

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 100

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long
To speak of that which gives thee all thy might?
Spend'st thou¹ thy fury² on some worthless song,
Darkening thy power to lend base³ subjects light?

5 Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem⁴

In gentle numbers⁵ time so idly spent;
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays⁶ esteem
And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise, resty⁷ Muse, my love's sweet face survey,

10 If Time have any wrinkle graven⁸ there;

If any, be a satire to decay,
And make Time's spoils⁹ despised every where.
Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life;
So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.
(111 words)

¹**Spend'st thou** why do you waste – ²**fury** poetic energy – ³**base** inferior – ⁴**straight redeem** immediately compensate for – ⁵**gentle numbers** noble verses, excellent poetry – ⁶**lays** songs – ⁷**resty** lazy, sleepy – ⁸**graven** etched, cut – ⁹**spoils** ravages, plunder