

SONNET 116 PARAPHRASE

Let me not to the marriage of true minds Let me not declare any reasons why two

Admit impediments. Love is not love True-minded people should not be married. Love is not love

Which alters when it alteration finds, Which changes when it finds a change in circumstances,

Or bends with the remover to remove: Or bends from its firm stand even when a lover is unfaithful:

O no! it is an ever-fixed mark Oh no! it is a lighthouse

That looks on tempests and is never shaken; That sees storms but it never shaken;

It is the star to every wandering bark, Love is the guiding north star to every lost ship,

Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken. Whose value cannot be calculated, although its altitude can be measured.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks Love is not at the mercy of Time, though physical beauty

Within his bending sickle's compass come: Comes within the compass of his sickle.

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks, Love does not alter with hours and weeks,

But bears it out even to the edge of doom. But, rather, it endures until the last day of life.

If this be error and upon me proved, If I am proved wrong about these thoughts on love

I never writ, nor no man ever loved. Then I recant all that I have written, and no man has ever [truly] loved.

Shakespeare (1564-1616)