

# Sonnet's from the portugese analysis of all poems assignment

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Elizabeth Barrett Browning Sonnet 1 Theme: unexpectedness of love Falling in love with Robert and his returning of her love came as a great surprise to Elizabeth, considering past her circumstances. Analysis: Reworks the traditional sonnet sequence by transforming gender roles. She utilities the female voice instead of the traditional male voice. She assumes the role of epic hero. She adopts the patrician sonnet style. The octet's strict rhyming pattern reflects how she feels her life has been static so far.

The sextet's alternating near rhymes modulate from 'move' to 'strove' to 'love' reflecting gradual emotional and spiritual pavement as a result of discovering this unexpected love. The distortion of iambic pentameter reflects the distorted and enharmonic patterns of her own life. B uses past tense show how Joy escapes her- 'once' 'sung'. The brevity of 'once' suggests that this kind of love is fleeting. 'Once' also has fairytale associations 'once upon a time' which suggests that love for her is a myth.

She utilities the classical Greek reference (allusion) to Theocratic whose poem suggested that every year of life brought new happiness with it. This allusion evokes the original pastoral tradition from Sicily and implicitly allows a world of classical Italian paganism (and potential sexuality) into the world of Victorian poetry. Creates a dramatic effect by using enjambment to set off a phrase at the beginning of the sestet. Volta, (Italian: "turn") the turn in thought in a sonnet that is often indicated by such initial words as But, Yet, or And yet. The Volta occurs between the octet and sestet in a Patriarchal sonnet.

Here the thought continues from line 8 to 9. This suggests that the melancholy blends itself across all aspects of her life. That she remembers the poem as being 'sung' (past tense) also suggests that armory and sweetness have not been a part of her life's journey. Listing the sweet years, the dear and wished for years' 'The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years'. This again emphasizes how much Joy and beauty she has missed out on and how much she has suffered 'antique tongue' classical adjectival reference, could suggest these notions are foreign to her Just as an antique language is or that this happiness could only be found in the past. Lung' powerful and jarring verb. Browning feels that fate has powerfully 'shadow' she is now an image of her former self due to the illness, offering and oppression she has been through OR darkness has spread, there is no light of hope in her life. 'mystic Shape' capitalizes-shape is personified. Mystic means "spiritually allegorical, pertaining to mysteries of faith," "pertaining to occult practices or ancient religions" So... This shape is foreign to her 'shape' "creation, form, destiny," from root of shape (v. ). Meaning "contours of the body" is attested from late ICC. Meaning "condition, state" is first recorded 1865, Aimer. Eng.

In M. E. , the word also had a sense of "a woman's private parts." 'hair' : An allusion to Homer's Iliad. Epic which begins with Athena pulling Achilles by the hair. Divine intervention by the Gods. EBB could see Borrowing's love for her as divine intervention. Her allusion to Homer's epic subtly suggests that there is something heroic and brave about this romantic engagement. The gender dynamic of this allusion should not be overlooked. At the opening of the Iliad Achilles and Agamemnon are contending over who will get to

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keep a captive female in his tent-an odd and interesting allusion for the beginning of feminine love sonnets.

In Barrett Browning; s revision of this scene, the desiring female speaker assumes the position of epic hero. Pulled away from destructive, seductive thoughts of death, she engages with the emotional risks of love when the conditions seem to glorify her as much as her beloved; thus the speaker is both the subject and object of love, revising without entirely reversing the Perchance tradition in which the woman is a silent object of admiration. This allusion to homer's epic, as well as the heroic sonnet form, subtly suggests that there is something brave and heroic about this romantic engagement.

Fate is symbolized as a woman constantly turning. Her hair had to be grabbed while he was facing you. Allusion to a A children's game. The sestets is based on a children's game of the time in which one child would creep up behind another, grab her hair and ask: " Guess who it is? " The poet compares falling in love to this game. She suggests than when the strange feeling (of love) metaphorically " drew me backwards by the hair", she assumed that it was death that was seizing her (her pessimistic expectation). Mystic Shape" (line 10) suggests something mysterious and possibly sinister. In line 12: "... A voice said in mastery while I strove" suggests the power of her new linings and her attempts to resist them because she feared them. Silver answer-color imagery-love has found her but isn't quite gold yet. She can while she is Joyful to find love she is wary of it. Silver also represents purity, so perhaps the answer of ' love' is pure and simple as further

witnessed through the use of monosyllables ' Not Death but Love' Rang-  
connotative of wedding bells or announcements.

