

If this be error and upon me proved,  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

## 129

Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame  
Is lust in action;<sup>7</sup> and till action, lust  
Is perjured, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame,  
Savage, extreme, rude,<sup>8</sup> cruel, not to trust;  
5 Enjoyed no sooner but despised 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<sup>8</sup> and proved, a very<sup>9</sup> 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.

brutal

true

## 130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;<sup>9</sup>  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
5 I have seen roses damasked,<sup>9</sup> red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.<sup>1</sup>  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
10 That music hath a far more pleasing sound;  
I grant I never saw a goddess go;<sup>9</sup>  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare<sup>9</sup> admirable, extraordinary  
As any she belied<sup>9</sup> with false compare. misrepresented

variegated

walk

## 135

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy Will,<sup>2</sup>  
And Will to boot, and Will in overplus;

7. The word order here is inverted and slightly obscures the meaning. Lust, when put into action, expends "spirit" (life, vitality; also semen) in a "waste" (desert; also with a pun on *waist*) of shame.  
8. A bliss during the experience.  
9. An anti-Petrarchan sonnet. All of the details commonly attributed by other Elizabethan sonneteers to their ladies are here denied to the poet's

mistress.

1. Not with our pejorative sense, but simply "emanates."

2. (1) Wishes, (2) carnal desire, (3) the male and female sexual organs, (4) a lover—Shakespeare?—named Will. This is one of three, possibly four, ~~sonnets~~ punning on the word.