiall lookes,
Be anchord in the baye where all men ride,
Why of eyes falſehood haſt thou forged hookes.
Whereto the iudgement of my heart is tide?
Why ſhould my heart thinke that a ſeuerall plot,
Which my heart knowes the wide worlds common place?
Or mine eyes ſeeing this,ſay this is not
To put faire truth vpon ſo foule a face,
In things right true my heart and eyes haue erred,
And to this falſe plague are they now tranſferred.

137
THou blinde foole loue, what dooſt thou to mine eyes,
That they behold and ſee not what they ſee:
They know what beautie is, ſee where it lyes,
Yet what the beſt is, take the worſt to be.
If eyes corrupt by ouer-partiall lookes,
Be anchord in the baye where all men ride,
Why of eyes falſehood haſt thou forged hookes,
Whereto the iudgement of my heart is tide?
Why should my heart thinke that a ſeuerall plot,
Which my heart knowes the wide worlds common place?
Or mine eyes ſeeing this, ſay this is not
To put faire truth vpon ſo foule a face,
  In things right true my heart and eyes haue erred,
  And to this falſe plague are they now tranſferred.

The trope of love as blind is of classical origin, being found in Ovid as "Amor caecus" and extensively in Lucretius' discourse on love in *De Rerum Natura*:

> Evils are found in love that is right and true. But in thwarted and lesser love ("in amore inopi") one beholds untold evils as if through eyes that are blind ("prendere . . oculorum lumine operto"). It is better . . to take care not to be led into vice, because it is easier not to fall into the snares of love ("plagas in amoris") than it is to escape from those nets ("retibus ipsis"). [1]

The figure of Cupid, with or without a blindfold, became a staple Renaissance icon: Alciato's Emblem 114, "In statuam Amoris," asks ironically of Love, 'If he is blind and wears a blindfold, what use is a blindfold to someone blind? He can't see less because of it.' [2] Shakespeare usually alludes to "blind Cupid" as a figure of illicit love: Benedick exclaims, "hang me vp at the doore of a brothel-house for the signe of blinde Cupid"

(*Ado* 1.1.219), and a discourse, in which Love converts worse things into better, occurs in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*:

> Things base and vilde, holding no quantity,
> Loue can transpose to forme and dignity,
> Loue lookes not with the eyes, but with the minde,
> And therefore is wing’d *Cupid* painted blinde. (1.1.235-9)

Shakespeare in Sonnet 137 treats the conceit in an original way. Love is pictured by sonneteers as a fool or a foolish boy who launches his attacks through the mistress’ eyes. [3] What has love done to his eyes, the poet asks, such that “they behold and see not what they see,” an echo of Ps. 135.16, “they haue eyes but they see not” (*BB*), used of those who worship idols. Love’s blindness is contagious, because the poet’s eyes can discern what is true beauty (“what beautie is”) and where it is found (“see where it lyes”), yet distorts or converts what is “best” into the “worst.”

The phrase, ‘to corrupt the eyes,’ or to mar them, was a Latinism (see Plautus, *Mercator* 3.1.1, “oculos corrumpis tales”). Looks that are “ouer-partiall” cannot read truly according to the aphorism, ‘No partial-eye makes bad things good.’ [4] ‘Partial-eyed’ was attached to Fortune, Justice, and love, always with the sense of being biased, and often with the sense of being blind, and was a popular epithet (see Richard Barnfield, *Cynthia* 98-99, “whose partial eies gan role, / And on our beuties look’t”). Here eyes are blinded by looks, which, since they are infatuated or too keen, dazzle and blind. Fixated on their object, they are “anchord in the baye where all men ride.” The metaphor was a familiar one (see *Cym*. 5.5.393, “See / *Posthumus* Anchors vpon *Imogen*; / And she . . throwes her eye / On him”), but is here turned to bawdy purposes with “baye” suggestive of the mistress’ private parts and “ride” the action of a male. If eyes be so transfixed, why should the mistress fashion or counterfeit (“forge”) from her *oeillades* (“eyes falsehood”) further “hookes,” that attach the judgement of the poet’s heart to falsehood? Again the image was a stock one (compare Cullman, “Men are taken with pleasure, as fishes [are taken] with a hook,” [5] or Marlowe, *Hero and Leander* 333-4, “Thus hauing swallow'd *Cupids* golden hooke, / The more she striv’d, the deeper was she strooke,” or Spenser, *Amoretti* 47.1-4:

> Trust not the treason of those smyling lookes,
> Vntill ye haue theyr guylefull traynes well tryde:
> For they are lyke but vnto golden hookes,
> That from the foolish fish theyr bayts doe hyde

Since an anchor has a fluke or hook, the metaphor is one of anchoring as well as fishing.

The piscatory *topos* is further developed in the contrast between "seuerall" and "common;" "seuerall" (from *separare* = to cut off) meant private and, in terms of land, enclosed private land; "common" was non-private land and available to all; 'several fishing' was a right to fish, because the land adjacent was privately owned. The poet asks, with the sexual to the fore, why should his heart think something a private possession like a plage ("seuerall plot"), when it knows the thing is possessed in common by all and sundry ("the wide worlds common place"). Or, he asks, why should his eyes, observing such a common place being so frequented, declare they are not glossing over things by imposing "faire truth" on "so foule a face."

The couplet admits that both the poet's eyes and heart have been at fault ("haue erred"), when it came to judging "things right true." His self-deception has led him to transfer his attention to "this false plague." This mistress is pictured as a 'plage' (or "plague"), either a 'snare,' (hence she is one who falsely entraps), or the 'quarter' or 'direction' towards which eyes are directed (hence she is a false sight). The customary reading of "plague" as disease, to which there is no earlier allusion in the sonnet, seems erroneous.

(The last line's "false plague" points to the way Sonnet 137 generally plays with the Latin "plaga" and its Italian equivalent, 'piaga' or 'piaggia.' They could mean a 'wound' or 'plague' such as love inflicts [see Cooper, "Plaga, plagae . . A wounde;" Florio, "Piaga, *a wound . . a plague*"], or a snare by which love entraps [see Cooper, who cites Lucretius above, "Iaci in plagas amoris. Lucr. To be cast into snares of loue," and Cicero, "Incidere in plagas, per translationem. Cic. To happen into the nets, to fal into a snare set of purpose to deceyue him"]. [6] In addition, according to Florio, a 'plage' or 'piaggia' was "*a meadow, a plot of grounde*," and he also records, "Piaggiare, *to reduce into meadowes*" as common land might be separated and privatized. Finally a 'plaga' or 'piaga' or 'plage' was a strand or shallow bay [Cooper, "Plaga . . a coast;" Florio, "*the stronde of the sea*"]. "Bay," "plot," and "plague"/'plage' are all features of the sonnet.)

137.1. Ovid, *Fasti* 2.762; Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 4.912-19:
Atque in amore mala haec proprio summeque secundo
inveniuntur; in adverso vero atque inopi sunt,
prendere quae possis oculorum lumine operto.
innumerabilia; ut melius . .
. . cavereque, ne inliciaris.
nam vitare, plagas in amoris ne iaciamur,
non ita difficile est quam captum retibus ipsis
exire.

137.2. Alciato 114, 21-22:
Si caecus, vittamque gerit, quid taenia caeco
Utilis est? Ideo num minus ille videt?

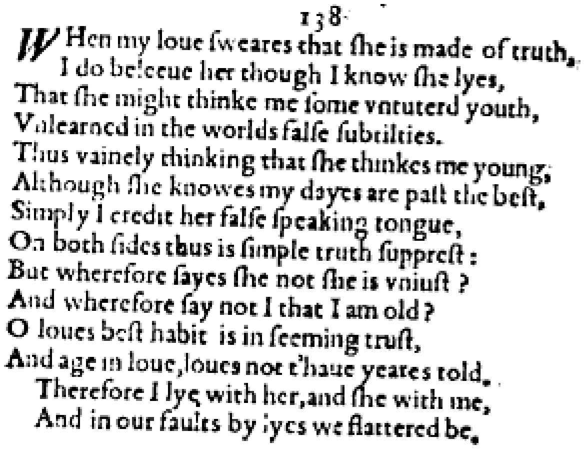
137.3. Compare Griffin, *Fidessa* 43.13, Fletcher, *Licia* 2.7, even Shakespeare, Sonnet 57.3, "so true a foole is loue," and Spenser, *Amoretti* 17.9, "The sweet eye-glaunces, that like arrowes glide."

137.4. Compare Robert Pricket, *Honors Fame in Triumph Riding. Or, the Life and Death of the Late Honorable Earle of Essex* (London: R[alph] Blower, 1604) C4^r, "No partialleye made bad things good."

137.5. Culmann, *Sententiae* (1612) 35; *Sententiae* (1639) 30, "Voluptate capiuntur homines, ut homo pisces."

137.6. Cooper, *Thesaurus* plaga.

Sonnet 138



138

WHen my loue ſweares that ſhe is made of truth,
I do beleeue her though I know ſhe lyes,
That ſhe might thinke me ſome vntuterd youth,
Vnlearned in the worlds falſe ſubtilties.
Thus vainely thinking that ſhe thinkes me young,
Although ſhe knowes my dayes are paſt the beſt,
Simply I credit her falſe ſpeaking tongue,
On both ſides thus is ſimple truth ſuppreſt:
But wherefore ſayes ſhe not ſhe is vniuſt?
And wherefore ſay not I that I am old?
O loues beſt habit is in ſeeming truſt,
And age in loue,loues not t'haue yeares told.
Therefore I lye,with her,and ſhe with me,
And in our faults by lyes we flattered be.

138
WHen my loue ſweares that ſhe is made of truth,
I do beleeue her though I know ſhe lyes,
That ſhe might thinke me ſome vntuterd youth,
Vnlearned in the worlds falſe ſubtilties.
Thus vainely thinking that ſhe thinkes me young,
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And wherefore ſay not I that I am old?
O loues beſt habit is in ſeeming truſt,
And age in loue, loues not t'haue yeares told.
  Therefore I lye with her, and ſhe with me,
  And in our faults by lyes we flattered be.

The Passionate Pilgrime (1599)

WHen my Loue ſweares that ſhe is made of truth,
I doe beleeue her (though I know ſhe lies)
That ſhe might thinke me ſome vntutor'd youth,
Vnskilfull in the worlds falſe forgeries.
Thus vainly thinking that ſhe thinkes me young,
Although I know my yeares be paſt the beſt:
I ſmiling, credite her falſe ſpeaking toung,
Outfacing faults in Loue, with loues ill reſt.
But wherefore ſayes my Loue that ſhe is young?
And wherefore ſay not I, that I am old?
O, Loues beſt habite is a ſoothing toung,
And Age (in Loue) loues not to haue yeares told.
Therfore Ile lye with Loue, and Loue with me,
Since that our faultes in Loue thus ſmother'd be.

Sonnet 138 is one of the sequence's wittiest, the *quarto* being a revision of an earlier version found in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, published by William Jaggard in 1599. [1] The volume's authorship was wrongly attributed to Shakespeare, although five of the twenty poems in the volume are his. The 1599 version is found above. The sonnet's wit is reinforced by the echoes of biblical injunctions against false swearing and of phrases from the Church of England's "*A Sermon against swearing* and periurie," the seventh in the Elizabethan "Book of Homilies." (Shakespeare further uses the homily in Sonnet 152.)

The sonnet opens with the poet's mistress swearing that she is "made of truth," constituted of the oneness that characterizes "truth" or troth, but with a hint of "maid of truth," virginal and intact (a 'maid of joy' was a courtesan or whore). [2] When she swears such, the poet believes her, or indicates he believes her, even though he knows "she lyes." His reason: so that the mistress might think him a callow, gullible youth ("some vntuterd youth"), someone that appears younger than he is, because he is easily duped by one who would pass herself off as "made"/maid of truth. She will find him, as a gull, innocent ("Vnlearned") of the "worlds false subtilties," of the demimonde's practice of passing off women as virginal to young men. In "vainely thinking that she thinkes me young," "vainely" means both 'in vain' and 'arrogantly.' To swear vainely or to take God's name in vain was sinful: the intent of the "*Sermon against swearing*" was to point out the "perill and daunger it is vainely to sweare." [3] The mistress, however, knows the poet's aged inadequacy ("my dayes are past the best"). He, then, "simply," 'straightforwardly' or with the foolishness of a simpleton, will "credit her false speaking tongue." The "*Sermon against swearing*" singles out those who lie to gain credit with their fellows: "a trustie man . . shall haue no neede by such vaine swearing, to bring himselfe in credence with his neighbours." [4] Thus "on both sides," on the part of the poet and his love, "simple truth [is] supprest;" "simple truth" is the 'undivided' truth that is pledged in marriage as well as 'humble' truth or truth not given to pride; "supprest" means kept secret or unvoiced. Shakespeare has changed the line found in *The Passionate Pilgrim* ("Outfacing faults in loue, with loues ill rest") to make it accord with 2 Tim.

2.15-16, where the elect, "diuiding the worde of trueth iustly," are instructed to "Suppresse . . vayne wordes." [5] The Geneva version's sidenote indicates such words derive from "the subtilitie of Satan."

But why ("wherefore") does the mistress not admit her deceit ("sayes she not she is vniust;" the "*Sermon against swearing*" identifies an "vniust" as "a deceitfull person")? [6] Equally why does the poet not admit his age ("that I am old")? His response is an aged response: "O loues best habit is in seeming trust." Love to survive must sometimes not tell the truth but let what seems prevail, a "seeming trust," either a pretending or a deceiving trust. The "best habit" of love is firstly that in which it attires itself; it is also that through which love manifests itself as behaviour or habit; finally "seeming trust" is love's best possession (the category of "*habitus*"). In a quasi-chiastic line, "And age in loue, loues not t'haue yeares told," he claims that aged lovers prefer to keep their ages suppressed; "told" means both 'counted' and 'recounted.' The couplet is centred on the pun on "lye," 'to speak falsely' and 'to lie beside.' The poet 'lies' to and with the mistress as she lies to and with him. In so doing, and through their "faults" or failings in love (see *The Passionate Pilgrim* 8 & 14, "faultes in loue"), they are "flattered," they are 'deceived' as well as 'gratified' by each other.

