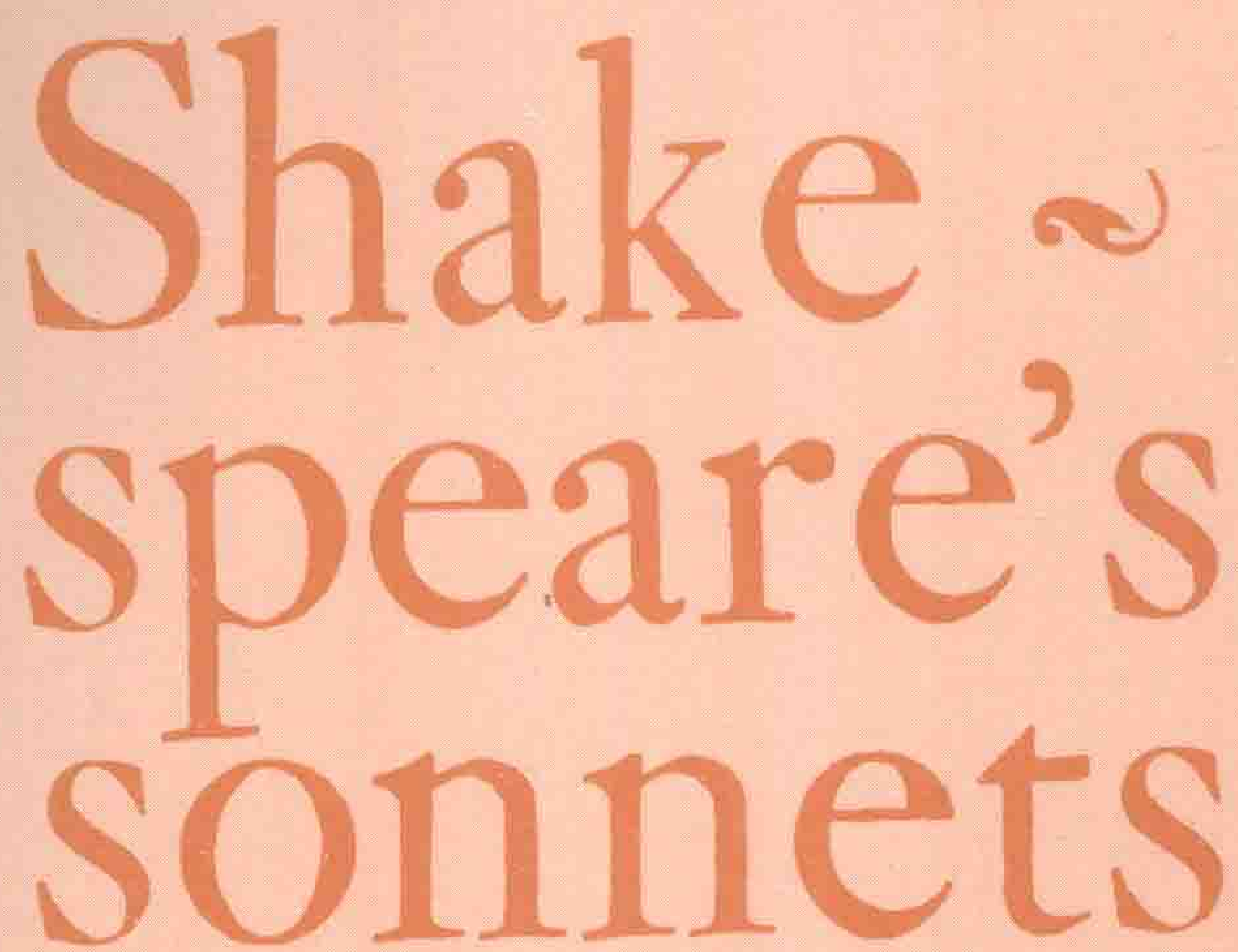

edited with analytic commentary by

Stephen Booth

HAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

Edited with analytic commentary by

STEPHEN BOOTH

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Shakespeare's Sonnets

For
Philip J. Finkelpearl

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Preface

The job of an editor is usually to establish as far as possible the author's text and to provide glosses for words, constructions, idioms, and allusions with which a modern reader may be unfamiliar. The job of an editor of Shakespeare's sonnets is somewhat different, and my own approach to it is somewhat different from that of previous editors of the sonnets. With two exceptions, sonnets 138 and 144, our only textual authority is the 1609 Quarto (see Appendix 1); therefore an editor has little comparing, choosing, and conflating to do. As to establishing Shakespeare's original text, that is either obviously unnecessary—or obvious (for instance, "beautits" in the Quarto text of 6.4 must be a misprint for *beauties*; Q's "Cha ter" in five of the surviving copies of 87.3 is obviously a misprint for *Charter* in the other eight; and Q's "fo" for "so" in 152.14 surely results from the tendency of *f* and the nearly identical long *s* to get confused in a printer's font)—or obviously beyond salvation except for a fanatically self-confident scholarly redeemer.

My primary purpose in the present edition is to provide a text that will give a modern reader as much as I can resurrect of a Renaissance reader's experience of the 1609 Quarto; it is, after all, the sonnets we have and not some hypothetical originals that we value. I have adopted no editorial principle beyond that of trying to adapt a modern reader—with his assumptions about idiom, spelling, and punctuation—and the 1609 text to one another. I do not modernize for the sake of modernizing or retain Quarto readings for the sake of retention, and I do nothing for the sake of methodical purity (to do that would be to let the means justify the end, and, since my modern text is physically coupled to the Quarto text reprinted in parallel with it, my lack of systematic rigor about particulars should not inconvenience anyone). Both my text and my commentary are determined by what I think a Renaissance reader would have thought as he moved from line to line and sonnet to sonnet in the Quarto. I make no major substantial emendations and few minor ones. It might therefore seem reasonable to reprint the Quarto text alone and simply comment on that, but the effects of almost four centuries are such that a modern reader faced with the Quarto text sees something that is effectively very different from what a seventeenth-century reader saw.