Loud volume. Has it awoken her from her melancholy and sadness? Rang is also in present tense to show her awakening to love and Joy, as opposed to the past tense ' sung Wished' Sung, Voice, Rang -the experience is auditory. Why? Siren's call? Has she subverted this? She is like the men lead to their death? The dangers of love? Perhaps she only understands love when she hears it from someone else, she herself cannot articulate it because of her isolated existence. Bells are commonly representative of Joy and freedom.

The shape of the bell is closely related to the vault of HEAVEN. A bell's pendulous motion can represent the extremes of good and evil; death and immortality. Its sound is a symbol of creative power, but can also be a call to arms. Is also phallic in some senses, a bell and handle = a vulva and a phallus. Embodiment of virginity, unmarried women adorn themselves with bells. The use of direct speech in lines 13 & 14 dramatists her surprise. The ellipsis in line 14 creates suspense before the final antithesis of " Not Death, but Love. Which highlights the great change in her outlook on life from the second quatrain. Volta: Browning plays with the Patriarchal form because she's more intent on meaning rather than staying with form. Goes into 9th line in sestets. Provides a Volta in line 13 after the caesura ' but there'. Ellipsis. The function of these is to show that she is reserved and reticent about embracing love due to her societal constraints which include: patriarchal power structure, history of illness and tragedy, feels unworthy and mistrusts herself.

Sense of Self-she is aware of her limitations and cleverly questions and challenges those through her poetry. Classical Elements in Poem Modern Elements of Poem Patriarchal Rhyme Scheme Theocratic Antique tongue Hair-allusion to Homer's Iliad epic The drama of death and love evokes classical drama and mythology, figures such as Orpheus and Eurydice and the fuge of fate. Can read her poems as a version of the silent, suffering powerless woman

Usurps masculine conventions-she's no longer silent but eloquent Uses her structure to infer movement from stasis to an opening up of emotions Cleverly invokes sexuality and desire in a strict patriarchal society Transforms ritual of identity-sonnet is about (values debate about identity within context of conformity) She is aware of her limitations and cleverly challenges them throughout her poetry She is reserved and reticent about embracing love due to her societal constraints: patriarchal power Elizabeth Barrett Browning Sonnet 13 Theme: The dominant idea and tone of this sonnet seems to be uncertainty - uncertainty about whether the poet/persona can trust her lover and whether she can control the intensity of her own feelings. This poem is about EBB being unable to speak or admit her love to Robert Browning, however, she paradoxically creates a work of art to declares her love. She declares herself as a poet maker which will then be her gift to Robert. She isn't ready to admit love yet. She will declare it when she is ready. The female voice instead of the traditional male voice.

Unlike the traditional depiction of a woman in Patriarchs poetry-she is not silent. She poses and answers the heterocyclic question, ' And wilt though

have me fashion into speech/the love I bear thee, finding words enough... ' She adopts the Patrician sonnet style. She has control over her own silence, questioning the validity of words and hence the sonnet form itself. Paradox- this poem is about her not being able to communicate yet she communicates with Robert Browning through this poem. She does not introduce a Volta in lines 8 or 9 which shows her determination to express her uncertainty about revealing her feelings to Robber Browning. The sonnet.

This is reflective of the conversational style of the letters and also emends the reader that the sonnet is part of a sequence of ideas. \*The use of the archaic forms and "wilt" suggests that the question may be a device, as used in the sonnets of Shakespeare and the Metaphysical poets, to introduce her ideas dramatically, rather than a response to a real request from Robert. ' Hold the torch out where the words are rough/ between our faces, to cast a light on each?.. ' The torch and light here can symbolism illumination, exposure or disclosure and hence the revelation of their love to others, which EBB is afraid of as it will allow them to be criticized by others. In these lines EBB is also creating a drama of epic significance. The flaming torches allude to classical drama.

