

# Sonnet 130

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In the sonnet 130, by William Shakespeare, plays an elaborate joke on the convention of love poetry. He describes his beloved in a surprising way, informing that she is not the possessor of good looks. In the end poet concludes that he loves his beloved more than he could a perfect maiden. Overall, appearance does not matter where true love is concerned. We normally expect poets to praise their woman they love by comparing them with nature's most beautiful things. However, in this poem the speaker is frank and honest. " I have seen roses damasked red and white, but no such roses see I in her cheeks". In line 6: The speaker takes the standard image of rosy cheeks a step further here, pretending to be surprised that there aren't actually red and white roses in this woman's cheeks. In this poem the poet is not making exaggerating comparisons. " Coral is far more red than her lips' red; ". The poet is not making exaggerating comparisons but honestly describing his beloved in a simple way. In line 2: Comparing lips to red coral gives us another over-the-top simile. Lips that red would have to be painted, and that's the kind of fake beauty that this poet is against. The ordinary beauty and humanity of his lover are what is important to Shakespeare in this sonnet, and he deliberately uses typical love poetry metaphors against themselves. " If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head". Hair is another major cliché about women's beauty. The poet is saying that if her hair is black then it's like wires that grows on her hair. Shakespeare uses image of hair as black wires. This is significant because the poet is trying to make a point that his mistress is not perfect. In this poem, the speaker insists that love does not need conceits in order to be real; and women do not need to look like flowers or the sun in order to be beautiful. " And in some

perfumes is there more delight Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks". The speaker is telling us that his mistress has a bad breath. In line 8 the word " reeks" brings up a really strong image of just how far from perfect this woman is. The speaker doesn't need perfection in order to love. " I love to hear her speak That music hath a far more pleasing sound; " (line 9). It takes the poet more than half of the poem to get there, but the speaker finally says that he loves something about his mistress. This is a big turn in the poem, a shift from a list of criticisms toward an actual confession of love. That's not to say that everything changes, since he still admits that the sound of her voice isn't as beautiful as music. To this point in poem we can conclude that this poem is written not to a perfect women. " I grant I never saw a goddess go; My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground" (line 12). This is a really nice image of the simple beauty that the speaker loves. Why would you expect, or even want, your lover to float around like a goddess? What good does it do to compare someone to an imaginary perfect creature when the real living, breathing person is right there? Have you ever felt this way? Think about someone you love, whether a girlfriend or a boyfriend or a really good friend. Do you love her because she never makes mistakes, because her hair is perfect, because she's always clever? Or do you love him just as much (or even more?) for being goofy, or clumsy, or for looking less than perfect? This whole poem is about beauty — the things we find attractive and the stereotypes we have about what women should look like. " My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun" (line 1). In this line the speaker starts out talking about his lover's eyes, and we expect him to give her a compliment, because that's what we've heard in a million different

poems and songs. Instead, he switches it up on us, telling us that her " eyes are nothing like the sun." At first, it may be a little hard to figure out what this means. The comparison of eyes to the sun is a bit odd. Shakespeare has shown us in this sonnet that chasing after some made-up ideal will only make you miserable. In fact, if you compare women to white snow or red coral, then you have belied, or misrepresented, them. He loves this particular woman even though she can't begin to measure up to the perfection of a goddess. " And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare As any she, belied with false compare" Here's where the speaker finally just comes out and says it. Other poets might make up fancy comparisons for their lovers, pretending that they are as perfect as a goddess, as white as snow, etc. Shakespeare refuses to do that; he simply loves this woman for what she is.