In modernizing spelling and punctuation I have taken each poem individually and tried to find a mid-point between following the punctuation and spelling of the Quarto text (which modern readers, accustomed to logically and semantically directive punctuation and spelling, are inclined to misinterpret) and modern directive spelling and punctuation (which often pays for its clarity by sacrificing a considerable amount of a poem's substance and energy). In each case I have tried to find the least distorting available compromise. Sometimes no compromise is satisfactory, and I describe the probable operation of a line or quatrain in a note.

Some awkwardness occurs in the commentary because it is, in effect, interrupted several times by lengthy discussions of particular topics at the points which occasion them; little essays of that sort might have been relegated to a full-scale critical introduction or to an appendix, but to do so would be to mistake neatness for efficiency. Placed as they are, the long notes seem longer than they might otherwise seem, but in fact save the considerable repetition that isolating them from their subjects would entail. The long notes are these:

On explications and emendations of unsatisfactory Shakespearian texts (in the notes on sonnet 112, pages 364–72).
On the special grandeur of the best sonnets (in the notes on sonnet 116, pages 387–92).
On spelling and punctuation (in the notes on sonnet 129, pages 447–52).
On the functions of criticism (in the notes on sonnet 146, pages 507–17).

The longest of the long notes is the one on sonnet 146. A secondary purpose of this edition is to campaign for an analytic criticism that does not sacrifice—or at least tries not to sacrifice—any of a work of literature to logical convenience or even to common sense. The long note on sonnet 146 is an argument and plea for such a criticism. The fact that my commentary attempts also to exemplify such a criticism may be another source of discomfort to my reader. My notes can seem dedicated not to doing what the commentary should do—clarify the sonnets (which in fact rarely need much clarification)—but to transforming lines that are simple and clear into something complicated and obscure. If one accepts its terms, there is some validity to that charge, but I do not accept its terms. All of us were brought up on the idea that what poets say is sublime—takes us beyond reason; my commentary tries to describe the physics by which we get there. Notes designed to explain what the sonnets mean—what the poet is trying to get said—usually end up treating the actual words and their sequence as attendant inconveniences of verse. Such notes often begin with "i.e." and state the substance of a line in a syntax completely foreign to the one in the poem. Much of the time, to gloss a phrase or line in a way that indicates how the actual construction conveys its meaning is difficult, but I want notes that help a reader *with* the poems, not notes that substitute for them.