She is also the one in control as she is the torch bearer, which again subverts the traditional notion of the submissive woman in Patriarchal poetry. The metaphor " where the words are rough" suggests the external forces that make it difficult to her express her love publicly, possibly a reference to her father's opposition. " I drop it at thy feet'. Cleverly denounces her previous image of power and control by submitting humbly to him. The use of the

verb drop suggests her inability to effectively be a torchbearer and consequently she reveals to him that she is unable to effectively communicate her love to him in her writing, ' I cannot teach my hand to hold my spirit so far off/From myself.. Me. ' The high modality reflects her inability to do so. Nay, -let the silence of my womanhood/Commend my woman-love to thy belief-' Cleverly adopts the role of a virtuous Victorian woman who until the point of marriage will not talk and must remain a mystery. The first word of the sestet " Nay' (No) does not introduce a Volta (turn) in this case. Instead it emphasizes her determination not to declare her love, reinforcing the second quatrain. ' And that I stand union, however wooed'. There is a lovely play on contrasting words here with the W sound which emphasizes the paradoxical nature of her situation. She is in love but cannot admit it, however, cleverly explores and conveys her emotions of uncertainty to Robert through her poetry.

She urges her lover to assume that she is following the conventions of courtly love (suggested by the phrase " woman-love" and the archaic word " wooed"), in which the woman was expected to pretend disinterest as a sign of modesty and a way to encourage her lover to more extravagant protestation of his love. (This links to the archaic forms in the first quatrain. ) Here, the verb ' rending is powerful and sexual. Her outward unresponsiveness conceals deeply felt passion. The image of being ravished is suggested in the metaphor of her life as a garment being torn apart. The superlative ' most' coupled with the rhyming and long sounding ' dauntless, voiceless' reveals the amount of mental and emotional strength needed by EBB to guard her feelings.

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She again creates the classical image of woman. She is heroic and strong in grief. 'Lest one touch of this heart convey its grief'. The singular 'One touch' conveys the powerful brevity of tenderness and instantaneous consequent vulnerability of revealing her love. Should she reveal her love, she will be open to 'grief, the grief that comes with love and happiness. It may also be personal grief due to the loss of her brother as well as the social grief that comes as a result of the restrictions placed on women during her time. Revealing her love will make her vulnerable in many ways and will open up a plethora of emotions for her. Admitting love.

The pronouns change from male 'thou' and 'thee' to female 'I' and 'myself.... Me' to neutral 'this'. This could reveal the process in which she constructs a hybrid gender for herself which allows her to escape patriarchal constraints and usurp masculine conventions (see below). The drama is that this is a woman speaking as a lover to a lover, about the nature of love poetry. The emphasis is on the nature of 'Woman-love' and the paradox is that her traditional 'silence' has become powerful eloquence. Part of the challenge is that EBB works with cross dressing and paradoxes about hybrid gender, as in her poems of George Sand, that 'large-brained woman and large-hearted man'.

While she usurps masculine conventions, authority and eloquence she also insists that she retains a tragic identity as the always 'union' and enduring woman, the lover who cannot admit love, and in that way suffers love that in turn leads to sadness. Intellectualism and paradox are certainly part of her strategy and essential to the emotional power of the sonnet. Elizabeth

Barrett Browning Sonnet 14 In this poem EBB has accepted her suitor's love, but now makes demands regarding the nature of that love. She urges her lover to love her not for any particular reason, but simply because he loves her "for love's sake only". She argues that if there is a particular reason for loving someone, then a change in circumstances can remove the reason and destroy the love.

