

EXPLANATIONS.

1. "Since brass, nor stone, ... / But sad mortality ... hold a plea."

These lines extracted from the first quatrain of Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 65 vividly present the ephemerality of all physical elements. The poet here sadly admits the invincible power of time. Every earthly object has to come under the bending sickle of time, irrespective of its strength, durability or vastness. The ravages caused by time are so severe and far-reaching that the very tender and frail human beauty is most unlikely to defend or defy its blows.

The expression is a characteristic representation of time-love theme of Shakespearean sonnets. The poet's tone here is both reflective and pensive. The cruel ravages of time fill his mind with depression and he laments the transience of human beauty and glory. Here, the legal expression 'hold a plea' meaning defending one's case reminds the readers of the conflict between time and beauty.

2. "O, how shall summer's honey breath ... battering days"

These lines extracted from the second quatrain of Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 65 reveal the poet's hopelessness about any prospect of survival for man's youth against the onslaught of time. The sweet, warm days of summer i.e. one's youth are bound to pass away with the progress of time. The honey stored in a flower cannot withhold the pressure of bees. The flower fades away once the honey is taken from it. In the like manner, time takes away man's honey i.e. prime youth and leaves him with signs of decay and degeneration.

The lines express the poet's pensive admission of the corrosive effects of time. It echoes the Shakespearean ^{theme} of the struggle between time and love with the former getting greater emphasis. The imagery of bees collecting honey from flowers to suggest the smooth and stealthy manner of taking away one's youth is brilliant. The use of the terms like 'siege' and 'battering days' evokes in our mind the sense of military attack, which again reveals the destructibility of time and the helplessness of man's beauty against it.

3. "O fearful meditation ... from Time's chest lie hid?"

These lines extracted from the third quatrain of Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 65 reveal the poet's deep depression at the thought of withering away of man's physical qualities caused by time's merciless blows. The poet shudders to think that there is hardly any prospect for the frail beauty of man to survive against the wrecks of time. He considers beauty to be time's best jewel and also maintains that this very jewel will soon be lost in oblivion in Time's chest i.e. coffin.

The imagery of a precious jewel being treasured in a chest is quite intricate and impressive. Here man's beauty has appropriately been compared to a jewel to suggest its worth and a desperation of the

owner to possess it. Time has been personified here to show its destructive power more forcefully. Again, the use of rhetorical question in these lines clearly reveals the poet's conviction about the invincible power of time to annihilate the pomp of possession and the show of beauty. The image of a jewel in a chest has been used by Shakespeare in other sonnets too (Sonnet No. 48 and 52).

4. "On what strong hand . . . can forbid?"

These lines extracted from the third quatrain of Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 65 reveal the poet's conviction about the invincible power of time to annihilate the pomp of possession and the show of beauty. Although he asks whose mighty hand can hold back the swift march of time, he firmly believes that any human being, however powerful he or she might be, stands only as a weakling against the havoc of time. Time will overcome any challenge and continue to destroy and plunder the physical charm and beauty of all individuals.

The 'hand-foot' imagery in these lines showing a hand's attempt to stop a foot explicitly reveals man's frail effort and his helplessness against the onslaught of time and also the overpowering power of time upon one and all. The use of rhetorical question emphatically suggests the impossibility of any escape from the ravages of time. The word 'spoil' has been used here in a double sense. Primarily, it refers to time's destruction but a closer reading offers a hint at the things looted by it.

5. "O, none, unless . . . still shine bright."

These lines form the concluding couplet of Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 65. Here the poet dejectedly but frankly admits that no earthly object or human effort is strong enough to thwart the onslaught of time. However, he is optimistic of perpetuating his love for his young friend through his verse. He is enlivened with a sweet hope that the magic power of his poetry will secure a place of permanence for his love in the galaxy of brightly shining stars.

Shakespeare considers the perpetuation of his love a miracle because it is to be attained by no formidable object but by verse. It is again a miracle in that the black ink which is generally associated with darkness will brighten his love. His proud assertion about the sustainability of his love through the power of verse is very typical of the Elizabethan sonneteers. While Shakespeare himself makes a similar claim in Sonnet No. 18, Spenser boasts of his poetic creation to immortalize his love in Sonnet No. 75 of Amoretti. Here, he also echoes Sidney in the glorification of the colour black (Sonnet No. 7 in Astrophel and Stella).