

Theme: Sexual Love and Language

Poem: *Sonnet 18* by William Shakespeare

In *Sonnet 18*, the speaker asks whether he should compare his girl to a summer day. He says his girl is prettier than that. He then says why summer isn't as good as her and basically compliments her in order to get into her pants. He says that everything that is beautiful eventually loses its beauty over time, but he says that her beauty is eternal through his poem and says that as long as there's someone alive to read his poem about her, she will live forever.

This poem says firstly that men often say beautiful things in order to get into a woman's pants. As we learned in class, using language like this was simply a measure to ensure a man ended up with sex. This poem suggests that there's no such thing as non-sexual love since although the things he said were in fact beautiful and romantic, his aim was not to love the woman he's writing about but merely to have sex with her. It also tells us that men have the mindset of being romantic not for the sake of love but for the sake of sex, which actually defiles the idea of love. This poem shows one of many men who use language to try and get what he wants.

This poem also comments on language itself. It suggests the power that language has over us. Not only in a romantic sense but near the end when he says his words and his poem will immortalize her, this suggests the power of words and language. The idea that we can each be immortalized but language is something that I think everyone believes. The poem for example, immortalizes Shakespeare, as long as people read his works, he will always be remembered and that might be a motivation for people who write today. They know that as long as they have readers, they will live forever, and this poem expresses that.