

The Pelican
SHAKESPEARE

THE SONNETS

Edited by
JOHN HOLLANDER



THE PELICAN SHAKESPEARE

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The Sonnets

William Shakespeare

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EDITED BY STEPHEN ORGEL

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY JOHN HOLLANDER



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Version_1

1

From fairest creatures we desire increase, 1
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the ripper should by time decease, 3
His tender heir might bear his memory; 4
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes, 5
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel, 6
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring, 10
Within thine own bud buriest thy content 11
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding. 12
 Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
 To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee. 14

3

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another,
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest, 3
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother. 4
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb 5
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb 7
Of his self-love, to stop posterity? 8
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee 9
Calls back the lovely April of her prime; 10
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see, 11
Despite of wrinkles, this thy golden time.
But if thou live remembered not to be, 13
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

15

When I consider everything that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment, 2
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment; 4
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheerèd and checked even by the selfsame sky, 6
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease, 7
And wear their brave state out of memory: 8
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay 9
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight, 10
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay 11
To change your day of youth to sullied night;
And, all in war with Time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft you new. 14

18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date. 4
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines, 7
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed: 8
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st, 10
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade 11
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st. 12
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

A woman's face, with Nature's own hand painted, 1
 Hast thou, the master mistress of my passion; 2
 A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
 With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
 An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling, 5
 Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth; 6
 A man in hue all hues in his controlling, 7
 Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
 And for a woman wert thou first created, 9
 Till Nature as she wrought thee fell a-doting, 10
 And by addition me of thee defeated 11
 By adding one thing to my purpose nothing. 12
 But since she pricked thee out for women's pleasure, 13
 Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their treasure.

An alternative modernization of the final couplet:

But since she pricked thee out for women's pleasure, 13a
 Mine be thy love, and thy loves use their treasure. 14a

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.

Sonnet 20 as it appears in the 1609 quarto.



62

Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye
And all my soul and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart. 4
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine, 5
No shape so true, no truth of such account, 6
And for myself mine own worth do define
As I all other in all worths surmount. 8
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopped with tanned antiquity, 10
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read; 11
Self so self-loving were iniquity:
'Tis thee (my self) that for myself I praise, 13
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

81

Or I shall live your epitaph to make, 1
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten,
From hence your memory death cannot take, 3
Although in me each part will be forgotten. 4
Your name from hence immortal life shall have, 5
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die. 6
The earth can yield me but a common grave
When you entombèd in men's eyes shall lie.
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'erread; 10
And tongues to be your being shall rehearse 11
When all the breathers of this world are dead.
 You still shall live (such virtue hath my pen) 13
 Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men. 14

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power 1
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle hour; 2
Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st 3
Thy lovers withering as thy sweet self grow'st;
If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack, 5
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back, 6
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill 7
May Time disgrace and wretched minutes kill. 8
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure! 9
She may detain, but not still keep, her treasure; 10
Her audit, though delayed, answered must be, 11
And her quietus is to render thee. 12
[] 13
[]

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head. 4
I have seen roses damasked, red and white, 5
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks. 8
I love to hear her speak; yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound: 10
I grant I never saw a goddess go; 11
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground. 12
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
 As any she belied with false compare. 14