

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 90

Then hate me when thou wilt¹; if ever, now;

Now, while the world is bent² my deeds to cross³,

Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,

And do not drop in for an after-loss⁴:

5 Ah! do not, when my heart hath 'scaped⁵ this sorrow,

Come in the rearward of⁶ a conquered woe;

Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,

To linger out⁷ a purposed overthrow⁸.

If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,

10 When other petty griefs have done their spite,

But in the onset⁹ come: so shall I taste

At first the very worst of fortune's might;

And other strains¹⁰ of woe, which now seem woe,

Compared with loss of thee, will not seem so.

(121 words)

¹**wilt** will, desire – ²**bent** resolved, determined – ³**my deeds to cross** to defeat me – ⁴**drop in for an after-loss** attack after the main battle – ⁵**'scaped** escaped – ⁶**the rearward of** final assault upon – ⁷**linger out** prolong – ⁸**purposed overthrow** intended defeat – ⁹**onset** first wave of attack – ¹⁰**strains** kinds