Scholarly glosses, particularly those for the sonnets, have commonly done a disservice both to readers and poems by ignoring the obvious fact that verse exists in time, that one reads one word and then another. A word or phrase can be incomprehensible at the moment it is read and then be effectively glossed by the lines that follow it; a word or phrase can (and in the sonnets regularly does) have one meaning as a reader comes on it, another as its sentence concludes, and a third when considered from the vantage point of a summary statement in the couplet. The notes to this edition attempt to indicate not only what words mean but when they mean it; the notes try actively to discourage analyses that treat syntax as if it existed in a static state.

Since these sonnets can easily become what their critical history has shown them to be, guide posts for a reader's journey to madness, I fear that much of what is sanest in what I say will look mad to a reader who forgets that when I

say "suggestion" or "overtone," and when I talk about ideas and echoes that merely cross a reader's mind, I mean only what I say. In the course of the commentary I often caution readers against being misled by the generic implication that all notes to poems peddle their suggestions as substitute glosses on the words discussed (two particularly urgent instances are 78.3, 7, 11, note [on pens] and the long final note on sonnet 112). Some of the puns, allusions, suggestions, and implications I describe are farfetched; any that I fetch unbidden by the poems deserve to be sent back scornfully, but these poems go in generally for farfetched effects. As long as my reader remembers that I am describing *effects*, not trying to substitute ideational static for obvious surface meaning and intent, then the incidentals I describe and justify deserve, and can safely receive, a hearing.

(In talking about peripheral, rhyme-like repetitions of stock words [e.g. *in, but*, etc.] in different meanings or about possible puns on equally common words [e.g. *all* and *con-*] I have done what I could to acknowledge the commonness of such "effects" in everyday prose by duplicating them in the sentences in which I describe them. I want to forestall complaints that I am promoting accidents of the language to an exalted position they do not deserve. I can be said to exaggerate the value of such inevitabilities and accidents only if criticism is assumed to be a scorecard for rating the artist's ingenuity, and if poetic effects are taken to include only those that either import something [e.g. imitate, suggest, or complement the semantic substance of the passage where they appear] or call attention to their artificiality [e.g. end rhymes, heavy alliteration, or polyptoton in a significant word]. *In*significant and/or un*in*tentional verbal effects figure largely *in* casual conversation and *in* good and bad workaday prose; they trigger our *in*stinct for making and hearing puns, and they are often the unsought key by which we know when a paragraph addressed to the gas company is or is not as we want it. Such non-signifying patterns and tensions also occur in great poems—as little noticed and as undeniably there as the hundreds of slightly different leaf shapes and shades of green in a middle-sized maple tree in the back yard; they contribute to a great poem's identity just as—and just what—they contribute elsewhere. A literary effect need not be special to be.)

I think it will be profitable if I demonstrate the problems inherent in this sort of commentary by choosing one passage that both demands the analysis I provide and exemplifies the virtues and drawbacks of such analysis. I will discuss the third quatrain of sonnet 16 and couple further explanation of my methods and aims to that discussion. This is sonnet 16:

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
4 With means more blessèd than my barren rhyme?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers,
8 Much liker than your painted counterfeit.
So should the lines of life that life repair

Which this time's pencil or my pupil pen
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair
12 Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
To give away yourself keeps yourself still,
And you must live, drawn by your own sweet skill.

