

# Sonnets

The background of the image is composed of three vertical panels. The left panel is blue with white and light blue lightning-like patterns. The middle panel is green with white and light green lightning-like patterns. The right panel is red with white and light red lightning-like patterns. The patterns are abstract and resemble electrical discharges or plasma.

**William Shakespeare**

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## Sonnets

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## THE SONNETS

### I.

FROM fairest creatures we desire increase,  
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,  
But as the ripener should by time decease,  
His tender heir might bear his memory:  
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,  
Feed'st thy light'st flame with self-substantial fuel,  
Making a famine where abundance lies,  
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.  
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament  
And only herald to the gaudy spring,  
Within thine own bud buriest thy content  
And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding.  
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,  
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

### II.

When forty winters shall beseege thy brow,  
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,  
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,  
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:  
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,  
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,  
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,  
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.  
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,  
If thou couldst answer 'This fair child of mine  
Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,'  
Proving his beauty by succession thine!  
This were to be new made when thou art old,  
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

### III.

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest  
Now is the time that face should form another;  
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,  
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother.  
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb  
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?  
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb  
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?

Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee  
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:  
So thou through windows of thine age shall see  
Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time.  
But if thou live, remember'd not to be,  
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

**IV.**

Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend  
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?  
Nature's bequest gives nothing but doth lend,  
And being frank she lends to those are free.  
Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse  
The bounteous largess given thee to give?  
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use  
So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?  
For having traffic with thyself alone,  
Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive.  
Then how, when nature calls thee to be gone,  
What acceptable audit canst thou leave?  
Thy unused beauty must be tomb'd with thee,  
Which, used, lives th' executor to be.

**V.**

Those hours, that with gentle work did frame  
The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell,  
Will play the tyrants to the very same  
And that unfair which fairly doth excel:  
For never-resting time leads summer on  
To hideous winter and confounds him there;  
Sap cheque'd with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,  
Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness every where:  
Then, were not summer's distillation left,  
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,  
Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,  
Nor it nor no remembrance what it was:  
But flowers distill'd though they with winter meet,  
Leese but their show; their substance still lives sweet.

**VI.**

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface  
In thee thy summer, ere thou be distill'd:  
Make sweet some vial; treasure thou some place  
With beauty's treasure, ere it be self-kill'd.  
That use is not forbidden usury,  
Which happies those that pay the willing loan;

That's for thyself to breed another thee,  
Or ten times happier, be it ten for one;  
Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,  
If ten of thine ten times refigured thee:  
Then what could death do, if thou shouldst depart,  
Leaving thee living in posterity?  
Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair  
To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir.

**VII.**

Lo! in the orient when the gracious light  
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye  
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,  
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;  
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,  
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,  
yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,  
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;  
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car,  
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,  
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are  
From his low tract and look another way:  
So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,  
Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.

**VIII.**

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?  
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.  
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,  
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?  
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 shouldst bear.  
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,  
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,  
Sings this to thee: 'thou single wilt prove none.'

**IX.**

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye  
That thou consumest thyself in single life?  
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die.  
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;