

Summary of shakespeare's sonet assignment

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This theme is developed until sonnet 18, where the narrator abandons it in favor of an alternative plan to eternal the fair lord's beauty in his verse. But it is not long before the narrator's mellifluous depictions of the fair lord's beauty are replaced with the haunting lament of unrequited love. The narrator grows increasingly enamored with the fair lord, eventually becoming emotionally dependent upon him and plagued by the inability to win his heart. The narrator is further distressed by the incessant passing of time, and he fears the detriment time inevitably will bring to the fair lord's youthful beauty.

The narrator's emotions fluctuate between love and anger, envy and greed. We find poignant examples of the narrator's jealousy in the rival poet sonnets (79-86), where the fair lord's attention has been caught by another. The narrator's fragile psyche collapses in bouts of self-deprecation as he agonizes over the thought of forever losing the object of his affection. In sonnet 87, the narrator bids the fair lord farewell - but his heartache long persists. The remainder of the fair lord sonnets are characterized by the vicissitudes of the narrator's emotional well-being.

After his parting with the fair lord in sonnet 87, the narrator grows introspective, waxing philosophical as he begins to probe the very fabric of love. Throughout these developments we are made privy to the narrator's mounting apprehension that his time is running short. Finally, in sonnet 126, his love matured and yet still beautiful, the narrator points out that the fair lord too will one day meet his doom. The following sonnet begins the dark lady sequence, the group of sonnets dealing with the narrator's irresistible attraction to a dark and beautiful woman.

Here the allure is not of love but of lust and the narrator is torn between his hunger for the woman and his disgust at the sinfulness of carnal desire. The dark lady is described as freely promiscuous, the epitome of lustful endeavor.