One great problem for both editors and readers of the sonnets is that words, lines, and clauses often give a multitude of meanings—of which none fits a single "basic" statement to which the others can be called auxiliary. The problem is alleviated and at the same time complicated (particularly for an editor) because even where the lines are vaguest and most ambiguous they are usually *also* simple and obvious. The third quatrain of sonnet 16 provides a good example, one that offers a good occasion for explaining why my commentary is as it is. This quatrain is a devil's puzzle for an editor, but its first word makes it quite otherwise for a casual reader: *So*. *So* means "thus" here and signals a conclusion from the preceding facts. Moreover, the reader knows what to expect of that conclusion: quatrain 3 will say in terms appropriate to the particulars of lines 1–8 what the speaker has been saying in various ways during the preceding fifteen sonnets. The language that follows upon *So* pertains to and often echoes the language of lines 1–8, and a reader will see the speaker's point without understanding (or knowing that he has not understood and cannot in any usual sense understand) the sentence that makes that point. (Compare 8.5–8.) This quatrain obviously means "Thus children will give you the immortality that art cannot." No scholar or critic can deny this sense or say the quatrain means something else. Why then should an editor burden himself and his reader with what the words mean and how they fit together? Aside from the signal given by *So*, the editor will find no satisfactory logical explanation of how these four lines transmit their simple message. In demonstrating their complexity, will an editor not be guilty of making problems where he should be solving them? Where a Renaissance meaning for a word or a special, now-forgotten context exists or where modern usage will mislead a modern reader, editors' labors are justified, but no such considerations are more than incidentally relevant to this quatrain. Should editors not let well enough alone? An editor who takes it as his task to explain what the poet is driving at should indeed keep his unneeded hands off this quatrain. Once an editor has told him about the connotative and denotative significance of some of Shakespeare's words and phrases, a modern reader can read Shakespeare's sonnets and respond to them very much as a seventeenth-century reader would. He enjoys them and, I think, misses very little, if any, of their greatness and beauty.

This edition performs the usual tasks of glossing unfamiliar words and putting familiar ones into their Renaissance contexts; but since my commentary is explicitly designed to insure that a reader's experience of the sonnets will as far as possible approximate that of the first readers of the 1609 Quarto, I am also concerned with questions that are purely and unabashedly academic. My notes are as much occupied with investigating the sources of the greatness, the beauty, and, often, the obvious substantive meaning of Shakespeare's sentences as with

reviving and revealing that meaning; the notes analyze the processes by which the relevant meanings of Shakespeare's words and phrases and the contexts they bring with them combine, intertwine, fuse, and conflict in the potentially dizzying complexity from which a reader's sense of straightforward simplicity emerges. It is the complexity, I think, that gives the sonnets what critics of eras less ambitious than this one for the clinical precision of natural science called the magic of the sonnets, the sense they give of effortless control of the uncontrollable. The notes to this edition investigate the particulars of the complexity. Any reader superstitiously fearful that the magic of a poem will vanish with knowledge of its sources need not worry any more than a student of zoology need worry that gazelles will slow down if he investigates the reasons why they can run so fast.

My commentary is designed not only to help a twentieth-century reader to a Renaissance reader's understanding of Shakespeare's idiom but also to answer academic questions about how the sonnets work—how they achieve the clarity and simplicity most of them have from the unstable and randomly dynamic locutions they employ. A reader who wants to know what it is that makes a sonnet he values so good will not achieve perfect understanding from this edition, but the commentary should help him to move in what common sense suggests is the most profitable direction—toward awareness of the multitudinous statements, ideas, ideals, standards, and references that almost every line of the 154 sonnets contains.

Let me turn again to quatrain 3 of sonnet 16. Although the general distinction that *So should the lines of life that life repair* makes between *lines of life* and lines of verse or lines in a drawing is immediately effective, editors worked and argued for many years over the precise meaning of *lines of life*. Finally, in 1930, William Empson in effect pointed out that *all* the suggested glosses for the phrase are right; this is from the second edition of *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1947): "*Lines of life* refers to the form of a personal appearance, in the young man himself or repeated in his descendants (as one speaks of the lines of some one's figure); time's wrinkles on that face (suggested only to be feared); the young man's line or lineage—his descendants; lines drawn with a pencil—a portrait; lines drawn with a pen, in writing; the lines of a poem (the kind a Sonnet has fourteen of); and destiny, as in the life-line of palmistry—*Merchant of Venice*, II.ii.163" (pp. 54–55). The phrase also includes "lines of relationship (in a genealogical table)" and the obvious—but not quite demonstrable—meaning, "children." (*Line* may also play on "loin"; see the note on p. 579.)

