

SONNET 60

Lines 1-4

*Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end,
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.*

In the first lines of 'Sonnet 60,' the speaker begins with a clear and beautiful description of time. He uses a metaphor to compare the progression of time to the movement of waves "towards the pebbled shore". Life is fast and there is never enough time to do everything that one wants to, these lines allude to. The moments move as the waves do, in and out, one replacing the next. Their efforts together move one's life forward towards its inevitable conclusion.

Lines 5-8

*Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And time that gave doth now his gift confound.*

In the next four lines of 'Sonnet 60,' the speaker describes "Nativity" (the place of person's birth) and everything that has ever been born. None of it stays young or new forever. It all "Crawls" through time to "maturity" where it finds its light and peak. There are numerous obstacles to that peak that all living beings face. There are "Crooked eclipses" that try to fight against "his glory". Time, which was once a friend carrying one on towards the penultimate moments of their life becomes an adversary. It takes its gift back.

Lines 9-14

*Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow;
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.
And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.*

In the third quatrain of 'Sonnet 60,' the speaker adds that **it is time's job to destroy the beauty of youth** that it once bestowed and create wrinkles on "beauty's brow". The perfect smoothness of youth is corrupted by "parallels".

Time even "Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth," the most beautiful things in nature fall victim to the power of time. There is nothing it won't touch with its "scythe". These lines use imagery to refer to the figure of death as a grim reaper.

In the last two lines, the speaker concludes by saying his verses will last into the future. They will continue to praise the youth's worth no matter what time tries to do.