

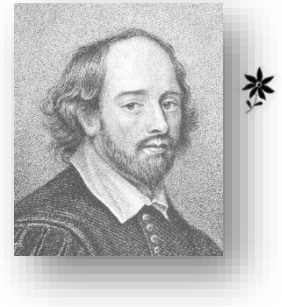


WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1564-1616

Sonnet 129

(Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame)



Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,
5 Enjoyed no sooner but despisèd straight,
Past reason hunted and, no sooner had,
Past reason hated as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;
Mad in pursuit and in possession so,
10 Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme,
A bliss in proof and proved a very woe,
Before, a joy proposed—behind, a dream.
 All this the world well knows, yet none knows well
 To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