Multitudinous meanings, overtones, and suggestions of reference that are relevant to their context but not necessarily compatible with each other or any single paraphrase are common in the sonnets. An editor of the sonnets who presents only the gloss demanded by the author's clear intent in the ongoing logic of a poem will not be incorrect but incomplete. There are some relatively rare instances where historical changes in idiom invalidate or distort a modern reader's probable response to a line (for instance, *astonishèd* in 86.8 *base* in 100.4, *brave* in 12.2 and 15.8, *closet* in 46.6, *eager* in 188.2, *fond* in 3.7, *go* in 130.11 *Intend* in 27.6, *interest* in 74.3, *level* in 117.11 and 121.9, *modern* in 83.7,

ow'st in 18.10 and 70.14, *pencil* in 16.10, *policy* in 118.9 and 124.9, *prove* in 26.14, *reeks* in 130.8, *remember* in 120.9, *reviewest* in 74.5, *satire* in 100.11, *several* in 137.9, *store* in 11.9 and 14.12, *table* in 24.2 and 122.1,12; *translated* in 96.8,10; *will* in 134–136 and *wink* in 43.1 and 56.6). But most of the time when an editor offers the one obviously correct gloss on a word or phrase or line or quatrain, he is not so much explaining its meaning to his reader as lending scholarly sanction to the reader's own uneasy understanding of the text. The general effect of such a gloss is to tell the reader that he is foolish to have let his mind wander into any of the incidental byways toward which the accidents of particular words and idioms beckon him. The difficulty is that, since a modern reader is in obvious need of correction about those Renaissance words and phrases that he cannot understand or misunderstands because of changes the language has undergone in the time between Shakespeare and himself, a modern reader quickly develops the assumption that anything in a Renaissance text that does not accord with the general line of its argument is an illusion generated by his own ignorance and the assumption that "in those days" readers effortlessly understood a troublesome line as the unqualified and unclouded action that the logic of its context demands and an editor's gloss says it is. Some words, phrases, and lines only seem difficult to a reader unacquainted with the editor's special field of knowledge, but knowledge of Renaissance diction and idiom suggests that many of Shakespeare's locutions must have made his first readers as uneasy as they make modern readers. One can lose some of a poem if one forgets that a Shakespearian clause that makes straightforward logical sense after it has been sorted out and had its gaps filled in with probabilities must always have required some such exercise by its reader.

The notes in this edition are designed to admit that everything in a sonnet is there. Sometimes a line signals a syntactic action that later dissolves (see 33.2, 5, 7, note). Sometimes the syntax sends a reader on abortive side trips, often substantively gratuitous ones; for example, the word *that* in 16.9 can further crowd a complex line for a reader who understands *So should the lines of life that life repair* as "So should the lines of life *which* repair life"—a reading that cannot be denied even though it is cancelled, after the fact, by the actual appearance of *Which* to begin the next line.

In addition to containing the manifold significances of *lines of life* and the double action of *that*, line 9 also presents an example of another kind of fullness in the sonnets. As Empson goes on to say, *So should the lines of life that life repair* says both "that life thus should ['ought to' and 'would'] repair the lines of life" and "the lines of life thus should repair that life." The line is thus a syntactic mirror of a paradox, getting by giving, that is a recurrent theme in the preceding fifteen sonnets and is stated explicitly in the couplet of this one: *To give away yourself keeps yourself still.*

The second line of this quatrain is almost equally complex; moreover it demonstrates that discussion of Shakespeare's language is inseparable from discussion of punctuation and orthography. The spelling and punctuation of the 1609 Quarto are not necessarily or even probably Shakespeare's own, and, more

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importantly, even if they were it would not much matter. This is the Quarto text of 16.9–12:

> So should the lines of life that life repaire
> Which this (Times pensel or my pupill pen)
> Neither in inward worth nor outward faire
> Can make you live your selfe in eies of men,

No punctuation or orthography can satisfactorily retain all the superimposed meanings of line 10—meanings present in the Quarto but meanings that a modern reader can deny himself because of his habit of expecting punctuation and spelling to control logical relationships methodically.

The instinct of a modern reader will be to take the parenthetical material as an appositive identification: *this* equals *Times pensel or my pupill pen*. When one stops to think about it, that reading gives an understanding that comes close to sense but is not quite logical; before it is glossed by the parenthesis, *this* may, as Empson suggests, be taken as a contrast to *that* in the preceding line: "this life," the speaker's, spent on efforts to preserve the life of the young man in *barren rime* as opposed to *that life*, the young man's.

