

"sonnet 18" by william shakespeare essay sample

[Literature](#), [William Shakespeare](#)



Shakespeare asks, Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? in his famous love poem. In Sonnet 18 he praises his lover's beauty in such an astonishing way that makes you want to be the person he is in love with. On the other hand he is aware of the fact that beauty is not everlasting and he is bewildered by the idea. So he tries to find a way to make her beauty eternal and resolves in dedicating this poem to her. Therefore the main theme in the poem Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? is to capture eternal beauty. In my opinion, the poem Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? is a love poem. The poet is obviously in love with a very beautiful person. He shows his admiration of her prettiness throughout the poem.

He exaggerates her beauty by making an attempt to compare it to the splendors of nature such as a Summer day. He tries to make a comparison between his lover and summer and decides that her beauty is beyond compare. Summer is a lovely season and according to Shakespeare his beloved is superior. Summer is not sufficient enough to compete with her beauty, which is clear when he says, "Thou art more lovely and more temperate"? (Shakespeare line 2) He emphasizes the flaws of this season, "Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May"(line 3) . He also says that Summer can be too hot, "Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines"(line5) . These faults in a Summer day support the idea that her beauty is flawless unlike Summer. Despite the difference between them, Summer and Shakespeare's lover's beauty share one common feature.

Both Summer and Shakespeare's beloved one's beauty are not permanent. Soon seasons change and Autumn takes away all the beauty of Summer. Shakespeare complains of summer being too short, "And summer's lease
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hath all too short a date"(line 4). He says all the nice things come to an end, " And every fair from fair sometimes declines"(line 6). Because of the way nature works he fears that his lover will lose her beauty too. She will age and eventually die and her beauty will fade away. The idea of losing such a great beauty is unacceptable for the poet and he rebels against it. He says that her unique beauty shall not fade. He says summer can come and pass but her beauty will be everlasting " But thy eternal summer shall not fade"(line 9). Metaphor is used here; the eternal summer is his beloved one's beauty. Shakespeare also says that she will not lose her beauty and death will not be able to take away her splendor in lines 10 and 11, " Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;/Nor shall death brag wand ' rest in his shade".

The poet immortalizes his beloved one's beauty. He keeps her alive by using his lines " When in eternal lines to Time thou grow'st"(line 12). The poet believes that as long as his love poem is remembered the splendor of his lover will be remembered as well. He writes, " So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see/So long lives this and this gives life to thee(lines 13, 14). All in all, in my opinion the main theme in this poem is to capture infinite beauty. Shakespeare describes his lover as if she is divine. Her beauty is incomparable. Even Summer is not sufficient enough to be a competitor. She is immortalized with his lines. She still breaths through his words. As I write this essay talking about his lover's divine beauty five hundred years after he has written the poem Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? I fell that he has accomplished immortalizing his beloved one.