138.1. William Shakespeare (?), *The Passionate Pilgrime. By W. Shakespeare* (London: William Jaggard, 1599) A3^{r}.

138.2. Compare Nicholas de Nicolay, *The Nauigations, peregrinations and voyages, made into Turkie by Nicholas Nicholay . . Translated out the French by T[homas] Washington* (London: Thomas Dawson, 1585) 144, "a mayden of ioy or a common woman, or strumpet."

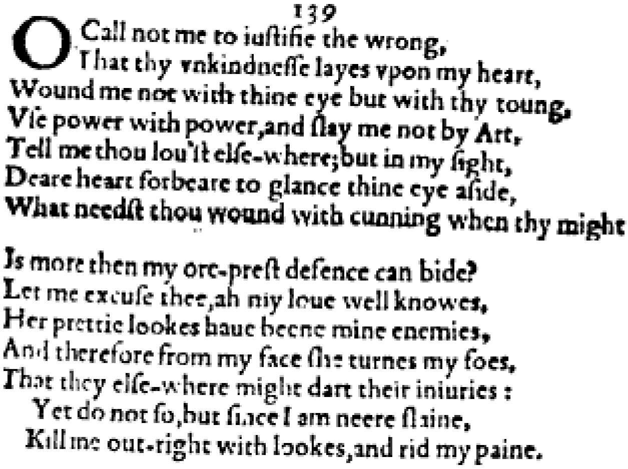
138.3. Church of England, *Certaine Sermons appointed by the Queenes Maiestie, to be declared and read, by all Parsons, Vicars, and Curates; euery Sunday and Holy day in their Churches* (London: Christopher Barker, 1582) D6^{r-v}.

138.4. Church of England, *Certaine Sermons* D8^{v}.

138.5. *The New Testament of Our Lord Iesus Christ. Conferred diligently with the Greke, and best approued translations* (Geneva, Conrad Badius, 1557).

138.6. Church of England, *Certaine Sermons* D7^{v}.

Sonnet 139



139
O Call not me to iuſtifie the wrong,
That thy vnkindneſſe layes vpon my heart,
Wound me not with thine eye but with thy toung,
Vſe power with power,and ſlay me not by Art,
Tell me thou lou'ſt elſe-where;but in my ſight,
Deare heart forbeare to glance thine eye aſide,
What needſt thou wound with cunning when thy might
Is more then my ore-preſt defence can bide?
Let me excuſe thee,ah my loue well knowes,
Her prettie lookes haue beene mine enemies,
And therefore from my face ſhe turnes my foes,
That they elſe-where might dart their iniuries :
Yet do not ſo,but ſince I am neere ſlaine,
Kill me out-right with lookes,and rid my paine.

139
O Call not me to iuſtifie the wrong,
That thy vnkindneſſe layes vpon my heart,
Wound me not with thine eye but with thy toung,
Vſe power with power, and ſlay me not by Art,
Tell me thou lou'ſt elſe-where; but in my ſight,
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Let me excuſe thee, ah my loue well knowes,
Her prettie lookes haue beene mine enemies,
And therefore from my face ſhe turnes my foes,
That they elſe-where might dart their iniuries:
  Yet do not ſo, but ſince I am neere ſlaine,
  Kill me out-right with lookes, and rid my paine.

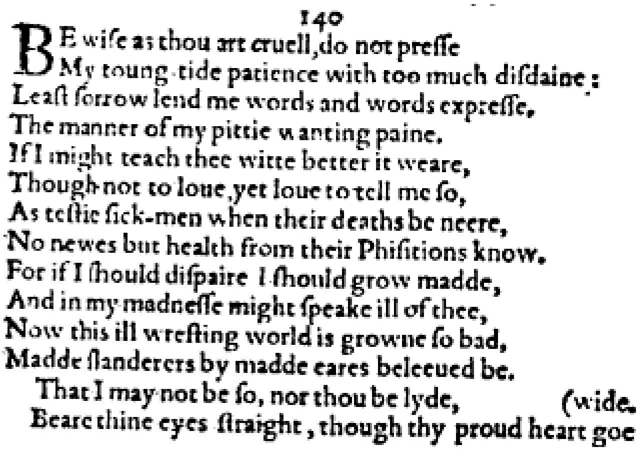
Sonnet 139 returns to a series of sonnets marked by standard Petrarchan conceits and vocabulary: the poet instructs the mistress not to require him to validate or excuse the wrong, with which her unkindness oppresses him ("layes vpon my heart"). The image of laying a heavy weight upon the heart is the iuridical one of 'peine forte et dure,' when increasing weights were applied to the chest until the person either pleaded or died, while 'lay vpon,' meaning 'lay siege to,' was a common Petrarchan motif, although here the direction is from mistress to poet. The sonnet now distinguishes between the hurt inflicted by the mistress' eyes, which is forbidden, and the injury caused by her tongue, which she is allowed: she must use her tongue's might mightily ("power with power") and not kill ("slay") him with the "Art" of her eyes. She may inform him with her tongue that her love lies elsewhere, but in his presence (“in my sight”) she (“deare heart”) must refrain from casting from the corner of her eyes *oeillades* upon others (“forbeare to glance thine eye aside”). Why, he asks, does she wound him with her eyes’ skill (“cunning”), when her verbal power (“might”) is more than his too much laid-upon (“ore-prest”) defence can bear.

The eyes of petrarchist mistresses, exercising “power” and “Art,” customarily “Wound” and “slay” poets: Spenser’s beloved in *Amoretti* 21.14 is expert in the “art of eyes,” while the eyes’ power to kill is everywhere, compare *Amoretti* 49.2, “your eyes haue powre to kill?” [1] *Amoretti* 57.8 has the mistress’ eyes “slaying” the poet with Petrarch’s “mille strali,” the “thousand arrowes which your eies haue shot.” In *Amoretti* 12.14 the poet lays a legal complaint “against your eies that iustice I may gaine.”

The sestet’s pronouns move from the second person (“thee”) to the third (“she” / “her”): “Let me excuse thee” is the poet's instruction to himself, while the remainder of the quatrain is direct speech comprising his exculpation. She is well aware that her “prettie lookes,” her eye-glances rather than her beautiful appearance, have been the poet’s enemy. For his sake she turns her eyes (“foes”) from his face, so that they might direct their woundings elsewhere (“iniuries,” which retains its legal sense of an injured party, from *in* + *jus* = against the law). The couplet reverses direction again: since the poet is on the verge of death (“neere slaine”), the mistress must not look elsewhere, but must kill him with her eyes (“Kill me out-right with lookes”), because then his pain in death will no longer be felt; “out-right” means ‘with one action,’ but also keeps its original sense of ‘directly,’ or not “aside.” The poet thus obtains the sonneteers’ customary resignation, “who dying doe themselues of paine beguyle” (Spenser, *Amoretti* 47.12).

139.1. The power of the eyes to kill was often compared with the cockatrice’s power: compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 49.10, where the poet asks that, glancing at others, she might “kill with looks as Cockatrices doo.”

Sonnet 140



140
BE wiſe as thou art cruell,do not preſſe
My toung-tide patience with too much diſdaine:
Leaſt ſorrow lend me words and words expreſſe,
The manner of my pittie wanting paine.
If I might teach thee witte better it weare,
Though not to loue,yet loue to tell me ſo,
As teſtie ſick-men when their deaths be neere,
No newes but health from their Phiſitions know.
For if I ſhould diſpaire I ſhould grow madde,
And in my madneſſe might ſpeake ill of thee,
Now this ill wreſting world is growne ſo bad,
Madde ſlanderers by madde eares beleeued be.
That I may not be ſo, nor thou be lyde, (wide.
Beare thine eyes ſtraight, though thy proud heart goe

140
BE wiſe as thou art cruell, do not preſſe
My toung-tide patience with too much diſdaine:
Leaſt ſorrow lend me words and words expreſſe,
The manner of my pittie wanting paine.
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Though not to loue, yet loue to tell me ſo,
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And in my madneſſe might ſpeake ill of thee,
Now this ill wreſting world is growne ſo bad,
Madde ſlanderers by madde eares beleeued be.
That I may not be ſo, nor thou be lyde,
Beare thine eyes ſtraight, though thy proud heart goe wide.

Mistresses from Petrarch onwards are notoriously cruel ("crudele") and treat their lovers with disdain ("disdegno;" compare Petrarch, *Canzionere,* 44, 1-6

> Ma voi che mai pietà non discolora,
> et ch'avete gli schermi sempre accorti
> contra l'arco d'Amor che 'ndarno tira,
> mi vedete straziare a mille morti:
> né lagrima però discese anchora
> da' be' vostr'occhi, ma disdegno et ira.
>
> [But you [Laura], whom pity never makes pale and who always uses wise defences against Love's bow, which he draws in vain, look on me racked by a thousand deaths: no tear has yet fallen from your beautiful eyes, but only disdain and anger.]

The elements of wit, pain, pity and grace are found, famously, in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* 1.)

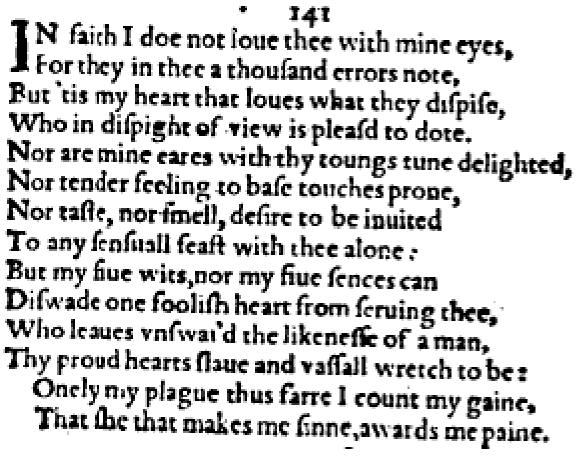
Sonnet 140 advises caution, counselling the mistress to be as "wise" as she is normally "cruell;" she must not exert pressure on or push beyond limit ("presse") the poet's "patience," his long-suffering, which he cannot render into words ("toung-tied;" in Sonnet 1 Astrophil finds "wordes came halting out"). Otherwise ("least" or 'Lest') sorrow might afford him words and words might give expression to his pain which finds no pity ("pittie wanting paine"). Lack of pity was a hallmark of petrarchist mistresses. If he could instruct her in wisdom ("witte"), it would be better if he was told she loved him, even if she didn't, much like "testie sick-men" like to be deceived; "testie" means 'tetchy' or 'ill-tempered' and was used proverbially of the elderly (compare Harrington's "testie with old age") and of sickness and madness (Thomas Drant writes in his translation of Horace's *Satires*, "Testie anger [is] a kynde of madnes"). [1] Those who are short-tempered, when facing death, want no news from their physicians other than false, good ("healthy") news; so also the poet wishes to be falsely consoled.

If the poet in his testiness were to despair ("dispaire," with a hint of 'un-pair' or 'depart from'), a condition not allowed on a death-bed, he would "grow madde" and in his "madnesse" slander the mistress ("speake ill of thee"), especially given that this "ill wresting" world has now so degenerated that mad slanderers are believed by people disposed to hear madness ("mad eares"). An "ill wresting" world is one which twists or perverts the meaning of anything (Florio has under *peruertito,* "wrested to an ill sense," while *H5* 1.2.14 has "wrest, or bow your reading" and La Primaudaye points out that the slanderer is particularly prone "to wrest in ill part whatsoever was well meant"). The slanderer and madness where long associated through Eccles. 10, which states that the "backbiter" or "sclaunderer" is "like a serpent" and that "the last worde of his mouth is starke madnesse" (*BB*). To avoid his going mad and to avoid her being made the subject of detraction ("nor thou be lyde"), the mistress must not look askance at others ("Beare thine eyes straight;" compare Sonnet 139.6, "forbeare to glance thine eye aside"), even if her heart in its pride stray from the straight and narrow ("though thy proud heart goe wide"). The archery image of taking straight aim ("Beare . . straight") and shooting wide ("goe wide") is retained from Sonnet 139's darting eyes.

140.1. Ariosto 8.42.5; Horace, Drant P1^{r}; compare Lyly, *Sapho* E1^{v}, "Sicke foles are testie, who though they eate nothing yet they feede on gall."

140.2. Peter de la Primaudaye, *The French Academie, wherin is discoursed the institution of Maners* (London: George Bishop, 1589) 434.

Sonnet 141


141
IN faith I doe not loue thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thouſand errors note,
But 'tis my heart that loues what they diſpiſe,
Who in diſpight of view is pleaſd to dote.
Nor are mine eares with thy toungs tune delighted,
Nor tender feeling to baſe touches prone,
Nor taſte, nor ſmell, deſire to be inuited
To any ſenſuall feaſt with thee alone:
But my fiue wits,nor my fiue ſences can
Diſwade one fooliſh heart from ſeruing thee,
Who leaues vnſwai'd the likeneſſe of a man,
Thy proud hearts ſlaue and vaſſall wretch to be:
Onely my plague thus farre I count my gaine,
That ſhe that makes me ſinne,awards me paine.

141
IN faith I doe not loue thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thouſand errors note,
But 'tis my heart that loves what they diſpiſe,
Who in diſpight of view is pleaſd to dote.
Nor are mine eares with thy toungs tune delighted,
Nor tender feeling to baſe touches prone,
Nor taſte, nor ſmell, deſire to be inuited
To any ſenſuall feaſt with thee alone:
But my fiue wits, nor my fiue ſences can
Diſwade one fooliſh heart from ſeruing thee,
Who leaues vnſwai'd the likeneſſe of a man,
Thy proud hearts ſlaue and vaſſall wretch to be:
  Onely my plague thus farre I count my gaine,
  That ſhe that makes me ſinne, awards me paine.