A more obvious and therefore more urgent understanding of *this* is as "this poem." Part of the apparent gloss in the parenthesis is thus easy to accept: the speaker's *pupill pen* may be read as a metonymy by which the product, the poem, is indicated by the tool with which it is made, the pen. However, *Times pensel*, which precedes *my pupill pen* in the apparent appositive, is another matter. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "pencil" described a small brush, an instrument used in drawing not in writing. More important still, this pencil belongs to time; a pencil wielded by "time" would be used to mark the face of the young man, to age him, to do just the opposite of what the poem and the *pupill pen* attempt to do. Understanding the parenthetical words as appositional is additionally difficult because *Times pensel* relates to the idea of portraiture introduced at the end of the preceding quatrain; "time" as a personified malignancy cannot be thought of as an artist attempting to preserve the young man by an alternative method to the poet's.

Since the spelling and punctuation probably result from a printer's whims, errors, or idiosyncracies, most editors justly and sensibly abandon the quatrain's parenthesis and, since a modern reader is conditioned to take capitalizations like *Times* as a signal of personification, give *Times* as *time's* (the apostrophe added to genitives in *s* by modern editors can be a distorting limitation; but here, where *Times* is obviously genitive in any reading of line 10, the apostrophe simply makes the genitive construction as immediately obvious to a modern reader as context would have made it for a Renaissance reader). When an editor modernizes line 10, logic and the narrowed potential of modern language drive him to settle for *Which this time's pencil or my pupil pen*—perhaps followed by a comma. From the line thus printed a modern reader will understand "which the portraiture of this age or my poor writing." That orthography and punctuation effectively deny the personification of time and the relevant but syntacti-

cally unaccommodated suggestion of time drawing wrinkles on a face. They also cancel the possible reading of *this* as "this poem," the first element of a triple subject for *Can make*. The modern reading also tends to suppress some of the significance of *pupil*, which Empson glosses as "immature and unskilful: as pupil of that time whose sonnet tradition I am imitating; or of *Time* which matures me" (p. 55).

For Shakespeare's contemporaries all these meanings, contradictions, echoes, and suggestions would have been active in the line—all in some way appropriate but none appropriate to all of the others. A modern printing cannot retain all that is in this line and in others like it because a modern reader can probably never perfectly free himself from the assumption that punctuation and spelling follow rules and that a Renaissance writer would or could expect to succeed in exercising delicate control of his readers' responses by such means. The version of the Quarto's line 10 that I offer here is no less a compromise and no less unsatisfactory than those of other modernizers. In its favor one can, however, point out that it and my texts of other lines similarly resistant to translation into the twentieth century are accompanied by the Quarto text itself and by commentary that attempts to mark each unsatisfactory compromise for what it is.

In a case like line 10 some of the flexibility of Renaissance texts can be salvaged by resisting the temptation to put a comma after *pen*. Without a comma the relationship of *Which this time's pencil or my pupil pen* to line 11 does not solidify until one reaches *Can make* in line 12; the word *Neither* thus can momentarily act as a pronoun referring to *pencil* and *pen*, and the logical implications of the parallelism between *time's pencil or my pupil pen* in line 10 and *inward worth nor outward fair* in line 11 can have free play until line 12, which thus has the rhetorical effect of a certainty emerging from a maze of unsatisfactory alternative lines of thought.

I have tried also to offer notes that distinguish the now unfamiliar habits of Renaissance syntax and idiom from locutions that can never have been as straightforward as their practical efficiency suggests they are. For example, consider the three-line subordinate clause appended to *So should the lines of life that life repair*:

> Which this time's pencil or my pupil pen
> Neither in inward worth nor outward fair
> Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.

