

A Lover Searches History

The maisters across history;
Do each in turn, attempt in verse;
To write upon the mystery
Of perfect love, complete immerse.
But each a tale, from days of old;
True love in turn, goes bitter cold.

Great Homer in his precedence;
How beauty fair, doth conquer man;
When splendor has such excellence,
No army strong, no sea can span.
Though great allure, a face may be;
A fickle hart, is prone to flee.

Good Plutarch, ever sage and wise;
Of glory Rome, her leadership;
How strength in love can compromise,
A Roman hart, an Egipt lip.
Though passion well doth he display,
If power come, the hart betray.

And then behold the English bard;
Of tales of woe, and times romance.
Of feud and friend, they disregard;
As two in one, in secret dance.
Though solace in true love be grand,
Take not your life, for loss of hand.

So how does each a maister miss,
To find true love and give the tale.
Methinks that each who try remiss,
As love before, was oft the pale.
Until alas, came love so true;
The dawning light, along came you.

By: Lord Paganus Akritas

Poetry Competition (Novice)

12th Night

Artists Name: Lord Paganus Akritas (Gregory Lemich)

Title of Project: Poem, “A Lover Searches History”

Historical Basis: 16th Century English Poem

Tools and Materials: All of the inspiration, verbiage, and stylings came from Tottel’s Miscellany (1557), with emphasis on Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.

Format: The poem presented here (page 2) was formatted off Howard’s *A praise of his love: wherein he reproveth them that compare their Ladies with his* (#20, page 3). Both Howard’s and the presented use five tetrameter Venus and Adonis stanzas (ABABCC).

Theme: Thematically, this poem is meant to have the same playful and challenging spirit of love as Howard’s *A praise of his love*. Though Howard wrote many serious love poems, he also wrote ones which have a lighthearted feel to them. Examples include *To the ladie that scorned her lover* (#21) which uses a spirited chess metaphor throughout and *The meanes to attain a happy life* (#31), a poem of light contentedness.

In Text References: In Howard’s *A praise of his love*, he references Penelope (from the Iliad) and Nature as a sentient force. This poem extended the historical references to include Homer and the Iliad, Plutarch’s writings on Alexander and Cleopatra, and Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. In justification, references to the Trojan war and Greek and Roman mythology and heroes are widely prevalent in Howard’s writings (#3, #5, #7, #15, #16, #24, #30, #34, #36, #37). Next, Romeo and Juliet was written in 1597 making Shakespeare a contemporary of this poem. Howard established a precedence for writing about his contemporaries in his poems about Thomas Wyatt (#34, #35) and others (#15, #18, #32, #40).

Writing Style: The presented poem is an attempt at 16th century English sentence structure, grammar, and spelling. All non-modern spellings were directly taken from Henry Howard and Thomas Wyatt.

Writer Context: This is my first poetry submission in the SCA. I started studying poetry in Fall of 2020 and am looking forward to getting feedback.

Reference: Holton, A. and Macfaul, T. (2011). *Tottel’s Miscellany: Songs and Sonnets of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Others*. London, UK: Penguin. (Original work published 1557)

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A Praise of His Love by Henry Howard

Give place, ye lovers, here before
That spent your boasts and brags in vain;
My lady's beauty passeth more
The best of yours, I dare well sayn,
Than doth the sun the candle-light,
Or brightest day the darkest night.

And thereto hath a troth as just
As had Penelope the fair;
For what she saith, ye may it trust,
As it by writing sealed were;
And virtues hath she many mo
Than I with pen have skill to show.

I could rehearse, if that I wold,
The whole effect of Nature's plaint,
When she had lost the perfit mould,
The like to whom she could not paint;
With wringing hands, how she did cry,
And what she said, I know it, I.

I know she swore with raging mind,
Her kingdom only set apart,
There was no loss by law of kind,
That could have gone so near her heart;
And this was chiefly all her pain;
She could not make the like again.

Sith Nature thus gave her the praise,
To be the chiefest work she wrought;
In faith, methink, some better ways
On your behalf might well be sought,
Than to compare, as ye have done,
To match the candle with the sun.