

# How do the poets portray the nature of love in relationships

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



' Sonnet 130' is a pre 1914 poem, by William Shakespeare, about love although it is not a traditional love poem. The poem is not a flattering poem but is more insulting. The opening line of Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 is a simile " My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun". Unlike other poets who may exaggerate on describing the one they love, Shakespeare tells it as it is. Shakespeare continues to describe his mistress in terms of the senses of sight, smell, sound and touch.

Shakespeare describes his mistress' lips as " Coral is far more red than her lips' red" This is giving the impression that lips of his mistress' are a very pale colour. He continues to say " her breasts are dun" In Shakespeare's time pale skin would have been more admiring, but his mistress' is describing to have dun-coloured breasts, dun being a brown colour. His mistress' is described as having wire like hair as he says " If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head" Shakespeare is saying that his mistress does not have soft, sleek hair.

Shakespeare also picks up on the facial appearance of his mistress saying that in her cheeks she has no colour " No such roses see I in her cheeks" He also describes his mistress' as in having bad breath " Breath that from my mistress reeks". In line nine he gives the first compliment " I love to hear her speak" however then admitting follows he would rather listen to music " That music hath a far more pleasing sound" In the last two lines of Sonnet 130 they end with a rhyming couplet.

This is also a change in the content, Shakespeare says that in spite of all the bad things about his mistress that he does love her " I think my love as rare"

and “ As any she belied with false compare” Shakespeare is saying how appearance is not what matters when it is true love, but infact inner beauty. ‘ My Last Duchess’ is also a pre 1914 poem, but is about a man who killed his wife or so that is what the reader is lead to believe. The poem is in first person and is written from the 5th duke Ferrara. “ That’s my last duchess painted on the wall” The tone is very light hearted as if he does not really care.

The phrase ‘ my last’ could have two meanings, it could mean either his previous(his latest) or his final duchess. The writer suggests his duchess was cheating on him “ her looks went everywhere”. He is also implying that she is easily influenced “ Too easily impressed”. From the first half of the poem it gives us the feel that this was a fearful relationship. The writer says how his wife is very easily flattered “ Or blush, at least” He also thinks she is ungrateful as his name is 900 years old and comes from a royal family.

My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name” “ I gave commands” suggesting he ordered his wife about. “ Smiles stopped together” this is when his wife dies. The reader is then lead to ask the question did he kill his wife to get her out of the way ? “ Through his fair daughter’s self” He already has his eye on someone else’s daughter. He suspected his wife of cheating and killed her. The poem is set in a time where men rule this is called patriarchal. The poem by William Shakespeare is very different to the poem by Robert Browning..

In the poem ‘ My Last Duchess’ the writer uses rhymes on every line and in Sonnet 130 there is a rhyming couplet on the last two lines. However, they

are both similar in a way that they are not traditional love poems. Both poems express the depth of love however in 'My Last Duchess' the nature of love is jealousy and shows how love can ruin a relationship but in 'Sonnet 130' love is shown to be much deeper than how the person looks and makes a relationship much stronger. 'To His Coy Mistress' is a pre 1914 poem about a man who flatters or attempts to flatter a woman in order to get the woman into bed.

The first half of the poem being the flattering part, tells the woman of how he would take her different places but there is not enough time "Had we but world enough, and time" He uses a lot of repetition in each of his stanzas using time, this is to get the point across of *carpe diem* 'seize the day' He flatters the woman by saying she would love him before, she will love him in old age and would love him till death although he repeats there is not enough time "times winged chariot hurrying near" He then goes from flattering her "pass our long loves day" The poem focuses also on life and death and how she should waste no time.

However in comparison to His coy mistress this poem is post 1914 called 'Kissing'. The poem is written by Fleur Adcock. The poem is about age and varies from the start to the end of the poem. At the beginning of the poem the writer talks about "the young". Throughout the poem the writer expresses that people can show and share their love no matter how old they are "The young are walking on the riverbank" but then it also continues to say "middle aged are kissing" this shows that even though the couple are getting older they are still entitled to love and attention.

The writer portrays that true love never dies even as the years pass “ Together that it hurts” This is showing they still love each other despite their age. ‘ Our love now’ is a post 1914 poem by Martyn Lowery. The poem is written from a males point of view but also we get to hear the woman’s side too. The poem is set out in a way we are able to hear the males side and then hear the woman’s reply.

The man appears to be asking for the woman back, as it is obvious something dramatic has gone on “ observe how the wound heals in time” this is suggesting he has hurt her in some way and is now saying they could go back to being perfect “ The skin slowly knits” the man appears to be very persuasive but the woman does not fall for it as she still says “ there is always a scar” The man then continues to say the relationship will ‘ grow back’ he compares this to when you cut your hair “ but the hair grows back” The woman then says “ Changes must occur the style will be different” Even though the man is trying his best to persuade the woman to come back to him she is saying how after something has happened you will be left with a scar or things will be different.

The writer is expressing how even though you can love someone if something dramatic is to take place then things cannot go back to how they were before there must be change. Another post 1914 poem is by John Cooper Clarke ‘ I wanna be yours”. The poem is different to all the other poems I have looked at due to its humour. The poem is not too serious and is more light hearted compared to all the other poems. We realise the poem is going to be humorous from the first line “ Let me be your vacuum cleaner”.

Throughout the poem the writer uses many everyday images to express the love this man feels towards another person for example "let me be your ford Cortina I will never rust" this is not the familiar way you would show someone your love which makes it light hearted. Throughout the poem we do not know anything about the person writing the poem, but on the last two lines, that are separated by the repetition of deep, we are lead to believe that the writer is admiring somebody else "I don't wanna be hers" This could suggest that he is in a relationship but has fallen for someone else. The language of the poem is informal due to words like "wanna". The poem also flows because of its rhyming pattern.

The writer does not include any capital letters or full stops which adds to the flow. The writer says about love and relationships that even though you could be involved with someone, it is possible to feel strong emotion about someone else. We get feeling that the writer is trapped in a relationship and dreams of being with this other women. With the language being used we get the impression that Clarke is writing about younger love because of the simple words and images used in the poem. In the post 1914 poems the poets portray that the nature of love as light hearted and the relationships are much serious whereas in the pre 1914 poems the poets are describing much deeper love and more serious relationships.