

Shakespeare's  
download this essay  
print save gcse essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

William Shakespeare's Sonnet 125 is written in the traditional Elizabethan form. It consists of 14 lines and can be divided into two parts: the first section comprises line one to 12; it includes only alternate rhymes (the rhyme scheme here is ababcdcdefefgg).

In this main part the theme is introduced and explained. The last two lines make up the rhyming couplet, its content sums up the sonnet's main topics. Sonnet 125 is addressed to the handsome youth. This is not directly evident from the text, because the text would also be suitable for the dark lady, but since we learnt that Sonnets 1 to 126 are addressed to the handsome youth, I suppose that this one is as well. In his work, Shakespeare directly addresses to the person of his interest. He calls him "you" instead of "thee", "thy" or "thou" which reveals his respect for the handsome youth.

In the first two lines Shakespeare expresses the importance of the handsome youth for himself, by comparing him to several elementary natural phenomena. He says that for his thoughts he is as food to life, or as sweet as season showers are to the ground. Food is essential for animals, as well as showers are for the plants or the ground. By equating him with this he claims that without the handsome youth Shakespeare isn't able to think, to do what distinguishes human beings from other animals.

In the subsequent 3 lines the inner conflict that Shakespeare has is shown: Even if Shakespeare is with his handsome youth, he cannot be contented, because he always fears he might lose his most valuable treasure. He compares himself to a miser, who is on the one hand happy with his possessions, but on the other hand he can't enjoy his situation because he's

much too afraid that he could lose everything. In lines 7 and 8 my interpretation of an inner conflict is supported when Shakespeare writes that he's torn between urge to be alone with his handsome youth and the wish to "show him off" in society. In lines 9 to 12 the reader gets to know the reason for his conflict: he is undecided between these totally contradictory reactions, because as he says he is "sometimes all full with feasting on his sight", which means that there are obviously days when he is together with the addressee, and "by and by clean starved for a look".

I conclude from this that his handsome youth sometimes leaves him alone and is unreachable for him. Shakespeare suffers from being at his mercy and not being able to influence the situation. As he says in line 11 and 12 his pleasure depends on the handsome youth and he isn't interested in anything other than his attention and love. In the rhyming couplet Shakespeare summarizes the emotional complex that amassed in him when writing the poem by saying that he pines and surfeits day by day, sometimes having all, sometimes nothing. This does not only refer to the presence of the handsome youth, but also to all the feelings that this relationship entails. Shakespeare's usage of stylistic devices emphasizes my interpretation and makes his emotional life easy to understand for the reader.

In lines 1, 2, 4 and 5 he uses similes to compare his handsome youth to natural phenomena. These create images in the reader's mind and are thus helpful for the understanding. Furthermore, several antithesis contribute to the idea of an inner conflict in Shakespeare, for example in line 11 "Possessing or pursuing" or in line 13 "pine and surfeit". Also the anaphor in lines 5 and 7 ("Now...")

<https://assignbuster.com/shakespeares-download-this-essay-print-save-gcse-essay/>

) are in contradiction to the word " then" at the beginning of line 8.

Intrinsically, Shakespeare is once again not sure about his own life and feelings. His emotional life is in a mess and he is not able to organize it. This situation is obviously not unusual for Shakespeare, because in this Sonnet 125 he calls the handsome youth the most important person in his life, while " two sonnets later" the Dark Lady is already the person of his interest and the addressee of his work..

. however, I believe that he succeeds in letting the reader be participate in his thoughts.