The clause conflates two incompatible constructions, one stating the positive case for *lines of life* (*Which . . . Can make you live*), the other stating the case against art (*this . . . Neither in . . . worth nor . . . fair Can make you live*). As the three lines are read, *Which* first seems to be the grammatical subject of its clause—its antecedent being *life* or *lines of life*. The next word, *this*, transforms a reader's understanding of *Which* from probable subject to probable direct object in a developing clause of which "this . . . " will be the grammatical subject; it also adds another possible antecedent for *Which*—"reparation," a noun extrapolation from the verb in the preceding line. Ultimately, however, the completed construction, *this . . . Can make you live*, ignores the word *Which* and

cannot logically accommodate it at all: the word that links the clause to what precedes it vanishes in the course of our understanding. Moreover, a further complication of a reader's perception occurs because the clause is constructed positively; the action and power of the syntactical subject, *this time's pencil or my pupil pen*, is only qualified by a scarcely anchored syntactic appendage, *Neither in inward worth nor outward fair*. The logic of the situation urges a reader to understand the elements of the clause as if he heard "Neither in . . . worth nor . . . fair can this time's pencil or my . . . pen make you live . . . ," but the actual syntax cannot be discounted as a quaintness of archaic language: the thrust of the syntax and that of the substance and context pull against each other. A reader grasps the logically available statement he expects to hear, but it is wrapped in a syntax that suggests an opposite position. All this complexity and density is not only mastered by a reader but mastered without conscious effort or awareness. The word *So* led the reader into the quatrain confident of its direction; the couplet—a summary epigram that states a recurrent message in the preceding sonnets followed by a simple directive that echoes the language and topics of the quatrain—assures a reader that he has indeed read the simple statement he expected.

This third quatrain of sonnet 16 also offers occasion to comment on other editorial practices followed in my text. As I said, maintaining the Quarto capitalization of *Times* makes for a distortion in a modern reader's experience greater than the one that results from printing *time's*. What about *time* at the end of line 2? There, where *bloody tyrant* clearly personifies *time*, the Quarto text does not capitalize it. Many editors silently change *time* to *Time*, formalizing a personification surely evident to a Renaissance reader and, as the editorial silence testifies, evident to modern readers as well. In situations where indicating personification by capitalization does not result in a benevolent distortion, the indication is unnecessary. Much the same is true of words like *yourself*; in line 12 the Quarto gives *your selfe*, the usual Renaissance practice. The best way to duplicate the action of the Quarto line on its original readers is simply to print *yourself*—to do otherwise would be to preserve a distorting archaism for its own sake. Sometimes, however, retaining the Quarto spelling can take the place of an explanatory note; see, for example, line 13 of sonnet 62: *'Tis thee* (*my selfe*) *that for my selfe I praise*; there retention of the Quarto spelling would point up the wit of the line. I have chosen not to retain such accidentally informative spellings, not for the sake of consistency but because to create a physical distinction between standard reflexives and witty plays on them is to create an urgently etymological and ostentatiously artful effect from what would have seemed graceful wit to a Renaissance reader.

Dutiful retention of the Quarto's random use of italics (as in the Quarto text of sonnet 1, line 2) results in similar distortions by giving the sort of urgency orthographic emphases give to *Adolescent* prose. Renaissance texts do make purposeful use of such devices (e.g. *Will* in the Q text of 135.1, 2, 11, 12, and 14), but they do not do so consistently (e.g. *will* in the Q text of 135.4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 12 and *Statues* in the Q text of 55.5). The literary experience of Shakespeare's contemporaries, not conditioned to look for meaning in orthographic variations,

presumably let them recognize orthographic signals when their import assisted what was inherent in the rhythm and sense of a line but let them ignore orthographic peculiarities where they seem accidental; experience presumably also let them ignore the absence of such signals in situations where they are appropriate, and presumably preserved them from our modern temptation to study a printer's use or non-use of capitals and italics as a clue to what a Renaissance writer wished to convey. In modernizing the Q text I have used roman throughout and have not used informative capitals because where they are not unnecessary they are unwarranted. For a full discussion of the principles on which I modernize, see the long supplementary note on sonnet 129.

