

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

## Sonnet 84

Who is it that says most, which can say more,  
Than this rich praise, that you alone are you,  
In whose confine immured is the store  
Which should example where your equal grew<sup>1</sup>?

- 5 Lean penury<sup>2</sup> within that pen<sup>3</sup> doth dwell  
That to his subject lends not some small glory;  
But he that writes of you, if he can tell  
That you are you, so dignifies his story.  
Let him but copy what in you is writ,  
10 Not making worse what nature made so clear,  
And such a counterpart<sup>4</sup> shall fame his wit<sup>5</sup>,  
Making his style admired every where.  
You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,  
Being fond on praise<sup>6</sup>, which makes your praises worse.  
(115 words)

<sup>1</sup>**example where your equal grew** serve as the model for poems – <sup>2</sup>**Lean penury** mean poverty – <sup>3</sup>**pen** poet – <sup>4</sup>**counterpart** poem, portrait, copy – <sup>5</sup>**fame his wit** make his skill famous – <sup>6</sup>**fond on praise** foolishly fond of flattery