

Sonnet 8

- 1 Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.
Why lov'st thou that which thou receiv'st not gladly,
Or else receiv'st with pleasure thine annoy?
- 5 If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
By **unions married**, do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou should'st bear.
- Mark how **one** string, sweet **husband** to another,
10 Strikes each in each by mutual ordering,
Resembling **sire** and **child** and happy **mother**
Who, all in **one, one** pleasing note do sing;
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming **one**,
- 14 Sings this to thee: "Thou single wilt prove none."

Your assignment for the next class: formulate your answers to the following questions:

- | | | |
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| 1 | <i>Music to hear,...</i>
<i>...why hear'st thou music sadly?</i> | How do these words make sense at the beginning of this poem?
Who confessed to feeling the same way when she heard sweet music? |
| 2 | <i>Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.</i> | This seems to provide the immediate answer to the question. The implied beginning of this statement is: "You ought not hear it sadly because sweets with sweets..." etc. In which case the line itself could be translated as: your sweet thoughts are not at war with the sweet sounds of music, and the sense of joy communicated by music resonates with the listener's capacity for joy. |
| 3 | <i>Why lov'st thou that which thou receiv'st not gladly?</i> | Despite the sadness, he professes to love music. Is the poet necessarily correct in inferring from "thou hear'st music sadly" that therefore "thou receiv'st [it] not gladly"? Or, to put it differently: inferring from "music makes you sad," to "you don't like hearing it"? |
| 4 | <i>Or else receiv'st with pleasure thine annoy?</i> | Yet the poet offers an alternative explanation. Perhaps he experiences their <i>annoy</i> (that is, a distinctly disagreeable experience) with a perverse kind of pleasure. By now the poet seems to have moved quite far from the notion of simply hearing music sadly. |
| 5 | <i>If the true concord of well-tuned sounds...</i> | <i>Sounds. Well-tuned. Concord. True.</i> These are technical musical terms. What is their meaning? Is there a single word that we can use for all of them together? |
| 6 | <i>By unions married, ...</i>

<i>...offend thine ear,</i> | The first entry of two important metaphors: first, the notion of being one (<i>union</i> ; signified by green), and second, the state of matrimony (<i>married</i> , signified by blue). What musical sense, if any, do these metaphors add to line 5?

By now the poet has said enough to suggest that perhaps we should read line 1 differently. Perhaps it means not: "music makes me sad," but rather: "it makes me sad to hear something so disagreeable." |
| 7 | <i>They do but sweetly chide thee,...</i> | Who or what are "they"? How can they have the capacity (metaphorical or real) to chide? |
| 8 | <i>...who confounds</i>
<i>In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.</i> | Again the notion of being one: <i>singleness</i> . The addressee is being chided for "confounding" parts "in singleness," when he should be "bearing them" instead. These lines have been read in terms of the preceding sonnets, which chided a young man for staying single when he should be getting married. If so, how could the musical sounds be said to chide him for the same thing? |
| 9-14 | | Now construe the remaining six lines in accordance with the argument that has been set up in lines 1-8. The conclusion in line 14 could perhaps be read like so: "As a single person you won't even be one, but will rather prove to be nothing at all." |

SHAKE-SPEARES

Like feeble age he reeleth from the day,
The eyes (fore dutious) now conuerted are
From his low tract and looke an other way:
So thou, thy selfe out-going in thy noon:
Vnlok'd on diest vnlesse thou get a sonne.

8

MVsick to heare, why hear'st thou musick sadly,
Sweets with sweets warre not, ioy delights in ioy:
Why lou'st thou that which thou receaust not gladly,
Or else receaust with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,
By vnions married do offend thine eare,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singlenesse the parts that thou should'st beare:
Marke how one string sweet husband to an other,
Strike each in each by mutuall ordering;
Resembling fier, and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechlesse song being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee thou single wilt proue none.

9.

IS it for feare to wet a widdowes eye,
That thou consum'st thy selfe in single life?
Ah; if thou issulesse shalt hap to die,
The world will waile thee like a makelesse wife,
The world wilbe thy widdow and still weepe,
That thou no forme of thee hast left behind,
When euery priuat widdow well may keepe,
By childrens eyes, her husbands shape in minde:
Looke what an vnthrif in the world doth spend,
Shifts but his place, for still the world inioyes it,
But beauties waste, hath in the world an end,
And kept vnvsde the vsur so destroyes it:
No loue toward others in that bosome fits
That on himselfe such murdrous shame commits.

10.

SONNETS.

10

FOR shame deny that thou bear'st loue to any
Who for thy selfe art so vnprouident
Graunt if thou wilt, thou art belou'd of many,
But that thou none lou'st is most euident:
For thou art so possess'd with murdrous hate,
That gainst thy selfe thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beautious rooffe to ruinate
Which to repaire should be thy chiefe desire:
O change thy thought, that I may change my minde,
Shall hate be fairer log'd then gentle loue?
Be as thy presence is gracious and kind,
Or to thy selfe at least kind harted proue,
Make thee an other selfe for loue of me,
That beauty still may liue in thine or thee.

11

AS fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st,
In one of thine, from that which thou departest,
And that fresh bloud which yongly thou bestow'st,
Thou maist call thine, when thou from youth conuertest,
Herein liues wisdom, beauty, and increase,
Without this follie, age, and could decay,
If all were minded so, the times should cease,
And threescore yeare would make the world away:
Let those whom nature hath not made for store,
Harsh, featurelesse, and rude, barrenly perrish,
Looke whom she best indow'd, she gaue the more;
Which bountious guift thou shouldst in bounty cherrish,
She caru'd thee for her seale, and ment therby,
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

12

WHEN I doe count the clock that tels the time,
And see the braue day sunck in hidious night,
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls or fluer'd ore with white:
When lofty trees I see barren of leaues,
Which erst from heat did canopie the herd

B3

And!