



William Shakespeare

*Venus and
Adonis*

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Vilia miretur vulgus; mihi flavus Apollo
Pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua.

**TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
HENRY WRIOTHESLEY, EARL OF
SOUTHAMPTON,
and Baron of Titchfield.**

Right Honourable, I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burthen: only, if your honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.

Your honour's in all duty,
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.