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| **SONNET 18** | **PARAPHRASE** |
| Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? | Shall I compare you to a summer's day? |
| Thou art more lovely and more temperate: | You are more lovely and more constant: |
| Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, | Rough winds shake the beloved buds of May |
| And summer's lease hath all too short a date: | And summer is far too short: |
| Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, | At times the sun is too hot, |
| And often is his gold complexion dimm'd; | Or often goes behind the clouds; |
| And every fair from fair sometime declines, | And everything beautiful sometime will lose its beauty, |
| By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd; | By misfortune or by nature's planned out course. |
| But thy eternal summer shall not fade | But your youth shall not fade, |
| Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest; | Nor will you lose the beauty that you possess; |
| Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade, | Nor will death claim you for his own, |
| When in eternal lines to time thou growest: | Because in my eternal verse you will live forever. |
| So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, | So long as there are people on this earth, |
| So long lives this and this gives life to thee. | So long will this poem live on, making you immortal. |

**Language Analysis**

***temperate* (1):** i.e., evenly-tempered; not overcome by passion.

**the eye of heaven (5):** i.e., the sun.

**every fair from fair sometime declines (7):** i.e., the beauty (fair) of everything beautiful (fair) will fade (declines).  
Compare to Sonnet 116: "rosy lips and cheeks/Within his bending sickle's compass come."

**nature's changing course (8):** i.e., the natural changes age brings.

**that fair thou ow'st (10):** i.e., that beauty you possess.

**in eternal lines...growest (12):** The poet is using a grafting metaphor in this line. Grafting is a technique used to join parts from two plants with cords so that they grow as one. Thus the beloved becomes immortal, grafted to time with the poet's cords (his "eternal lines"). For commentary on whether this sonnet is really "one long exercise in self-glorification", please see below.

**“Sonnet 18” (from Bloom, professor emeritus at Yale)**

**Background Information:**

* Shakespearean sonnets (all 154) are always 14 lines in length with the following basic pattern (last word in each line): abab, cdcd, efef, gg (sometimes the rhymes in the mid-section change slightly, i.e. cde, cde)
* The couplet is the conclusion and the last words in each line rhyme. The other lines follow one of the patterns listed above. In this sonnet, the couple is very dependent on the preceding line (line 12).

**QUESTIONS:**

Directions: Answer the following questions after reading “Sonnet 18.” Include textual support from the poem in your answers.

1. “Sonnet 18” by William Shakespeare is **paradoxical**. Find support to show how the speaker (Shakespeare) in the sonnet praises his beloved by **comparing his beloved to a “summer’s day**?” But in truth, the comparison is sheer **hyperbole (exaggeration).** Bullet evidence of the comparison and the exaggeration below.
2. Temporal endurance or standing the test of time is ultimately, what is fair or beautiful to the poet. Find evidence of this concept in the sonnet. Bullet evidence of this below.
3. Shakespeare dwells on the conventional point that **summer and its beauty are mortal**. With the help from **anaphora** (deliberate repetition of the first part of the sentence in order to achieve an artistic effect; roots in biblical psalms) lines 4,6, & 7 begin with “And” which helps turn this common truth about summer into something more eloquent. **Paraphrase lines 4, 6 & 7 below; show how Shakespeare makes summer and its beauty eloquent even though they are mortal, end.**
4. Show how the beloved’s beauty will avoid the fault of fading, a fault that all other beauties share? The answer is in line 12!!! What is the meaning of this line and the couplet? What stands the test of time? And what can be preserved in it?