Except when there is practical value in doing otherwise, I have taken widely accepted glosses and suggestions by commentators whose work precedes and is covered by H. E. Rollins in his *New Variorum Edition* (1944) as in the public domain: I have not attempted to duplicate Rollins's effort in tracing back and acknowledging the first appearances of glosses and identifications that have become standard; nor have I troubled to consider suggestions that have been justly ignored by later commentators. Scholars of the caliber of Edmond Malone, Alexander Schmidt, and Hyder Rollins himself are in no danger of being forgotten; the bulk of the lesser scholars whose follies are displayed in the *Variorum* are in no danger *from* being forgotten. I have also chosen not to label each and every previously noted allusion and gloss with its donor's name because such scrupulosity seems less often prompted by generosity than by the hope that each *un*acknowledged perception will thereby be recognized and admired as the editor's own. I have drawn often on more recent commentaries, notably those in two editions that appeared in 1964, one by Gerald Willen and Victor Reed, the other by W. G. Ingram and Theodore Redpath; I acknowledge their contributions one by one because they are so many and because their authors are alive to hear my thanks. Bibliographical details on these and other works to which I refer regularly are given in the list of abbreviations (pp. 539–42).

Unless otherwise specified, all references to Shakespeare's plays and other poems are keyed to *The Tudor Shakespeare*, ed. Peter Alexander (London, 1951, and New York, 1952).

The spelling in my modernized text is British (because British readers seem to be more troubled by variations from the spellings normal to them than Americans are); however, where Q gives a spelling current in American usage but not in British, I have left it alone (e.g. *center* in 146.1). The spelling in the commentary is American because I am.

* * *

I am grateful to the Huntington Library for permission to reproduce the Bridgewater copy of the Apsley imprint of the 1609 Quarto and to The Elizabethan Club for permission to reproduce the title page from their copy of the Wright imprint. The two illustrations in the commentary are also by permission of the Huntington Library. I am indebted to Carey S. Bliss, Curator of Rare

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I have worked six years on the commentary to this edition, and there now seem to be few living Americans who have not read, written, or corrected some of it. I was especially dependent on the assistance of three people who helped me on specialized topics: Florence Elon (on music), Ivan King (on astronomy), and A. J. Patek (on medicine); I thank them and apologize to them for phoning them at odd hours with odd questions; please keep in mind that I asked for their help only when I had the wit to know I needed it. I am also vastly indebted to Brent Cohen, Susan Harris, Richard Sylvester, William Buford, and—and most of all—Barbara Theiner; each of them read through the whole of the commentary, taking my foot out of my mouth more often than I care to recall and making more suggestions and additions than the economics of academic publishing allow me to acknowledge specifically. My own contribution to the commentary was *at least* as great as my wife's (for instance, I prepared the index all by myself); her name is Susan Patek Booth.

S. B.

Berkeley, California
May 3, 1976

Preface to the 1978 Printing

The present need to print more copies of this book gives me a chance to make up for some earlier lapses. I have silently corrected as many minor errors as I have so far found or been told about. I am indebted to various friends, relatives, and reviewers for catching escaped faults that would otherwise be still at large; I am most particularly indebted to W. L. Godshalk—who in the course of the last ten days' frantic correspondence has virtually become co-editor.

I am grateful also to the staff of the Huntington Library for permitting me—and helping me—to get six pages of the Huntington-Bridgewater copy of the 1609 Quarto re-photographed. The six pages—reproduced as pages 90, 93, 94, 97, 98, and 105 below—are signatures $G2^{v}$, $G3^{r}$, $G3^{v}$, $G4^{r}$, $G4^{v}$, and $H2^{r}$. For reasons beyond my severely limited technical scope, five of those six pages did not reproduce clearly in the first printing of this book. The sixth, $H2^{r}$, was reproduced without its catchword. (I wish I could say I wondered why. I know why. In a dim moment I blocked it out of the photograph. The catchword ["To"] on that page is severely damaged. In the Huntington-Bridgewater copy it looks like a smudge. I guess I must have taken it for an accident of the photograph—even though its position, its relative clarity in other copies of Q, and the absence of any other catchword for the page said otherwise and said it loudly. I feel appropriately foolish.)

This new printing also includes several pages of additional notes, notes largely derived from suggestions offered by reviewers. One of those notes (on 111.1) discusses the one substantial difference between the modernized text printed here and the one published in 1977. For obvious economic reasons the new notes are all together at the end of the book (pp. 579–83), but I have inserted a brief notice of the existence and location of each at the appropriate point in the body of the commentary to which it pertains.

S.B.

Berkeley, California
September 6, 1978

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