One interesting interpretation is that she is cleverly This could be validated with the fact that 'love' is repeated nine times in the poem. 'If thou must love me, let it be for enough/Except for love's sake only.' The opening line is very dramatic and is addressed directly to the lover in the archaic second person ("thou"). She tells him: If you must love me, let it be for nothing. The high modality of the auxiliary verb "must" may be playfully suggesting that she does not really want him to love her or that she cannot believe that he would actually want to (a sign of her sense of inferiority). Like Sonnet 13 she also begins with the conjunction 'if' which creates a conversational tone. The idea of loving her for nothing seems strange until we read line 2. (I. E. He power of the idea is created by the enjambment, creating a pause before the qualifying condition - "except"). 'Do not say/ "I love her for her smile.. Re look.. Her way [Of speaking gently.. ; for a trick of thought/ That falls in well with mine, and Cortes brought/ A sense of pleasant ease on such as day-" EBB uses the imperative voice and listing of conventional attributes that are admired in women to warn Robert not to love her for these superficial qualities as they are subject to change. Ellipsis is used in these lines to suggest alternates that he might say. (Cortes - certainly) 'For these things in themselves beloved, may/Be changed, or change for thee,.. ND love so

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wrought,/May be inwrought so. Here, EBB explains why she does not want IM to love her in these ways - because these things may change, destroying the love. In using the contrast of opposites Wrought/inwrought' EBB highlights how easily love may come undone when it is based on transient qualities, as easily and simply as adding a small prefix to a word that resonates with work and effort. The word " beloved" in line 7 shows that she really loves him, dispelling any doubt that may have been created by line 1 . She has not used this word before to address him in previous poems for study. ' Neither love me for /Thing own dear pity wiping my cheeks dry! For one might well forget to weep, who bore/Thy comfort long, and lose love thereby-' The idea in lines 9 - 12 is that he should not love her because he pities her unhappiness, because his love would make her happy, so he could no longer pity her, and therefore, no longer love her. The exclamatory shows that she is horrified of being pitied. ' But love me for love's sake, that evermore/ Thou Mays love on through love's eternity. ' The poem ends with a clear and direct use of the imperative mood to emphasis her main idea - " love me for love's sake". She repeats the words of line 2, avian explained why she made the opening statement. Not be affected by changing circumstances, further reinforcing the poet's main idea.

In terms of the sonnet form, EBB has now moved away from the half rhymes in her sestets to full rhyme for', ' bore' ' evermore' and ' dry, thereby.

However, she utilities half rhyme in ending with ' eternity. This serves to emphasis the uniqueness of the word and the longevity of their love (made up of four syllables and the longest sounding word in the poem) and hence the uniqueness of their love if it isn't based on approaching her and loving

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her as a conventional woman. For a woman in Patriarchal poetry-she is not silent. She is in control and makes demands of Robert Borrowing love.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning Sonnet 21 The tone of this sonnet is dramatically different from the three previous ones set for study.

It is more exuberant (excited, high-spirited), clearly shown by the number of exclamations. This might suggest that her doubts about the genuineness of Robber's love are decreasing and she is beginning to enjoy their relationship. (One study guide refers to her " pleasure", another to her " thrill". ) An alternative reading might be that there is a sense of desperation in her excitement - that she is urging him to keep telling her that he loves her so she can overcome her doubts. There is evidence in the poem to justify either approach, so you must make your own judgment. In lines 1 -6 she urges her beloved to keep telling her that he loves her.

There is a typical dramatic opening, addressing her lover directly " Beloved" and using repetition " again and yet again". The repeated use of exclamatory in line 6 and 7 line create a sense of exuberance. The foregrounding of the adjectival ' Beloved' may reveal an acceptance of her feelings towards Robert Browning, as she has now placed the term of endearment at the start of the poem (in contrast to Sonnet 14). Moreover it relegates him to the object of the poem and thus EBB again subverts the traditional Patriarchal sonnet which had the woman as the object. EBB also subverts the form by taking control through the use of the imperative tone. She compares his repeated declarations of his love to the song of the cuckoo (" cuckoo-song" & " cuckoo-strain").

