

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 67

Ah! wherefore with infection should he live,
And with his presence grace impiety,
That sin by him advantage should achieve
And lace¹ itself with his society?

- 5 Why should false painting imitate his cheek
And steal dead seeming² of his living hue³?
Why should poor beauty indirectly seek
Roses of shadow⁴, since his rose⁵ is true?
Why should he live, now Nature bankraut⁶ is,
10 Beggar'd of⁷ blood to blush through lively veins?
For she hath no exchequer⁸ now but his,
And, proud of many⁹, lives upon his gains.
O, him she stores, to show what wealth she had
In days long since, before these last so bad.
(106 words)

¹lace embellish, enrich – ²dead seeming lifeless imitation – ³hue complexion – ⁴Roses of shadow imitation beauty – ⁵rose beauty
– ⁶bankraut bankrupt – ⁷Beggar'd of lacking – ⁸exchequer resources – ⁹proud of many desiring to produce many creatures