

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

## Sonnet 138

When my love swears that she is made of truth<sup>1</sup>  
I do believe her, though I know she lies,  
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,  
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties<sup>2</sup>.

5 Thus vainly<sup>3</sup> thinking that she thinks me young.  
Although she knows my days are past the best,  
Simply<sup>4</sup> I credit<sup>5</sup> her false speaking tongue:  
On both side thus is simple truth suppress'd<sup>6</sup>:  
But wherefore says she not she is unjust<sup>7</sup>?

10 And wherefore say not I that I am old?  
Oh! love's best habit<sup>8</sup> is in seeming trust<sup>9</sup>,  
And age in love loves not to have years told<sup>10</sup>:  
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,  
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.  
(118 words)

<sup>1</sup>**made of truth** honest, faithful – <sup>2</sup>**subtleties** ways of behaving – <sup>3</sup>**vainly** out of vanity – <sup>4</sup>**Simply** foolishly, naively – <sup>5</sup>**credit** pretend to believe – <sup>6</sup>**suppress'd** hidden – <sup>7</sup>**unjust** lying, unfaithful – <sup>8</sup>**habit** custom – <sup>9</sup>**seeming trust** pretending to trust – <sup>10</sup>**told** counted, revealed