A 'thousand' was a sonneteer's standard number for a multitude: Petrarch's "ben mille offese" ('a goodly thousand offences') or "mille piaghe" ('a thousand plagues' or 'a thousand wounds') were well-known and became clichéd. Sonnet 141's opening exclamation, "In faith," introduces a conceit that contrasts what can be seen by the five external and five internal senses, which are not of the rational realm and common to all animals, and what the heart can see. From the middle ages philosophers (and schools) posited four and subsequently five interior senses. Aquinas takes four from Aristotle (the 'common sense,' the imagination, the estimation and the 'sensitive memory'), to which he added one from Avicenna, the fantasy. [1] By Shakespeare's time the number of internal senses or wits were variably numbered: Richard Huloet, for example, gives only three:

“There are three interior or inwarde senses, to wete. Sensus communis, Phantasia, & Memoria. The Common sense or iudgement, fantasie, and memorie.” [2]

The poet argues that he doesn’t love the mistress through his sense of sight, since his eyes perceive (“note”) a “thousand” faults in her. Rather his heart loves what his eyes despise and, despite what is seen (“despight of view”), is ready to become infatuated (“pleasd to dote”). Similarly his ears receive no pleasure from the sound (“tune”) her tongue utters, while none of the other three senses, the “tender” sense of touch (compare 138, “tender inward of thy hand”), which is susceptible to less than honourable touching (“to base touches prone”), the sense of “taste,” and the sense of “smell,” desire to be invited to the “sensual feast,” where they might be served by the mistress. The senses’ feasting was a familiar metaphor for the cognitive process, in which the external senses captured an impression, which the “common sense” and intellect process, and which the will finally accepts as knowledge: compare John Davies account in *Mirum in modum*:

> Yet nought that *Vnderstanding* doth digest,
> But first on it the outward *Senses* feedes:
> Both which inuites the *Will* vnto their feast,
> Those *Senses* being tasters to the rest. [3]

Neither the poet’s five external senses nor his five internal (“my fiue wits”) can move his “foolish heart” from “seruing” the mistress. She reduces him, now the mere shadow of a man (“likenesse of a man”), to the level of a servile and menial servant (“slaue and vassal wretch”) in service to her heart; “vnswai’d” moderates either “Who,” the mistress, who is unaffected or hard-hearted, or the poet, who is ungoverned by either set of senses. The solitary thing the poet thinks his gain is his “plague,” which carries its original Latinate meaning of ‘wound’ (echoing Petrarch’s “piaghe” above, which Florio renders as “a wound, a sore, a hurt, a plague;” see Cooper’s *Thesaurus*, “Plagam . . To plague: to wound”). [4] He can account his hurt a gain only to the extent that (“thus farre”) the mistress, who makes him “sinne,” awards him his “paine,” both his suffering and his punishment (from *poena* = punishment), a sonneteer’s frequent pun (compare Spenser, *Amoretti* 10.14).

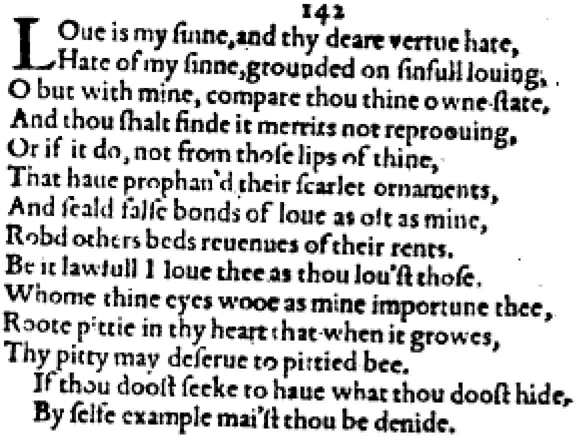
141.1. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1.78.4: "Sensus interiores, secundum Aristotelem, sunt tantum quatuor, secundum quatuor modos operationum, s. sensus communis, imaginativa, aestimativa in aliis animalibus, sive cogitativa in homine, et memoria sensitiva, licent sint quinque, secundum Avicennam, scilicet sensus communis, imaginativa, phantasia, aestimativa et memoria sensitiva."
('According to Aristotle the internal senses number four, corresponding to four modes of operation, that is, the 'common sense,' the imagination, the estimation, which is found in other animals or as reflection in humans, and the sensitive memory, although, according to Avicenna there are five, that is, the 'common sense,' the imagination, the fantasy, the estimation and the sensitive memory.')

141.2. Huloet, *Dictionarie* senses.

141.3. John Davies, *Mirum in modum. A Glimpse of Gods Glorie and The Soules Shape* (London: William Aspley, 1602) A4^{r}. Davies further expands,
But when we say the *Vnderstanding* seazeth
On nought but what the *Senses* first surprizeth,
Its meant of things that pleaseth, or displeaseth,
And to the *Senses* sensibly ariseth:
Then herevpon the common *Sense* deuiseth,
And then transferres it to the *Intellect*,
Which by hir pow'r inherent doth discourse,
By *Reasons* rule from *Causes* to th' *effect*:
And beeing there, runnes forth with greater force,
Till *Iudgement* (with strong hand) doth stay her course.

141.4. Cooper, *Thesaurus* obduco.

Sonnet 142


142
LOue is my ſinne,and thy deare vertue hate,
Hate of my ſinne,grounded on ſinfull louing,
O but with mine, compare thou thine owne-ſtate,
And thou ſhalt finde it merrits not reproouing,
Or if it do, not from thoſe lips of thine,
That haue prophan'd their ſcarlet ornaments,
And ſeald falſe bonds of loue as oft as mine,
Robd others beds reuenues of their rents.
Be it lawfull I loue thee as thou lou'ſt thoſe.
Whome thine eyes wooe as mine importune thee,
Roote pittie in thy heart that when it growes,
Thy pitty may deſerue to pittied bee.
If thou dooſt ſeeke to haue what thou dooſt hide,
By ſelfe example mai'ſt thou be denide.

142
LOue is my ſinne, and thy deare vertue hate,
Hate of my ſinne, grounded on ſinfull louing,
O but with mine, compare thou thine owne ſtate,
And thou ſhalt finde it merrits not reproouing,
Or if it do, not from thoſe lips of thine,
That haue prophan'd their ſcarlet ornaments,
And ſeald falſe bonds of loue as oft as mine,
Robd others beds reuenues of their rents.
Be it lawfull I loue thee as thou lou'ſt thoſe,
Whome thine eyes wooe as mine importune thee,
Roote pittie in thy heart that when it growes,
Thy pitty may deſerue to pittied bee.
  If thou dooſt ſeeke to haue what thou dooſt hide,
  By ſelfe example mai'ſt thou be denide.

The poet's sinful loving of the mistress ("Loue is my sinne") takes up from the "sinne" that concludes Sonnet 141. (The yoking of love and sin was a sonneteer's favourite ploy, compare Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 14.14, "Then loue is sin, and let me sinfull bee"). His loving here is different from Sonnet 62's "Sinne of selfe-loue," which was "grounded inward in my heart," because, although it is "grounded on sinfull louing," it is directed outwardly toward the "selfe example," by which the mistress will be denied. Shakespeare's use of "grounded" on each occasion is technically exact: Hooker, for example, writes of a life "which groundeth it selfe vpon the guiltines of sinne." [1] The mistress on the other hand is possessed of a "deare virtue," both 'precious' and 'costly,' which is "Hate of my sinne." The floating clause, "grounded on sinfull louing," which completes the opening lines' chiastic structure, can qualify either "Hate" or "sinne:" if

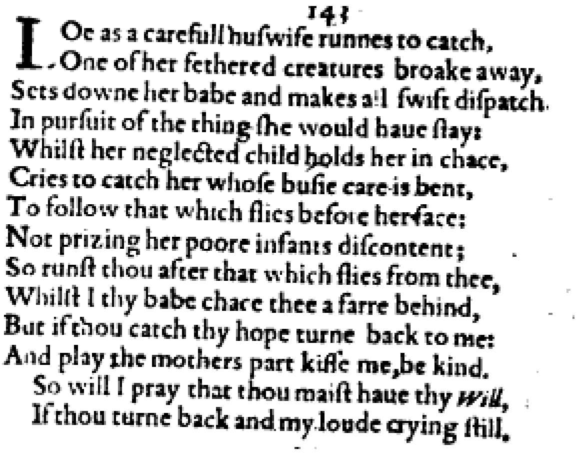
"Hate," then the mistress' hate, construed as a "virtue," is grounded on sinful loving; if "sinne," then the sin is grounded on the sinful loving of the poet. She is urged to compare her state with that of the poet, and she will then find either that her state ("it") deserves no censuring ("meritts not reproouing"), because it is one of "vertue," or that his state ("it") deserves no censuring, because it is one of love.

If, however, his state were to deserve censure, then no reproof should proceed from her lips for they are false: they "haue prophan'd their scarlet ornaments." Scarlet was associated with sin through Isa. 1.18: "though though your sinnes be as red as scarlet" (*BB*; compare *H8* 3.2.255, "Thou Scarlet sinne"); "ornaments" are the decoration that make her lips beautiful, but they evoke also a temple's or church's sacred furnishings, a sense sustained in "prophan'd," whose etymon was *pro* + *fanum* = in front of [or outside] the temple. Her lips, because false, have desecrated themselves; they have also "seald false bonds of loue." A bond is signed and "sealed" with red wax, but the mistress has sealed her words with a false kiss as often as the poet has so sealed his love. Equally her lips or the poet's ("Robd" or 'robbed' can be attached to either "those lips of thine" or "mine") have stolen from others' beds the "rents," which rightfully belong to them as yield or income ("reuenues," with a possible sexual pun through its French sense of comings and goings; the line is underpinned by the idea of the mariage bed as a temple, now "prophan'd," see Donne, *The Flea*, "this / Our mariage bed, and mariage temple is").

If it were lawful, which it isn't since sin is a transgression of the law, the poet would love the mistress in the same way that she loves those whom her eyes solicit ("wooe"), just as his eyes petition ("importune") her. She must "Roote pittie" in her heart, but only so that, once planted in the 'ground' and grown, it might merit pity itself ("deserue to pittied bee"). (In Sonnet 140 his pain was without pity, "pittie wanting paine.") If she were to need pity, which she keeps hidden from others ("what thou doost hide"), then, the poet wishes, may her example ("selfe example") be followed by others who will deny pity to her ("mai'st thou be denide"). (The couplet could also be a statement of fact: she may be denied pity.)

142.1. Hooker *Politie* (1593) 82.

Sonnet 143


143
LOe as a carefull huſwife runnes to catch,
One of her fethered creatures broake away,
Sets downe her babe and makes all ſwift diſpatch.
In purſuit of the thing ſhe would haue ſtay:
Whilſt her neglected child holds her in chace,
Cries to catch her whoſe buſie care is bent,
To follow that which flies before her face:
Not prizing her poore infants diſcontent;
So runſt thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilſt I thy babe chace thee a farre behind,
But if thou catch thy hope turne back to me:
And play the mothers part kiſſe me,be kind.
So will I pray that thou maiſt haue thy *Will*,
If thou turne back and my loude crying ſtill.

143
LOe as a carefull huſwife runnes to catch,
One of her fethered creatures broake away,
Sets downe her babe and makes all ſwift diſpatch
In purſuit of the thing ſhe would haue ſtay:
Whilſt her neglected child holds her in chace,
Cries to catch her whoſe buſie care is bent,
To follow that which flies before her face:
Not prizing her poore infants diſcontent;
So runſt thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilſt I thy babe chace thee a farre behind,
But if thou catch thy hope turne back to me:
And play the mothers part kiſſe me, be kind.
  So will I pray that thou maiſt haue thy *Will*,
  If thou turne back and my loude crying ſtill.

Sonnet 143 combines elements of a barnyard chase with a courtly setting to produce a poem of mock-epic proportions. It consists of a long extended metaphor (“Loe as . . “So”), opening with the image of “carefull huswife;” “carefull” suggests full of care - a feature later disproved - as well as economically prudent. A “huswife” or ‘hussif’ is a woman who manages her household with care and thrift, but there is present a strong suggestion, made explicit later, of a ‘light huswife’ or promiscuous woman, as in Iago’s description of Bianca as “A Huswife . . selling her desires,” who is “a Creature / That dotes on *Cassio*, (as ’tis the Strumpets plague.” [1] The woman “runnes to catch, / One of her fethered creatures.” A first reading is of a fowl or even a cock. (A cock as a penis was current slang in Shakespeare’s day: Nathan Field, a playwright (and actor in Shakespeare’s plays) and author of *Amends for Ladies,* which was probably performed around 1611-12 has the Widow exclaim, “Oh man what art thou? when thy cock is vp?” [2] A play on cock would anticipate the “*Will*,” the woman later hopes to catch.) A “creature” was also used at court of one whose position was created out of nothing by a patron and actuated by his will (compare Prospero’s description of courtly “creatures:” “who t’aduance, and who / To trash for ouer-topping; new created / The creatures that were mine”). Since plumes graced hats in the Tudor court, a “feathered creature” is a courtier or lesser retainer. (The image probably extends to a plumed popinjay, associated through its etymon with a parrot.) Finally a ‘creature’ as the quarry in a chase is used by Lear: “And the creature run from the cur.” [3]

Once the bird has “broake away,” the woman lays aside her child (“Sets downe her babe”) and straightway starts off (“all swift dispatch” is tautological) after the escaping bird that she wishes would remain (“would haue stay”). In the meantime her “neglected child,” now uncared for, “holds her in chace.” To ‘hold in chase’ was a hunting term meaning ‘to give chase.’ [4] The child “Cries to catch her,” clamors for the mother, but the word is appropriate to the chase, dogs being said to cry after their prey. [5] The woman, absorbed in her “busie care,” is inclined toward or intent upon (“bent”) pursuing “that which flies before her face.” To ‘flie before the face of’ was a biblical hebraism intending to ‘flee in advance of,’ although “flie,” also suggests a cornered bird flying up in the woman’s face. (The phrase, ‘to fly in the face of,’ intending not to heed a command or be defiant, was used originally of a hunting dog.) The woman ignores or doesn’t value (“Not prizing”) the discontent of her “poore” infant, strictly one without voice (*in* + *fans* = not + speaking).