This bird is heard very frequently in spring in England, and many people get sick of its monotonous calling. She suggests that while people might get sick of hearing the cuckoo, it should be welcomed because spring cannot come without it. In the same way, she cannot experience love without him '

Remember, never to the hill and plain/ Valley & wood, without her cuckoo-strain. ' Hills were the first manifestation of the creation of the world, standing high enough to be set away from primeval chaos, but lacking the majestic size of mountains. Biblical allusion Isaiah 40: 4 ' Every valley shall be raised, and every mountain and hill made low, the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

This suggests how everything will be complete and perfect when he repeats his love for her. Plains-symbol of space and boundless earth. Horizontal and opposed to the vertical hill. Valley-symbolic complement of a mountain. Egg yin (valley) and yang (Mountain). Commonly a symbol of fertility and life.

Valley is also a Biblical allusion to Psalm 23: even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me (lots of sexual connotations here! )

Wood- Symbolizes superhuman wisdom and knowledge. The carpenter uses tools symbolic of the divine power of bringing order out of chaos.

Through the use of these natural and Biblical symbols. EBB suggests that they will not find perfection, complementing unity or order in their love without him repeating he loves her. Note the personification of " sweet Spring in all her green completed' to herald a fresh start/rebirth/growth.

Green is also the color of the Goddess of love Aphrodite who was born from a

green sea-so mythological allusion. In lines 7 - 9 she admits to doubts about his love. " darkness", " doubtful spirit", " doubt's pain" and " Cry' have powerful negative connotations, suggesting that the process of deciding whether he really loves her has been very painful. Are these doubts in the past or the present? The use of ellipsis in line 9 suggests hesitation, making the use of the imperative (" Cry .. Speak seem a little desperate. In lines 9-11 the rhetorical question suggests renewed confidence. She argues that just as you cannot have too many stars or too many flowers, so you cannot say " I love you" too often. This continues the association of his love with positive aspects of nature begun in line 6. Stars are symbols of divinity and constancy much like their love. Flowers in contrast are transitory (they don't live forever). EBB again uses humbly to show how their love whilst mortal, can remain eternal. In lines 12 - 13 she again uses the imperative mood, combined with repetition to urge him to continue to say he loves her. Toll" metaphorically compares declaring his love to ringing a bell and " silver utterance" has positive connotations. (Note that she used " silver answer" in Sonnet 1) We discussed silver as being less precious than gold and therefore their love whilst still precious is more real rather than ideal. The bell is a symbol of Joy and freedom and in some senses is also phallic- so there are sexual connotations here again. In line 13 the dash introduces a change of idea, and a change to a more serious tone. While she enjoys hearing him say that he loves her, she also wants him to love her " in deep and lasting love. In terms of the sonnet form, this is the first sonnet for study that does not employ half rhyme in the sestet.

Thus the full rhyme could signify her growing confidence in their love.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning Sonnet 22 The tone of this sonnet is very different to that of Sonnet XIX. It is extremely serious but also confident, suggesting that the poet is absolutely sure of the truth of what she is saying. EBB suggests that their love can take them into a spiritual realm away from earthly concerns, but then rejects this. She prefers them to remain earthly lovers, even though she recognizes that physical love is not permanent because it cannot overcome death. She argues that nothing in life can harm them because they love each other. There is also a sense of equality in this poem. There is no masculine or feminine aspect.

She's become a man/woman voice (note the allusions to masculine mythological figures. Angels are gender neutral). In this sonnet the poet uses the first person plural (we / us / our). This is a velvetreen from the previous ones set for study, in which she used the first and second person singular. The change reflects her growing certainty that they truly love each other. In the octave she imagines their souls facing each other in silence, getting closer together until their " lengthening wings break into fire. " This image seems to refer to their deaths, when their physical bodies will be destroyed and their souls will escape to heaven together. This interpretation is supported by the reference to angels.

It links to the wish expressed in Sonnet XIV to be loved " through love's eternity. " and in Sonnet XIX to be loved with his " soul. " The image also has overtones of the mythical phoenix, a bird that burns itself to ashes and comes forth with new life (it is a symbol of resurrection) - suggesting the

intensity of the love has "destroyed" her old self and renewed her. ' Until their lengthening wings break into fire'. Here we have the use of classical/ mythological allusion to Icarus who flew too close to the sun and had his wings melt. Could this suggest that their love is so passionate it could be dangerous? Fire is also a symbol for knowledge and wisdom and again refers to the classical story of