

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 106

When in the chronicle¹ of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights²,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme,
In praise of ladies dead and lovely³ knights,
5 Then, in the blazon⁴ of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master⁵ now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
10 Of this our time, all you prefiguring⁶;
And for⁷ they looked but with divining⁸ eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.
(110 words)

¹**the chronicle** ancient stories – ²**wights** persons – ³**lovely** good-looking, much loved – ⁴**blazon** coat of arms, list of admirable qualities – ⁵**master** possess, control – ⁶**prefiguring** predicting, foreshadowing – ⁷**And for** unless – ⁸**divining** prophetic