The sestet shifts the focus to the courtly. The mistress is seen as chasing after her quarry, (“that which flies from thee”), while the poet identifies himself as “thy babe,” who, neglected, “chase thee a farre behind.” His wish is that, if she were to catch “her hope,” that which she desires, she will “play the mothers part,” act as a mother or, since she is involved in courtly games, play the role of a mother. She must “kisse” the poet. She must be “kind,” ‘generous’ as well as ‘natural’ as a mother must be.

The couplet extends the poet's prayer: "So will I pray that thou maist haue thy *Will*." The multiple meanings of "*Will*" link the poem to Sonnets 135 and 136, which, with their similar capitalization and italicization of the word, suggest that the compositor at least also saw a connection. "*Will*" firstly intends that which is hoped for or desired; secondly 'that male organ that you desire;' thirdly this poet whose name is "*Will*;" fourthly (possibly but unlikely) another person called "*Will*;" and finally 'that which is granted to you as a dependent "creature."' All the possibilities are contingent upon her returning to the poet and either calming him or making him silent ("my loude crying still"): kissing will stop the poet's mouth, so rendering him a voiceless "infant."

143.1. *Oth*. 4.1.94-5.

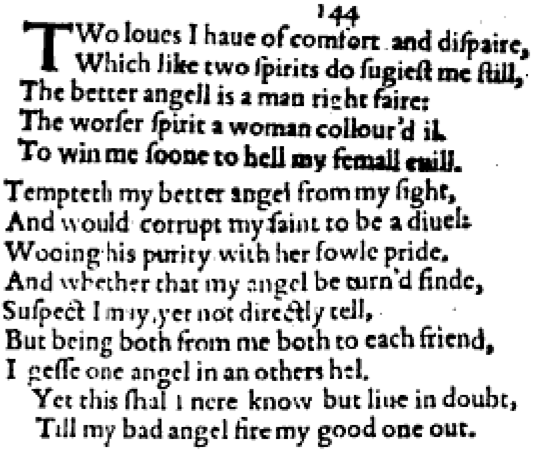
143.2. Field B4^{r}.

143.3. *Tmp*. 1.2.79-81; *Lr*. 4.6.156.

143.4. Compare *Cor*. 1.6.18-20, "Spies of the Uolces / Held me in chace."

143.5. Compare *Ham*. 4.5.109, "on the false Traile they cry . . false Danish Dogges."

Sonnet 144



144
TWo loues I haue of comfort and diſpaire,
Which like two ſpirits do ſugieſt me ſtill,
The better angell is a man right faire:
The worſer ſpirit a woman collour'd il.
To win me ſoone to hell my femall euill.
Tempteth my better angel from my ſight,
And would corrupt my ſaint to be a diuel:
Wooing his purity with her fowle pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd finde,
Suſpect I may, yet not directly tell,
But being both from me both to each friend,
I geſſe one angel in an others hel.
Yet this ſhal I nere know but liue in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

144	
TWo loues I haue of comfort and diſpaire,	
Which like two ſpirits do ſugieſt me ſtill,	
The better angell is a man right faire:	My (*PP*)
The worſer ſpirit a woman collour'd il.	My (*PP*)
To win me ſoone to hell my femall euill,	
Tempteth my better angel from my ſight,	ſide (*PP*)
And would corrupt my ſaint to be a diuel:	
Wooing his purity with her fowle pride.	faire (*PP*)
And whether that my angel be turn'd finde,	
Suſpect I may, yet not directly tell,	
But being both from me both to each friend,	For (*PP*)
I geſſe one angel in an others hel.	
Yet this ſhal I nere know but liue in doubt,	The truth I ſhall not know (*PP*)
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.	

(Another version of Sonnet 144 was printed by William Jaggard in *The Passionate Pilgrime. By W. Shakespeare* in 1599; the variants are minor, although the 1599 version has a more correct "side," rhyming with "pride," where the *quarto* has "sight," while the *quarto*'s, "Yet this shal I nere know," is stronger than 1599's, "The truth I shall not know." It is possible that Jaggard took his text for both Sonnet 138 and 144 from the one manuscript.) [1]

Although Sonnet 144 is one of Shakespeare's most violent, the conceit which he works, while not a frequent *topos,* was certainly an occasional one. In Michael Drayton's 1603 sequence, *Idea,* with which Shakespeare seems to have been familiar (see Sonnet 107), Sonnet 23 contains similar vocabulary and rhymes and treats of a succubus, a demon in female form or a "wicked spirit, sweet Angel deuill," who possesses the male poet while asleep:

> An euill spirit your beautie haunts me still,
> where-with (alas) I haue been long possest,
> which ceaseth not to tempt me vnto ill,
> Nor giues me once but one poore minutes rest.
> In me it speakes, whether I sleepe or wake,
> And when by meanes to driue it out I try
> with greater torments then it me doth take,
> And tortures me in most extreamitie
> Before my face, it layes all my dispaires,
> And hasts me on vnto a suddaine death;
> Now tempting me, to drowne my selfe in teares,
> And then in sighing to giue vp my breath;
> Thus am I still prouok'd to euerie euill,
> By this good wicked spirit, sweete Angel deuill. [2]

By contrast Shakespeare's sonnet gives voice to the poet's deep suspicions that his "better angel" has been corrupted by a "worser spirit." His not knowing, furthermore, compounds his jealousy and leads him to suspect the very worst.

It was commonly believed that each person was awarded a good angel and a bad angel: John Salkeld, James I's personal demonologist, explains that "there be giuen to euery man, one of the Angels, as helper and protector; as there is in like manner, a bad Angell designed also to euery one which allureth to wickednesse." [3] The good or guardian angel's primary function was to afford comfort as the angel did to Christ in his agony, "And there appeared an angell vnto hym from heauen, comfortyng hym" (Luke 24.33; *BB*; Henry Lawrence asserts in the *History of Angels*: "Angell Guardians . . comfort and strengthen us"). [4] The role of the bad angel was to induce despair, the lot of the infernally damned, as does Drayton's evil spirit, who "layes all my dispaires." Because both angels and devils operate in the realm of the imagination and phantasm, the technical term for their functioning was "suggest:" Perkins in his *Foundation* writes of "euill motions and lustes stirring in the heart" and of "Euill thoughtes in the mind, which come by the suggestion of the deuill." Lawrence states that angels "in a spirituall way communicate themselves to our spirits, suggesting good things," while devils apply themselves "to our fancies . . and stirring of the phantasmes,” so that they can “tempt, to pride, others to lust, others to covetousnes, &c, as being called in some places a lying spirit, in other a seducing spirit, in others a spirit of fornication, &c.” [5]

The sonnet’s opening “Two Loues” of “comfort” and “dispaire” suggest initially states interior to the poet, an impression that persists throughout. Only later are two persons revealed. The “Loues” are like two angels (“two spirits”), who continue to work on the poet’s imagination (“sugiest me still;” Shakespeare normally uses ‘sugggest’ negatively, for example *R2* 3.4.75-76, “What Eue? what Serpent, hath suggested thee, / To make a second fall of cursed man?”). The angel of comfort (“better”) is a “man right faire,” both ‘honest’ and ‘upright’ as well as ‘fair-complexioned’ and not black. The poet’s “worser spirit” is a woman “collour’d il,” of dark or devilish make-up: her outward appearance is symptomatic of her inner ugliness. As the poet’s “femall euill” her intention is quickly (“soone”) to win him to “hell,” to make him of the devil’s haunt, the state of despair to which she belongs. She does this by alluring the youth (“my better angel”) from the poet’s side, similar to Desdemona’s father who on seeing her dead would “do a desperate turne: Yea, curse his better Angell from his side, / And fall to Reprobance.” [6] She would corrupt the youth (“my saint”) to become a devil by “Wooing his purity with her fowle pride.” The sin of “pride” was a hallmark of the devil.

Devils were strongly active in the fleshly realm; they could move humans to love carnally and take advantage of their corruption. James I warns: “[The Deuill] can make men or women to loue or hate other, which may be verie possible to the Diuell to effectuat, seing he being a subtile spirite, knows well inough how to perswade the corrupted affection of them whome God wil permit him so to deale with.” [7] Salkeld endorses the traditional view that sins of the flesh belong to the devil (“the first sinne of the Angels was lust after women”), because the angelic essence is one of purity and chastity and to fall from chastity is to become a devil: “Chastitie made Angels; hee that will keepe it, shall be an Angell; hee that hath lost it a Diuell.” [8] The poet’s suspicions now become dominant: he may “suspect” the worse, that his “angel” has “turn’d” into a fiend (“finde”) or devil, but is unable to “directly tell,” to know immediately or without hesitation. The fact that each is absent from him and a friend to each other preys on his mind until finally he speculates ("gesse") "one angel in an others hel." The suspicion is all-encompassing, because it is not established which is the saint and which the inhabitant of hell.

Within the sonnet the sexual tenor remains strong, culminating in the cant use of "hel" as a vagina, a usage also found in Sonnet 129, "To shun the heauen that leads men to this hell," and in Lear's outburst against his daughters, "beneath is all the Fiends. There's hell, there's darkenes, there is the sulphurous pit" (*Lr*. 4.6.124). As well, there is a possible reference in "hel" to the game of barley-break where two couples from each end of a field attempt to traverse its length without being caught by a couple in the middle; if they are caught, then they take their place in "hell." The game could become highly charged sexually.

The poet's uncertainty continues to haunt him and will allow him no comfort ("liue in doubt"), until such time as "my bad angel fire my good one out." Angels, whether guardian or fallen, are creatures of fire: Ps. 104.4 pictures them as a "flaming fire" ("He maketh his angels spirites: and his ministers a flaming fire;" later developed in Heb. 1.7), while Salkeld, who explains they use "a kinde of purging fire," awards them a "ministery of purging and inflaming." Lawrence requires that the devil's flame be quenched: "the fire is ours always though the flame be his, quench the fire . . then yee defeate and vexe him." [9] The poet must wait for his fears to be allayed, until the bad angel cast aside an already used, and tainted, good angel. The conclusion retains the suggestion of an animal being smoked out from its burrow as from a hell (compare *Lr*. 5.3.22-23, "He . . shall bring a Brand from Heauen, / And fire vs hence, like Foxes") and a hint of the good angel being infected by the burning pain of venereal disease (as in the conclusion of Lear's outburst above, "there is the sulphurous pit; burning, scalding, stench, consumption").

144.1. Shakespeare (?), *Passionate Pilgrime* A4^r.

144.2. Drayton, *Idea* 23 in *The Barrons Wars* P5^r.

144.3. Salkeld 262.

144.4. Henry Lawrence, *An History of Angels, Being a Theologicall Treatise of our Communion and Warre with them* (London: M[atthew] S[immons], 1649) 53.

144.5. Perkins, *Foundation* 7; Lawrence 42, 79, 80.

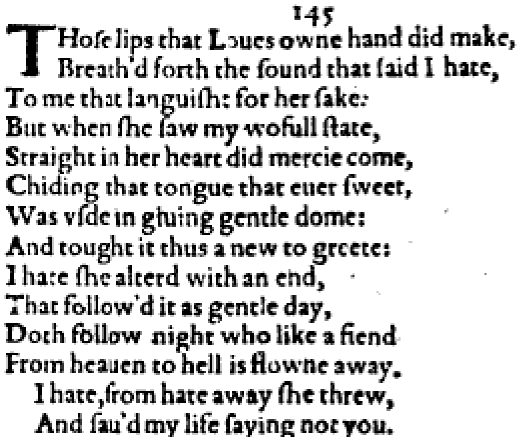
144.6. *Oth*. 5.2.210-12.

144.7. James I, *Daemonologie* 45.

144.8. Salkeld 324, 331.

144.9. Salkeld 281, 317; Lawrence 78.

Sonnet 145



145
THoſe lips that Loues owne hand did make,
Breath'd forth the ſound that ſaid I hate,
To me that languiſht for her ſake:
But when ſhe ſaw my wofull ſtate,
Straight in her heart did mercie come,
Chiding that tongue that euer ſweet,
Was vſde in giuing gentle dome:
And tought it thus a new to greete:
I hate ſhe alterd with an end,
That follow'd it as gentle day,
Doth follow night who like a fiend
From heauen to hell is flowne away.
  I hate, from hate away ſhe threw,
  And ſau'd my life ſaying not you.

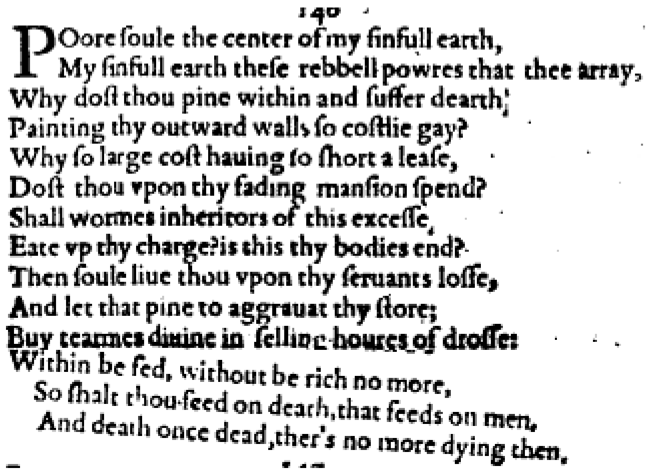
Sonnet 145 is not in Shakespeare's customary pentameter line, but in tetrameters. It has caused much debate beause of its placement in the sequence and because of its seeming lightness (so raising questions about its authorship). While it may seem awkwardly placed between sonnets of considerable weight, if it is to be placed anywhere, then it is best placed here where the heaven, hell and fiends of accompanying sonnets surround it. Its lack of weight and questioned authorship, it has been proposed by Andrew Gurr, could be explained by its being a piece of juvenilia. Gurr based his argument on the apparent pun on "hate away" and Hathaway (where the 'h' would not have been pronounced) at line 13. [1] (Booth sees a further pun on "And" and Ann at line 14 – apparently not heeding the warning in the acrostic to lines 7-10, WAIT). In the end the poem can only be accepted for what and where it is.

The sonnet opens with the mistress' lips, made by "Loues owne hand," possibly Cupid's, probably Venus', which have "breathed" forth the words, "I hate," as, conventionally, the poet pined for her ("languisht for her sake"). Once she discovered the poet's "wofull state," again a plaintive commonplace, immediately or directly ("straight") mercy entered her heart, scolding ("chiding") her ever-sweet tongue (a quality of petrarchist mistresses, compare Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 80.1, "Sweet swelling lip"). Hers was a tongue accustomed ("used") to giving tender and non-menacing judgements ("gentle dome") and she taught it a new mode of address ("tought it thus a new to greete"). She altered "I hate" by giving it a new end: the "not you" of line 14. The new ending fits the phrase as naturally as "gentle" day – non-threatening again – follows night which "like a fiend / From heauen to hell is flowne away." The fiend, Lucifer (identified with Venus as the morning star), when thrown from heaven as a fallen angel with wings, could be said to have "flowne away" from heaven to hell. [2] From the word "hate away" the mistress cast aside the end, the "away," and "alterd" it with another end, "not you," thus giving "I hate not you" and by so saying saved the poet's life. (In all this the demonology of the preceding sonnet cannot be ignored. The account of Lucifer being thrown from heaven to hell is found in Revelations 12.7 ff, where "there was a battayle in heauen, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon . . And the great dragon, that olde serpent, called the deuyll & Satanas, was cast out . . and his angels were cast out with hym." Pertinently a voice was heard in heaven exclaiming, "Nowe is made saluation . For the accuser . . is cast downe, which accused them . . day & nyght" [*BB*].)

145.1. Gurr 221-6.

145.2. Compare Isa. 14.12, "How art thou fallen from heauen, O Lucifer, sonne of the morning?" to which is attached the note, "for the morning starre that goeth before the sunne, is called Lucifer" (*BB*); or Griffin, *Fidessa* 46, where the "peepinge Lucifer" is identified as "Auroras starre."

Sonnet 146


146
POore ſoule the center of my ſinfull earth,
My ſinfull earth theſe rebbell powres that thee array,
Why doſt thou pine within and ſuffer dearth;
Painting thy outward walls ſo coſtlie gay?
Why ſo large coſt hauing ſo ſhort a leaſe,
Doſt thou vpon thy fading manſion ſpend?
Shall wormes inheritors of this exceſſe,
Eate vp thy charge?is this thy bodies end?
Then ſoule liue thou vpon thy ſeruants loſſe,
And let that pine to aggrauat thy ſtore;
Buy tearmes diuine in ſelling houres of droſſe:
Within be fed, without be rich no more,
So ſhalt thou feed on death,that feeds on men,
And death once dead,ther's no more dying then.

146
POore ſoule the center of my ſinfull earth,
My ſinfull earth theſe rebbell powres that thee array, ??
Why doſt thou pine within and ſuffer dearth
Painting thy outward walls ſo coſtlie gay?
Why ſo large coſt hauing ſo ſhort a leaſe,
Doſt thou vpon thy fading manſion ſpend?
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Buy tearmes diuine in ſelling houres of droſſe:
Within be fed, without be rich no more,
  So ſhalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,
  And death once dead, ther's no more dying then.

Although Sonnet 146 has often been presented as a poem in the long tradition of verse depicting "A Dialogue between the Soul and the Body," the sonnet in fact bears little resemblance to a dialogue and is more a meditation, in which the soul only is interrogated about its relationship to the body. It argues throughout that the soul must curtail the exigencies of the flesh. The opening "Poore soule" was a familiar address, compare Donne's epithetical, "Poore intricated soule." [1] The soul is posited as "the centre of my sinfull earth," where earth is that out of which the body is shaped (Gen. 2.7) and to which it must return. (The Committal in the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Order for the Burial of the Dead" contained the words, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.") An equally available verse was Wisd. 9.15, the basis of many poetic laments about the soul and heaviness, "a corruptible body is heauy vnto the soule, and the earthy mansion kepeth downe that vnderstandyng that museth vpon many thynges" (*BB*). The heaviness will feature later in "aggrauat thy store." That the soul is the centre of the earthly human inhabiting all his parts as the earth rests geocentrically was a stock conceit: Donne among other preachers declares, "Man is but earth; Tis true; but earth is the centre. That man that dwells vpon himselfe . . rests in his true centre." [2] Both Shakespeare and Donne have in mind the earthly man, who is the descendant of Adam: "The first man [is] of the earth, earthy: the seconde man [is] the Lorde from heauen. As is the earthy, suche [are] they that are earthy: And as is the heauenly, such [are] they also that are heauenly" (1 Cor. 15.45-46; *BB*).

The repetition of "My sinfull earth" at the start of line 2 is evidently a manuscript or compositor's slip, for which various speculative and unsatisfactory emendations have been proposed. It is best left as it is, the repetition being noted, even if it results in a hexameter line. The "rebell powres that thee array" are fleshly urges that refuse to submit ("rebell") to the soul's authority and are consequent upon original sin. Although "array" suggests ranks in which an army is arrayed, it primarily intends the material with which the soul is clad (compare 2 Cor. 5.2, "sygh we, desiryng to be clothed with our house whiche is from heauen," with its note, "when we depart hence, we shall not remaine naked, hauing once cast off the couering of this body, but we shall take our bodies againe, which shall put on as it were an other garment besides" [*GV*]).

The soul is asked, "Why dost thou pine within," why does it languish or waste away? Why does it "suffer dearth" or 'scarcity,' reminiscent of the "dearth which we do nowe most iustly suffer for our iniquitie" of the *Book of Common Prayer*'s "Litany," while at the same time "Painting thy outward walls so costlie gay?" Its "outward walls" are the body, which it colours (so giving life), although "Painting" and "gay" also hint at a cosmetic external, and, given the flesh's transience, an action not well spent ("costlie"). Since the body, the soul's earthy "mansion" (see Wisd. 9.15 above), has been awarded so brief a lease ("so short a lease") and its condition and colour are always "fading," why should the soul spend any cost upon it? [3] Attending to the body's needs, an "excesse" the meditator remonstrates, is to spend unwisely, because it will benefit only "wormes" as they eat up “thy charge,” the body, whose care is entrusted to the soul. The question, “is this thy bodies end?” that it be eaten by worms, requires a positive response, since according to Job, “My fleshe is clothed with wormes and dust of the earth” (7.5; *BB*), and the body’s inheritance is the worm, “And though after my skinne the [wormes] destroy this body” (19.26; *BB*).

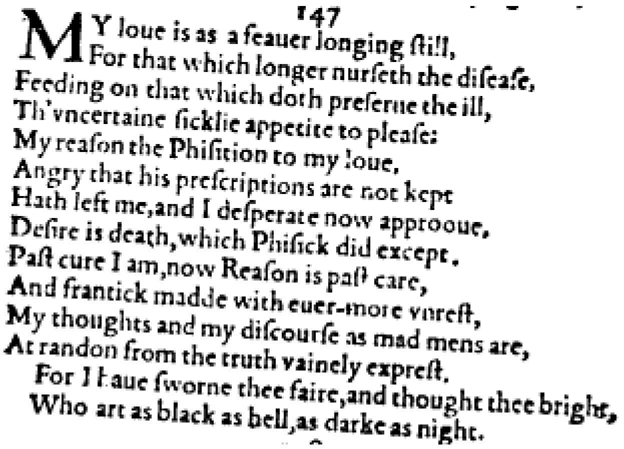
The soul should feed upon the body’s gradual dissolution (“thy seruants losse;” that the master of the mansion should live on the losings of his servant would not be thought natural). The body should decline, so that the soul can become substantial or weighty (“pine to aggrauat thy store;” “aggrauat” retains its Latinate sense ‘add weight to’ and recalls the “corruptible body [that] is heauy vnto the soule” of Wisd. 9.15 above). In contrast to its earlier “so short a lease” the soul must “Buy tearmes diuine,” where the term of the lease is eternal, “an house . . eternall in the heauens” (2 Cor. 5.1; *GV*). The cost of the eternal lease will come through “selling houres of drosse;” “drosse” is what remains after the purifying fire, similar to the “firie triall” of 1 Pet. 4.12, whose purpose the Geneva Version explains is “to purge vs of our drosse and make vs perfite.” The soul must be fed “Within” and not find riches “without.” So it will “feed on death,” which customarily “feeds on men.” The *locus biblicus* of death’s defeat is 1 Cor. 15, “Death is swalowed vp into victorie. O death where is thy stynge? O hell where is thy victorie? The stynge of death [is] sinne” (4-6; *BB*; the Geneva Version has “O graue where is thy victorie?”). Death is thus outsmarted by the soul (“And death once dead”) and “ther’s no more dying then,” either ‘therefore’ or ‘at the end of time,’ when death will finally be defeated (see Rev. 21.4, “and there shalbe no more death”). The claim was often made, for example, Donne’s Holy Sonnet 6.14, “Death thou shalt die.”

146.1. Donne, *LXXX Sermons* Sermon 48, 468.

146.2. Donne, *LXXX Sermons* Sermon 5, 44.

146.3. The well-known verse found in the King James Version, “In my Fathers house are many mansions” (John 14.2), was not available to Shakespeare: both the Bishops’ Bible and Geneva Version have “dwelling places;” as well both bibles render 2 Cor. 5.2 as earthly “house.” Only the Great Bible has “mancion” in these instances.

Sonnet 147



147

MY loue is as a feauer longing ſtill,
For that which longer nurſeth the diſeaſe,
Feeding on that which doth preſerue the ill,
Th'vncertaine ſicklie appetite to pleaſe:
My reaſon the Phiſition to my loue,
Angry that his preſcriptions are not kept
Hath left me,and I deſperate now approoue,
Deſire is death,which Phiſick did except.
Paſt cure I am,now Reaſon is paſt care,
And frantick madde with euer-more vnreſt,
My thoughts and my diſcourſe as mad mens are,
At randon from the truth vainely expreſt.
For I haue ſworne thee faire,and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell,as darke as night.

147
MY loue is as a feauer longing ſtill,
For that which longer nurſeth the diſeaſe,
Feeding on that which doth preſerue the ill,
Th'vncertaine ſicklie appetite to pleaſe:
My reaſon the Phiſition to my loue,
Angry that his preſcriptions are not kept
Hath left me, and I deſperate now approoue,
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At randon from the truth vainely expreſt.
  For I haue ſworne thee faire, and thought thee bright,
  Who art as black as hell, as darke as night.

Sonnet 147 continues the vein of thought found in Sonnet 146 and, if one excludes the aberrant Sonnet 145, in Sonnet 144. The poet's *delirium mentis*, which prevents expression of truth, also recalls the madness caused by lust and the infected reason of Sonnet 129.

The initial metaphor establishes that the poet's passion ("My loue") is like a "feauer," but the metaphor's lines are blurred by "longing," which can belong either to "loue" or "feauer." Love, like a burning fever, incessantly ("still") seeks that "which longer nurseth the disease," either the poet's own passion which nourishes the fever ("nurseth" is from 'nursh,' a contraction of 'nourish') or the mistress who harbours disease in herself or nurtures it in the poet. His feverish love takes its nourishment from "that," again either his passion or the dark lady or the disease nurtured by her. Each of these can be seen "to preserue the ill," to keep the illness in existence (an ironic use since "preserue" was normally used of good health), so as to satisfy "Th'vncertaine sicklie appetite." An "vncertaine" appetite is an inconstant and irregular one, just as an "vncertaine" fever is a fitful or intermittent one; "sicklie," associated with music as the food of love in *Twelfth Night*, is one that is weak or leads to sickness, but "sicklie" was also used, as was the Latin *valetudo*, of an unsound mind, so anticipating the sonnet's madness (see Thomas Cooper, "Valetudo mentis. . . Sicknesse of minde"). [1]

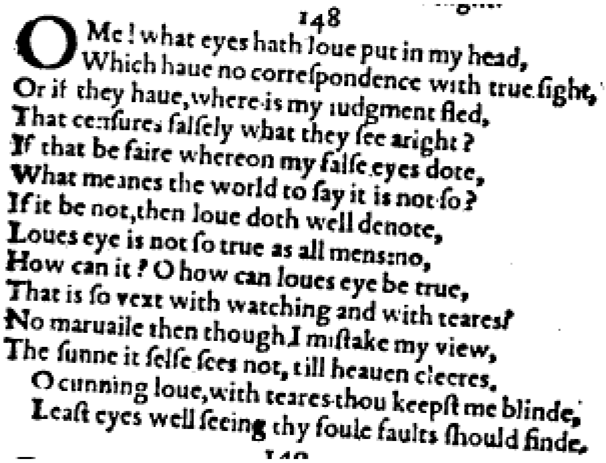
The poet's reason is to his love a "Physition," one who prescribes a remedy. A "prescription" was a course of action laid down by a doctor, the receipt he might write out, or, by transference, the medicine itself. The poet has ignored the instructions of reason or has refused to accept the remedy it could provide. Out of anger reason has departed the poet leaving him "desperate," despairing and careless of outcome, and he learns from experience ("approoue") the deadly nature of "desire," to which the science of the Physician ("Physick"), the reason, has taken exception ("did except"). Reversing the proverb, "Past cure is past care," [2] he claims that, since reason no longer cares or cares for him ("Reason is past care"), he is beyond cure ("past cure"), displaying all the signs of madness ("franticke madde") with continuous or ever greater tossing and turning ("euer-more vnrest"). His reason ("thoughts") and language ("discourse") are as "mad mens;" his talk is "At randon from the truth," with an uncontrolled rush of words (compare *1H6* 5.3.84, "He talkes at randon: sure the man is mad") and is unable to speak the truth ("vainely exprest"). The couplet introduces "thee" for the first time, turning from "My loue" to the beloved: "For I haue sworne thee faire" (repeated in Sonnet 152's couplet). He may have thought the mistress beautiful and as the shining light of day, yet, both physically and morally, she is as "black as hell, as darke as night." 'As black as hell' was proverbial. [3] The couplet's vehemence may be tempered by the thought that to swear when devoid of reason is to swear without full consent, so with reduced or no culpability.

147.1. *TN* 1.1.4, "The appetite may sicken, and so dye;" Cooper, *Thesaurus* valetudo.

147.2. Tilley C921; compare *LLL* 5.2.28, "Great reason: for past care, is still past cure."

147.3. Tilley H397.

Sonnet 148


148
O Me ! what eyes hath loue put in my head,
Which haue no correſpondence with true ſight,
Or if they haue,where is my iudgment fled,
That cenſures falſely what they ſee aright?
If that be faire whereon my falſe eyes dote,
What meanes the world to ſay it is not ſo?
If it be not,then loue doth well denote,
Loues eye is not ſo true as all mens:no,
How can it? O how can loues eye be true,
That is ſo vext with watching and with teares?
No maruaile then though I miſtake my view,
The ſunne it ſelfe ſees not, till heauen cleeres.
O cunning loue,with teares thou keepſt me blinde,
Leaſt eyes well ſeeing thy foule faults ſhould finde.

148
O Me! what eyes hath loue put in my head,
Which haue no correſpondence with true ſight,
Or if they haue, where is my iudgement fled,
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The ſunne it ſelfe ſees not, till heauen cleeres.
  O cunning loue, with teares thou keepſt me blinde,
  Leaſt eyes well ſeeing thou foule faults ſhould finde.

Sonnet 148’s opening exclamation, “O Me!” was a cry often associated with the wounded Cupid and a translation of “heu me” (compare Astrophil’s exclamation, “(O mee) that eye / Doth make my hart giue to my tongue a lye”). [1] The repeated exclamation, “O,” and the play on the homophones, ‘eye,’ ‘I’ and ‘aye,’ provide a fescennine subtext of male (erect) and female genitalia to the sonnet, outdone only by Sonnets 135 and 136. The eyes that “loue” (Cupid rather than the poet’s emotion of love) has put into the poet’s head have “no correspondence with true sight.” His “true sight” is that which enables him to discern truth or his reason with which his outer eyes should correspond: George Hakewill in *The Vanitie of the eie* writes of “the braine . . with which the eie holdes a maruelous correspondence.” [2] Either his eyes have given a distorted impression to the brain, or, if they have given a correct one, then his reason, which wrongly construes ("censures falsely," without its modern sense of cricticize) what the eyes have seen, must have deserted him.

If that which the poet's "false eyes" gaze on besottedly ("dote") is apprehended as "faire," why does the rest of the world deny it is so? Or, if what they gaze on is not faire, then Cupid well exemplifies ("doth well denote") that "Loues eye is not so true as all mens: no." The *quarto*'s punctuation is problematic. Either the colon remains where it is with an enjambment running over from octet to sestet, "no / How can it?" Or the colon can be removed to the end of the line: "Loues eye is not so true as all mens no: / How can it?" To retain the correspondence with "the world . . say . . not," "all mens no" is the more likely reading, which also avoids the unusual enjambment between lines 8 to line 9. The poet thus argues that Cupid's eyes are not as accurate as the negative judgement of all society: the object of the poet's eye is not fair. As in all the last sonnets there is a play on "eye" and "aye:" Love's 'yes' is less true that the 'no' of common judgement.

The repeated question, "How can it?" and "O how can . . " adds to the poet's plaintiveness. How can "loues eye be true," when it is blurred by tiredness or distorted by wet tears ("so vext with watching and with teares")? The two functions of the eyes are defined by Hakewill as "watching and tears." [3] It shouldn't be a cause for wonder ("No maruaile then") that the poet should mistake what he sees ("mistake my view;" to 'mistake one's mark' was an archery term meaning 'to shoot awry,' a habit of Cupid). Even the sun, the eye of heaven, cannot look on the earth, until the wet clouds blocking its vision clear away ("till heauen cleers").

Cupid is traditionally "cunning" and crafty ("O cunning loue"), but the pun on 'cunny' or 'coney' (from *cunneus* = female pudenda or the French *con,* which Cotgrave reticently translates as "*a womans &c*.") was never far from poets' minds. [4] The couplet's "thou" is either Cupid, who is traditionally blind, but who here blinds with tears the poet's eyes, which otherwise (being "well seeing") would discover love's "foule faults," or it is the mistress, of whom there is no other mention in the poem, who, as “cunning loue,” causes the poet’s tears to prevent her “foule faults” from being uncovered.

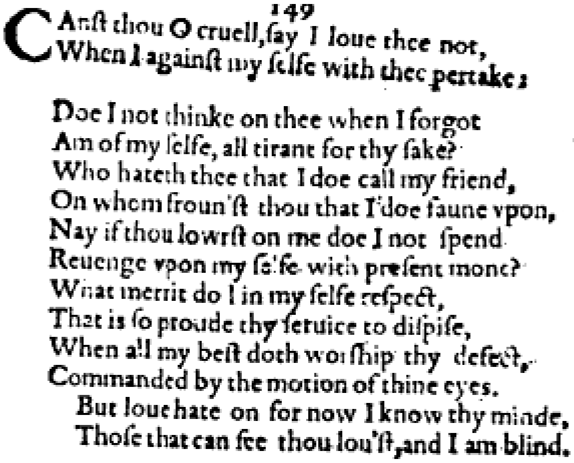
148.1. Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 47.13-14; see Catullus, *Carmina* 64.96-97, “heu misere . . sancte puer.”

148.2. Hakewill 93. Hakewill cites the proverb that “lusting for the most parte follows looking” and explains how the “heathens . . leaue the eie to Cupid their God of lust, as being the fittest for his vse, the proverb holding alike in inordinate lust, as in ordinarie loue, out of sight, out of minde” (6).

148.3. Hakewill 9.

148.4. Cotgrave, *Dictionarie* Con.

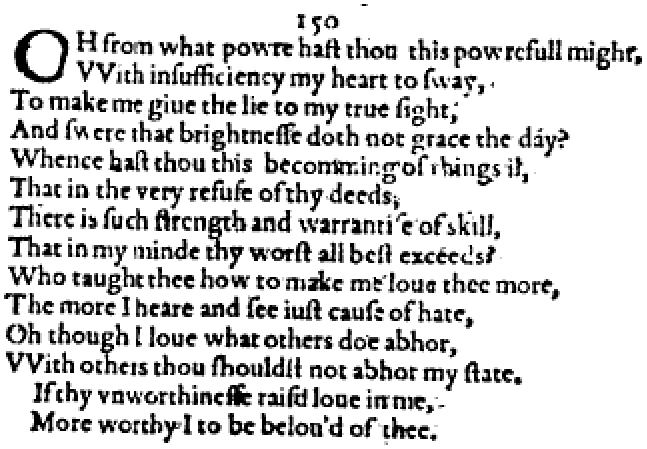
Sonnet 149



149
CAnſt thou O cruell, ſay I loue thee not,
When I againſt my ſelfe with thee pertake:
Doe I not thinke on thee when I forgot
Am of my ſelfe, all tirant for thy ſake?
Who hateth thee that I doe call my friend,
On whom froun’ſt thou that I doe faune vpon,
Nay if thou lowrſt on me doe I not ſpend
Reuenge vpon my ſelfe with preſent mone?
What merrit do I in my ſelfe reſpect,
That is ſo proude thy ſeruice to diſpiſe,
When all my beſt doth worſhip thy defect,
Commanded by the motion of thine eyes.
  But loue hate on for now I know thy minde,
  Thoſe that can ſee thou lou’ſt, and I am blind.

Sonnet 149, one of the less weighty of the sequence, is full of conventional Petrarchan vocabulary beginning with Petrarch’s “crudele” (“O cruell”). The opening question is rhetorical: can the mistress say the poet doesn’t love her, when he is prepared to take her side (“pertake”) against himself. A series of evidential questions follow. Doesn’t he keep her in mind even when he, forgotten, is utterly hard (“all tirant”) on himself for her sake? Who is there that she hates that he calls a friend? On whom does she look with disfavour (“froun’st”), before whom the poet demeans himself (“faune vpon”)? If she looks unkindly on him (“lowrst”), doesn’t he take it out on himself (“spend / Reuenge vpon my selfe”) with instant regret (“with present mone”)? What value (“meritt”) does he find in himself, which is so proud that it would make serving her beneath him (“thy seruice to despise”), particularly since everything good in him is dedicated to her foulness (“doth worship thy defect”), all things being under the sway of her eyes (“Commanded by the motion of thine eyes”)? Yet, despite all the poet’s abnegation of self, the mistress (“loue”) is instructed to continue in her “hate,” because he knows her mind: she loves only those who can see and not therefore the poet who is “blind,” made so by the tears of Sonnet 148.13, “with teares thou keepst me blinde.”

Sonnet 150



150

OH from what powre haſt thou this powrefull might,
VVith inſufficiency my heart to ſway,
To make me giue the lie to my true ſight,
And ſwere that brightneſſe doth not grace the day?
Whence haſt thou this becomming of things il,
That in the very refuſe of thy deeds,
There is ſuch ſtrength and warrantiſe of ſkill,
That in my minde thy worſt all beſt exceeds?
Who taught thee how to make me loue thee more,
The more I heare and ſee iuſt cauſe of hate,
Oh though I loue what others doe abhor,
VVith others thou ſhouldſt not abhor my ſtate.
If thy vnworthineſſe raiſd loue in me,
More worthy I to be belou'd of thee.

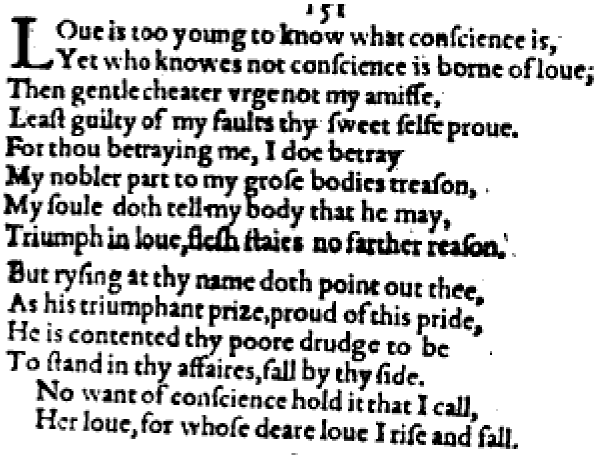
150
OH from what powre haſt thou this powrefull might,
VVith inſufficiency my heart to ſway,
To make me giue the lie to my true ſight,
And ſwere that brightneſſe doth not grace the day?
Whence haſt thou this becomming of things il,
That in the very refuſe of thy deeds,
There is ſuch ſtrength and warrantiſe of skill,
That in my minde thy worſt all beſt exceeds?
Who taught thee how to make me loue thee more,
The more I heare and ſee iuſt cauſe of hate,
Oh though I loue what others do abhor,
VVith others thou ſhouldſt not abhor my ſtate,
  If thy vnworthineſſe raiſd loue in me,
  More worthy I to be belou'd of thee.

The power of a petrarchist mistress was always uncurbed ("powrefull might") and it is for this quality the poet seeks a source ("from what powre"). Furthermore hers is a power, that rules over his heart with or through "insufficiency," causing him to come up short or reducing him to impotency. 'Insufficiency' from Roman times was used of impotency (Tertullian iuxtaposes *cupiditas* and *insufficientia* in his *Ad Uxorem*, while Montaigne cites Catullus speaking of a husband whose "sword/penis ("sicula") hangs more limply than a soft beet, never raising the middle of his tunic," when describing a gentleman neighbour who, in Florio's translation, "was suspected of insufficiencie . [and] . to justifie himselfe, three or foure dayes after his mariage, swore confidently, that the night before, he had performed twentie courses." [1] Insufficiency was considered grounds for annulment of marriage and a scourge of age; [2] its use here introduces the forthcoming sexual punnings at line 13, “raisd loue,” and the final “rise and fall” of Sonnet 151.14. Her unsurpassed power also forces the poet to contradict or prove the futility of (“giue the lie to”) what he truly sees. It makes him swear the opposite of what is: that the bright day is dark (“that brightnesse doth not grace the day”). From where, he asks, does she gain the ability to dignify or grace what is ill (“this becoming of things ill”), so that her most worthless actions (“the very refuse of her deeds”) display evidence of her skill and cunning, forcing the poet’s mind to conceive them as excelling the best actions (of others)? Who taught her to make him love her more, the more he finds “iust cause” to hate? Although he loves what others find repugnant (“abhor”), that is the mistress, she should not, as others do, find his position repugnant (“abhor”). Given the probable wordplay on ‘whore’ in “abhor” (compare Desdemona’s exclamation in *Oth*. 4.2.160-1, “I cannot say Whore, / It do’s abhorre me now I speake the word”), a further reading is possible: though he loves what others ‘name a whore,’ she should not, as others do, find his state whorish. If, finally, her lack of virtue (“vnworthiness”) caused love to swell up (“raisd loue”) in the poet (both physically and emotionally), then he is made the more worthy by being loved by unworthy her.

150.1. Tertullian, *Ad Uxorem* 1.4.6; Catullus, *Carmina* 67.21-22, “Languidior tenera cui pendens sicula beta / Numquam se mediam sustulit ad tunicam;” Michael Montaigne, *The Essayes or Morall, Politike and Millitarie Discourses of Lo*: *Michael Montaigne . . First written by him in French. And now done into English By Iohn Florio* (London: Valentine Sims, 1603) 520.

150.2. Compare Thomas Dekker writing of marriage, “you doe wrong to Time, inforcing May to embrace December: you dishonour Age, in bringing it into scorne for insufficiency, into a loathing for dotage” (*The Seuen deadly Sinnes of London* (London, E[dward] A[llde], 1606) 39).

Sonnet 151


151
LOue is too young to know what conſcience is,
Yet who knowes not conſcience is borne of loue;
Then gentle cheater vrge not my amiſſe,
Leaſt guilty of my faults thy ſweet ſelfe proue.
For thou betraying me, I doe betray
My nobler part to my groſe bodies treaſon,
My ſoule doth tell my body that he may,
Triumph in loue, fleſh ſtaies no farther reaſon,
But ryſing at thy name doth point out thee,
As his triumphant prize, proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poore drudge to be
To ſtand in thy affaires, fall by thy ſide.
No want of conſcience hold it that I call,
Her loue, for whoſe deare loue I riſe and fall.

151
LOue is too young to know what conſcience is,
Yet who knowes not conſcience is borne of loue;
Then gentle cheater vrge not my amiſſe,
Leaſt guilty of my faults thy ſweet ſelfe proue.
For thou betraying me, I doe betray
My nobler part to my groſe bodies treaſon,
My ſoule doth tell my body that he may,
Triumph in loue, fleſh ſtaies no farther reaſon,
But ryſing at thy name doth point out thee,
As his triumphant prize, proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poore drudge to be
To ſtand in thy affaires, fall by thy ſide.
  No want of conſcience hold it that I call,
  Her loue, for whoſe dear loue I riſe and fall.

Cupid (“Loue) is conventionally a babe (“Loue is a Babe” in Sonnet 115.13 and a “little loue-God” in Sonnet 154) and so is too young to have right reason – the age of reason juridically being seven years – or to have a conscience that is fully informed (“to know what conscience is”), this despite Falstaff’s claim, “now is Cupid a child of conscience.” [1] Elizabethan divines saw conscience as a God-given faculty which not only assisted in determining good and evil, but which assisted in discerning God’s election in one’s heart: Antonio in *The Tempest* calls conscience, “This Deity in my Bosome” (2.1.278). The question, “who knowes not conscience is borne of loue,” is ironic: Elizabethans knew well that love is born of conscience, the Pauline instruction being that, “loue [is] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience.” [2]

Recent commentators, following Booth, who draws on Archer Taylor's *The Proverbs,* cite here the classical adage, "Penis erectus non habet conscientiam," an 'erect penis has no conscience.' [3] Although no evidence exists that such an adage was known in classical times or indeed in Shakespeare's, "conscience" in the context of Cupid does carry fescennine associations which persist throughout the sonnet, beginning here with the customary Elizabethan pun on "conscience" as *con* + *science*. The French 'con,' which Cotgrave translates, "*A womans &c*." (compare the entry for "Noc:" "Noc. Con, *Turned backward (as our Tnuc) to be the lesse offensiue to chast eares*"), was used as the basis of extensive word-play as in "contented," below, with its pun on cunt + entered. [4] The sonnet's subtext plays on cunt-science, cunt-knowledge and to know carnally.

In light of the opening lines' principles the mistress is instructed not to press charges against the poet ("vrge not my amisse"). She is addressed as "gentle cheater" or 'escheator,' an official appointed to register and report to the exchequer an 'escheat,' the forfeiture of inheritance or land which reverted to the crown or Lord for specific reasons including lack of succession. The estate of an attainted person (see Sonnet 88.5), or one condemned to death particularly for betrayal and treason, automatically suffered escheatment: not only was any inheritance forfeited but, frequently, the offender's title or name became obliterate. Here the mistress is instructed not to register the poet's crime, firstly because love has yet to arrive at the age of reason and lacks the full consent required to make any "amisse" a capital one. Secondly she is urged not to record the poet's crime lest by doing so she "proue" her "sweet selfe" guilty of his faults, those of treason and betrayal: if she were to act as an escheator she would, in registering his crime and reporting him to the authorities, be betraying him and so would make herself subject to attainder through escheatment: specifically her name would be adjudged attainted or obliterate. The remainder of the sonnet comprises a torturous attempt to resurrect and preserve the name of "loue."

To prevent her betraying him ("For thou betraying me") the poet has betrayed his "nobler part," his soul, to his treasonable part, his corpulent body ("my grose bodies treason"). The soul, imbued with right reason, authorizes the body to "Triumph in loue." The flesh needs no further excuse ("staies no farther reason") and "rysing at thy name," as her name might be called in a court, identifies the beloved ("doth point out thee") as that which he has conquered ("his triumphant prize"). The sonnet's bawdy subtext allows "flesh . . rysing" to be read as a penis being aroused at the mistress' name, while "point out thee" is suggestive of a 'prick.' The flesh is "proud of this pride:" either it is 'proud' of its glory or tumescence ("pride") or, more likely, has 'proved' or experienced this pride, glory or tumescence (as in Sonnet 129.11 lust is "proud" or 'prov'd'). Being "proud," it is satisfied to remain a menial servant ("drudge"), who in love's service will be upstanding ("To stand in thy affaires") and who will be steadfast to the end ("fall by thy side"). (A bawdy reading would gloss "stand" as erect flesh and "fall" as flesh that is flaccid, anticipating the sexual hint of, "I rise and fall.") Since the poet's conscience is clearly informed by reason, his final counsel is not to think it is because of a lack of conscience (moral or physical) that he doesn't disallow the mistress the name of love, for his rising and falling (in service and in loving) are only for her ("for whose dear loue I rise and fall").

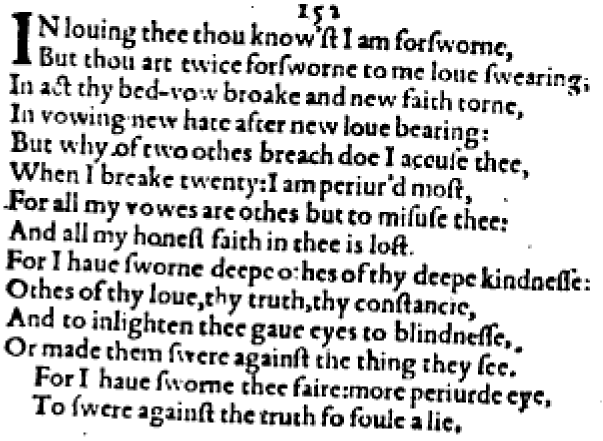
151.1. *Wiv*. 5.5.28-29.

151.2. 1 Tim. 1.5 (*BB*) with its gloss, "loue . . can not be without a good conscience."

151.3. Archer Taylor, *The Proverb and an Index to the Proverb* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1931; Hatboro, Penn.: Folklore Associates, 1962) 171.

151.4. Cotgrave, *Dictionarie* Con & Noc.

Sonnet 152


152
IN louing thee thou know’ſt I am forſworne,
But thou art twice forſworne to me loue ſwearing;
In act thy bed-vow broake and new faith torne,
In vowing new hate after new loue bearing:
But why of two othes breach doe I accuſe thee,
When I breake twenty:I am periur’d moſt,
For all my vowes are othes but to miſuſe thee:
And all my honeſt faith in thee is loſt.
For I haue ſworne deepe othes of thy deepe kindneſſe:
Othes of thy loue,thy truth,thy conſtancie,
And to inlighten thee gaue eyes to blindneſſe,
Or made them ſwere againſt the thing they ſee.
For I haue ſworne thee faire:more periurde eye,
To ſwere againſt the truth ſo foule a lie.

152
IN louing thee thou know’ſt I am forſworne,
But thou art twice forſworne to me loue ſwearing;
In act thy bed-vow broake and new faith torne,
In vowing new hate after new loue bearing:
But why of two othes breach doe I accuſe thee,
When I breake twenty: I am periur’d moſt,
For all my vowes are othes but to miſuſe thee:
And all my honeſt faith in thee is loſt.
For I haue ſworne deepe othes of thy deepe kindneſſe:
Othes of thy loue, thy truth, thy conſtancie,
And to inlighten thee gaue eyes to blindneſſe,
Or made them ſwere againſt the thing they ſee.
For I haue ſworne thee faire: more periurde eye,
To ſwere againſt the truth ſo foule a lie.

Elizabethans were well instructed in the evils of swearing falsely: the Church of England’s “Book of Homilies,” a collection read regularly throughout the year, contained a homily, attributed to Thomas Cranmer, “*A Sermon against swearing* and periurie.” Shakespeare shows familiarity with the homily in both Sonnet 138 and here. The sermon instructs that “no man should take his [God’s] name vainely in his mouth” and how dangerous it is “vainely to sweare, or to be forsworne.” [1] Justifiable swearing needed to fulfil three conditions, the first becoming the conceit of Sonnet 152: “First, he that sweareth, may sweare truely, that is, hee must . . haue the trueth onely before his eyes, and for loue thereof, saye and speake that which hee knoweth to bee trueth.” [2] In the end it is the poet's failure to have the truth "onely before his eyes," his "periurde eye," which annuls his words' truth.

The poet firstly acknowledges that he has perjured himself and that his mistress knows that in loving her he has been false and not kept his word ("In louing thee thou know'st I am forsworne"). She, however, is guilty of double perjury ("twice forsworne") in swearing love to the poet. [3] The first perjury is that she has broken her "bed-vow," an act of adultery not merely in thought but in "act" ("In act thy bed-vow broake"). Secondly by swearing love to the poet she has "torne" up her new pledge of faith ("new faith"), as one might tear up a signed oath, by bearing witness to her new love and declaring she hated her old love ("vowing new hate"). Just who the objects of her love and hate are is never specified, although it is clear that she and the poet are complicit in allowing words to mirror words and oathes to mirror oathes only to compound falsity rather than contradict it.

But, asks the poet, why should he level a charge of double perjury against the mistress ("two othes breach"), when he has broken "twenty" oaths. His claim that, "I am periur'd most," introduces the homophones I / eye / aye that recur through the sonnet, all of which, self, organ, and word of assent will be found perjured and false. 'Ay' ('aye') was initially always written 'I' and only subsequently as 'aye' or 'ey.' [4] The principal injunction against forsworn ayes and noes was Matthew 5, where Christ lays down that "whosoeuer doeth put awaye his wyfe, except it be for fornication, causeth her to commit adultry. And whosoeuer maryeth her that is diuorced, committeth adultry." The old law is abrogated, "ye haue hearde that it was sayde vnto them of olde tyme: Thou shalt not forsweare thy selfe, but shalt perfourme vnto the Lorde thine othes," and people should swear neither by heaven or earth but simply, "let your communication be yea, yea, nay nay. For whatsoeuer is more then these, commeth of euyll." [5] All the poet's "vowes" are merely instruments to mistreat or take advantage of the mistress ("misuse thee;" to "abuse" is the purpose of perjured oaths in the "*Sermon against swearing*"). Either his belief ("honest faith") in the mistress has disappeared or his honest principles have vanished because of her.

His faith is broken, because he has sworn, most avowedly yet falsely, "deepe othes" attesting to her love, truth and constancy. That he might make her fair or that he might remove the blindness of her eyes (or heart), he has sacrificed his "eyes to blindnesse;" either he has chosen to blind himself to her faults; or he has given up his 'ayes to darkness:' his false oaths are of the devil's realm; or, finally, he has broken the sermon's instruction to put the "trueth onely before his eyes," so perjuring himself: "Or made them swere against the thing they see."

The couplet begins as does the couplet of Sonnet 147, "For I haue sworne thee faire," although here the words introduce the poet's complicity in guilt. He has sworn her fair both in preceding sonnets and here when affirming her love, truth, and constancy. A "more periurde eye" is an 'eye' that has chosen not to see things as they are and is thus forsworn, an 'aye' that gives perjured assent to the mistress' own forswearing, and an 'I' who is more perjured than the mistress. Since the perjury consists in his swearing "against the truth so foule a lie," darkness and falsity now lie both with poet and with mistress.

The "*Sermon against swearing*" was adamant that perjury always came to light, even if at the final judgement ("although such periured mens falsehood be now kept secret, yet it shall be opened at the last day . then the trueth shall appeare, and accuse them").[6] Shakespeare's contemporaries knew that oaths were sworn by "laying their hands vpon the Gospel booke," in which is portrayed "the euerlasting paine prepared in hell for . . false and vaine swearers, for periured men."[7] Sonnet 152, the section of the sequence addressed to the mistress and the sequence itself (excluding the next two anacreontic sonnets) thus finish by alluding to the final judgement, a conclusion parallel to the doomsday warning ending Sonnet 126, the last of the sonnets to the young man.

152.1. Church of England, *Certaine Sermons* D6^{v}.

152.2. Church of England, *Certaine Sermons* D7^{r}.

152.3. A long section of the "*Sermon against swearing*" cites biblical exemplars, such as the "fonde and vnaduised oth" of Jephthah (Judg. 11.30), which constitute a similiar "double offence."

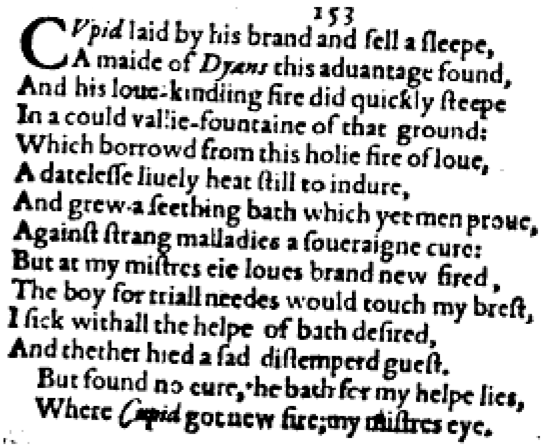
152.4. See Drayton, *Idea* 5.1, "Nothing but no and I, and I and no," with its narcissistic complaint, "I say I die, you Eccho me with I;" or Golding's rendering of Ovid, *Met*. 3.474, where to Narcissus' question, "is there any bodie nie?" immediately, "Echo answerde: I;" or Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 69, "I I ô I;" or even Shakespeare's Sonnet 136.6, "I fill it full with wils."

152.5. Matt. 5.33-37 (*BB*). The "*Sermon against swearing*," citing Heb. 6.16, also determines that a dispute where "one saith, Yea, and the other, nay" can only be resolved by an "oth."

152.6. Church of England, *Certaine Sermons* E1^{v}.

152.7. Church of England, *Certaine Sermons* E1^{r}.

Sonnet 153



153
CVpid laid by his brand and fell a ſleepe,
A maide of *Dyans* this aduantage found,
And his loue-kindling fire did quickly ſteepe
In a could vallie-fountaine of that ground:
Which borrowd from this holie fire of loue,
A dateleſſe liuely heat ſtill to indure,
And grew a ſeething bath which yet men proue,
Againſt ſtrang malladies a ſoueraigne cure:
But at my miſtres eie loues brand new fired,
The boy for triall needes would touch my breſt,
I ſick withall the helpe of bath deſired,
And thether hied a ſad diſtemperd gueſt.
  But found no cure, the bath for my helpe lies,
  Where *Cupid* got new fire; my miſtres eye. eyes

By including two sonnets of an anacreontic nature at the end of the sequence Shakespeare has followed a precedent set by Spenser’s *Amoretti and Epithalamion*, where the sequence of 89 sonnets is separated from the long epithalamium by fescennine verses imitating Anacreon. Shakespeare’s sonnet sequence is separated from the long poem, *A Louers complaint*, by similar fescennine verses. In Spenser’s case there was reason for incorporating the verses where he has. Because *Epithalamion* celebrated his own wedding, he was forced to annul the customary epithalamial distinction between its poet/presenter and its bridegroom. As bridegroom his voice must remain considerate and proper, since the bawdy asides and versified ribaldry of the presenter were not allowed him. So he removed the traditional fescennine elements from the epithalamium and placed them as irreverent verses separate from *Epithalamion* and dividing it from *Amoretti*. His decision was further justified, because all extant manuscript copies of the model for his epithalamium, Claudian’s *Epithalamium De Nuptiis Honorii Augusti*, are preceded by *Fescinnina*, an order that subsequently all renaissance editions of Claudian adopted. [1]

A like explanation is not valid for Shakespeare’s volume, even though its structure follows Spenser’s precedent of placing verses of anacreontic nature between sonnet sequence and lengthier poem. (The authorship of such verses in both their cases was challenged by earlier commentators because of their questionable nature and apparently caused Sidney on his deathbed to disown his Anacreontics.) [2] James Hutton, after much scholarly enquiry, concluded that Spenser's Anacreontic verses, like many neo-Latin, French and Italian versions, are a syncretic compilation of various sources and manifest features whose proximate origins are finally indeterminable, while in the case of Shakespeare he finds that “Shakespeare’s immediate source still eludes us.” [3]

Both Sonnet 153 and 154 treat of a well in which a brand could be quenched and which could rekindle an extinguished brand. Its *locus classicus* was “Jupiter’s Well,” found at his shrine at Dordona in Epirus. It is recorded in Pliny (‘in Dordona [is found] Jupiter’s Well: when it is cold, it extinguishes brands immersed in it; if quenched brands are put to it, it ignites them’), is acknowledged by Petrarch (‘There is another well at Epirus, of which it is written that, being cold, it ignites every extinguished small brand, and puts out those found alight’) and frequently by his successors. [4] It is found among Shakespeare’s contemporaries: Lyly, for example, characterizes “the passions of loue” as, “Not vnlike vnto *Iupiters* wel, which extinguisheth a fire brand, and kindleth a wet sticke.” [5] The *Anacreontea* would have been available to Shakespeare, as they were to Sidney and Spenser, in Henri Estienne’s 1554 Greek edition with Latin verse translations. [6] The theme was popular in the late 16th century and can be found among others in Lynche, *Diella* 18.

Sonnet 153 opens with Cupid either laying himself down beside his "brand" or laying it aside; his "brand" is the 'torch,' with which he is associated and which he used to inflame passion in the heart; both anacreontically and elsewhere it carried phallic suggestions, as in Martial's Epigram, which, speaking of marriage taeds, dismissively concludes "intrare in istum sola fax potest cunnum" ('only a brand can enter that cunny'). [7] Cupid then falls asleep, while a "maide of *Dyans*," one of Diana's chaste nymphs or virgins, took advantage of his being asleep ("aduantage found") and immediately ("quickly" but hinting at "liuely") soaked or doused ("did . . steepe") his "loue-kindling fire," either a fire which sets aflame with love or which generates love ("his," meaning 'its,' refers back to "brand"). The "vallie-fountaine," in which the "brand" is extinguished, anacreontically suggested the female genitalia. The fountain in turn took ("borrowd") from the brand, which is now "this holie fire of loue" ("holie," because it belonged to the god, Cupid) a life-generating heat ("datelesse liuely heat") to endure for evermore ("datelesse"). The fountain grew into a "seething bath," a boiling, bubbling spring impregnated with minerals and used for curing. Men still ("yet") come to test or experience ("proue") it as a potent ("soueraigne") cure against the disease of love (compare Spenser, *Anacreontics* 68, "salue of soueraigne might"). The "strang" of "strang malladies" is a variant of 'strange' rather than an errant 'strong' and suggests, as Booth points out, both the idea of the exotic as well as the biblical expression, a 'strange woman' or harlot (it also contains the standard visual play on evil women, "mal + ladies").

The "brand" of love, having newly taken fire from the "eie" of the mistress (the construction is a Latin ablative absolute), Cupid, the "boy," desired to use it to "touch" the poet's breast, either to set it alight or to "touch" it as with a touchstone to 'test' or 'try' it ("for triall"). The poet now completely sickened by love ("I sick withall") sought the cure of the "spring" and hastened ("hied") there, a "sad distempered guest;" "distempered" means 'with the humours out of order,' hence 'fevered' or 'diseased,' but "distempered" meaning 'steeped' recalls the earlier "did . . steepe" (compare *Ven*. 653, "Distempring gentle loue"). But the poet finds no remedy ("no cure") there: the only fountain ("bath"), in which he finds relief ("help"), is that from which Cupid took the rekindled fire: the "eye[s]" of the mistress.

153.1. See Kenneth J. Larsen, *Edmund Spenser’s Amoretti and Epithalamion. An Annotated Edition* (Tempe, Arizona: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1997) 225.

153.2. Katherine Duncan-Jones, “Sidney’s Anacreontics,” *RES* 36 (1985): 226.

153.3. James Hutton, “Cupid and the Bee,” in *Essays on Renaissance Poetry*, ed. Rita Guerlac (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980) 106-3; and, “Analogues of Shakespeare’s Sonnets 153-54. Contributions to the History of a Theme,” *MP* 38.4 (1941): 385-403.

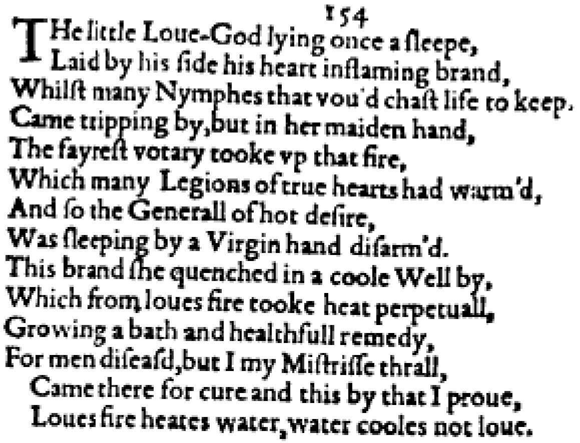
153.4. Pliny, *Hist*. 2.228, “in Dodone Iovis fons, cum sit gelidus et inmersas faces extinguat, si extinctae admoveantur, accendit.” Petrarch 135.61-5: “Un’altra fonte à Epiro, / di cui si scrive ch’essendo fredda ella, / ogni spenta facella accende, / et spegne qual trovasse accesa.”

153.5. John Lyly, *Euphues and his England. Containing His Voiage and Adventures, Mixed with sundrie prettie discourses of honest Loue* (London: Gabriel Cawood, 1592) R1^{v}; he also instructs, “Eschew idlenesse . . so shalt thou . . quench the brandes of *Cupide*” (*Euphues*. *The Anatomy of Wit* (London: Gabriel Cawood, 1581) 43^{r}).

153.7. Anacreon, *ΑΝΑΚΡΕΟΝΤΟΣ Τηΐου ῳδή. Anacreontis Teij odae. Ab Henrico Stephano luce & Latinitate nunc primum donatae* (Lutetiae [Paris]: Henricus Stephanus, 1554).

153.8. Martial, *Epigrammaton* 3.93.27.

Sonnet 154



154
THe little Loue-God lying once a ſleepe,
Laid by his ſide his heart inflaming brand,
Whilſt many Nymphes that vou'd chaſt life to keep.
Came tripping by,but in her maiden hand,
The fayreſt votary tooke vp that fire,
Which many Legions of true hearts had warm'd,
And ſo the Generall of hot deſire,
Was ſleeping by a Virgin hand diſarm'd.
This brand ſhe quenched in a coole Well by,
Which from loues fire tooke heat perpetuall,
Growing a bath and healthfull remedy,
For men diſeaſd,but I my Miſtriſſe thrall,
Came there for cure and this by that I proue,
Loues fire heates water,water cooles not loue.

154
THe little Loue-God lying once a ſleepe,
Laid by his ſide his heart inflaming brand,
Whilſt many Nymphes that vou'd chaſt life to keep,
Came tripping by, but in her maiden hand,
The fayreſt votary tooke vp that fire,
Which many Legions of true hearts had warm'd,
And ſo the Generall of hot deſire,
Was ſleeping by a Virgin hand diſarm'd.
This brand ſhe quenched in a coole Well by,
Which from loues fire tooke heat perpetuall,
Growing a bath and healthfull remedy,
For men diſeaſd, but I my Miſtriſſe thrall,
  Came there for cure and this by that I proue,
  Loues fire heates water, water cooles not loue.

Sonnet 154 is another working of the classical trope of a "Jupiter's Well," in which a lighted brand could be "quenched" and from which the extinguished brand could take flame again. The trope is also found in Sonnet 153; in both sonnets it is linked to the conceit of the *remedium amoris*. Sonnet 154 opens with the standard allusion to Cupid as the "little Loue-God," who laid beside himself "his heart inflaming brand" and fell asleep (compare Sonnet 153.1, "laid by his brand and fell a sleepe").[1] The "nymphes" or virgins who danced light-footedly by ("Came tripping") are those attending Diana who have taken vows of chastity ("vou'd chast life to keep"). The "fayrest" of the votaries (a "votary" is one who like a Vestal virgin takes a *votum* or vow) took the brand that had warmed "Legions of true hearts."[2] Thus Cupid, the "Generall of hot desire," either the commander or the generator of passion (from *genero* = generate), is rendered defenceless (without his weapon) or harmless by a virgin ("by a Virgin hand disarm'd"). The votary "quenched" the brand in a nearby "coole Well" (see Sonnet 53 for Pliny's "Iovis fons . . gelidus" ['Jupiter's cool well']), [3] which in turn takes from it "heat perpetuall" (Sonnet 153.6's "dateless . . heat"), making it into a spring and "healthfull remedy" for men who are "diseasd," either sick or not at ease (Sonnet 153.12's "distemperd"). The poet, his mistress' captive ("my Mistresse thrall"), approached the spring for a "cure," only to find ("proue") his attempt unsuccessful, because, while love might heat water, water cannot cure love. The sequence's final paradoxical and chiastic line, "Loues fire heates water, water cooles not loue," as Kerrigan points out, may echo the Song of Sol. 8.6-7, "Her [loues] coales are coales of fire, and a very vehement flambe: so that many waters are not able to quenche loue" (*BB*).

154.1. Compare Spenser, *Anacreontea* 7-10, "As Diane hunted on a day, / She chaunst to come where Cupid lay, / his quiuer by his head: / One of his shafts she stole away."

154.2. Holland talks of the "Vestall nunnes, or Votaries," see Suetonius. *The Historie of Tvvelve Cæsars Emperours of Rome: Written in Latine by C. Suetonius Tranquillus, and newly translated into English, by Philemon Holland* (London: Humphrey Lownes and G. Snowdon, 1606), Annotations (on Octavius Caesar Augustus) 11. In Spenser's *Amoretti* 16.6 Cupid is identified with the "legions of loues," that dart from the mistress' eyes.

154.3. Pliny, *Hist*. 2.228; compare Spenser, *Anacreontea* 69-70, where Cupid is "bath'd . . in a dainty well / the well of deare delight."

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