Sonnets

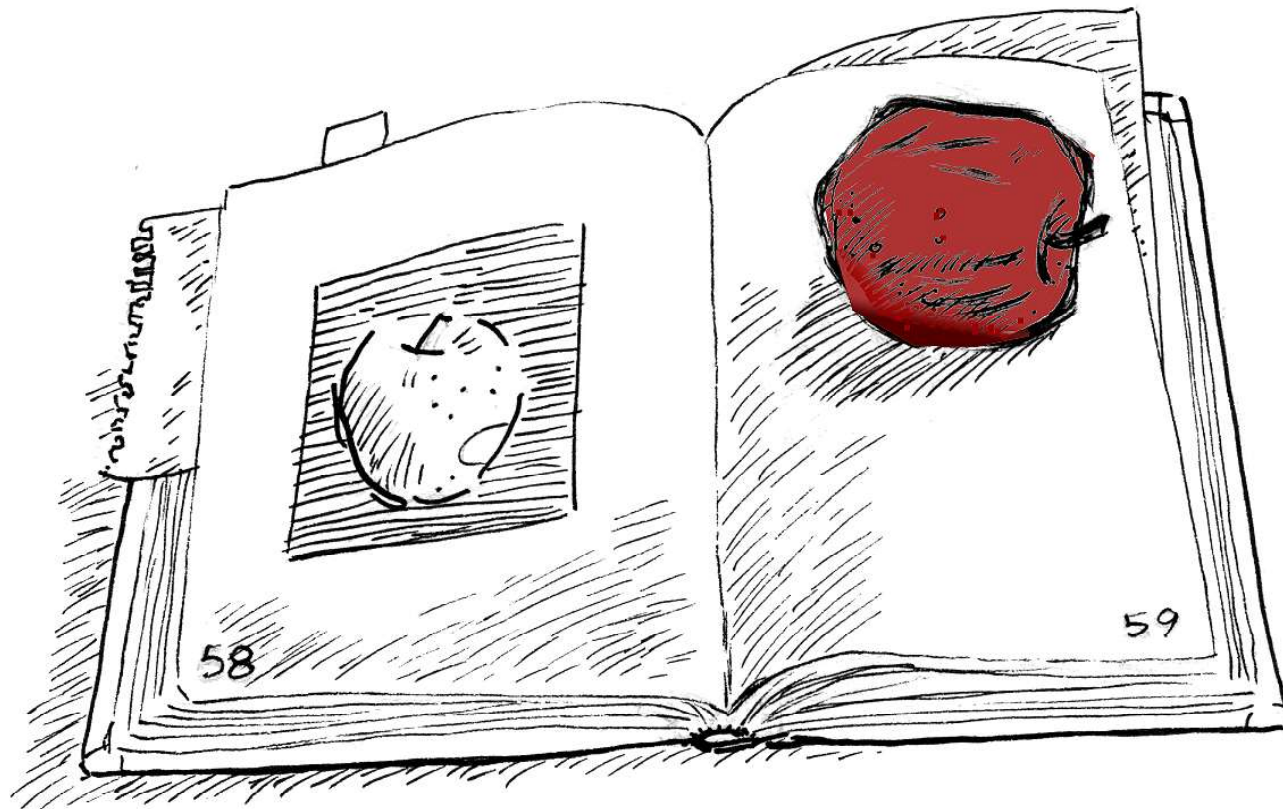# *Sonnet Types*

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Wyatt (1503 — 1542) is an example of an Early English Renaissance writer.

- Credited with introducing the sonnet-form to England.

- He made available numerous translations of Petrach's works

  and imitations of Italian sonnet forms.

- Follows the logic of Petrachan themes of unrequieted love

- Likewise, he crafted his own versions of the poetry style.
  > Opens with an octave like the Petrarchan model: ABBA ABBA
  > His resulting sestet however is displayed as: CDDC EE
  > *or* he will experiment a step further, resulting in: ABBA CDDC EFFE GG

  > either way, rather than two tercets, the result is a closing couplet rhyme,
    an exclusive English contribution to literature

Sonnet Types

Sir Thomas Wyatt

- *like Chaucer,* Wyatt is interested in the Italian Renaissance, using aspects of their culture for the developing English arts movement
- *like Petrarch,* Wyatt is interested in the Ancient Classical period, using the poetry and prose of that time as a means of embellishing the current literature
- keep in mind, he is mainly considered a nobleman, diplomat, and courtier of Henry VIII's court; poetry and arts were a secondary activity, a hobby
- his poetry and translations were not published until after his death
- often he employed a literary technique called *imitatio*, which means emulation or imitation of another artist's work; in this fashion, a poet may "borrow" an image or phrase from another writer, then twist the concept into something new

Sonnet Types

In Wyatt's work he promotes the Petrarchan model.

Wyatt uses Petrarch as a prototype for the English poem.

- typical Petrarchan conceits appear frequently:

  > love as a hunting trip

  > the female figure as a doe

- particularly in his *imitatio* verses he will maintain the original intentions of the work, rarely diverging away from the primary source

- due to his time period in history, his language and spelling are out-dated to the average reader; however, with patience, his work can be accessible

Sonnet Types

The Italian Rhyme Scheme

A	A	
B	B	
B	A	
A	B	
A	A	
B	B	
B	A	
A	B	
C	C	C
D	D	D
E	C	C
C	C	D
D	D	C
E	C	D

Wyatt Rhyme Schemes

A		A
B		B
B		B
A		A
A		C
B		D
B		D
A		C
C	C	E
D	D	F
D	C	F
C	D	E
E		G
E		G

Sonnet Types

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503 — 1542)

	Rhyme scheme ||	Meter
Who so list to hount, I knowe where is an hynde,	A	5.5
But as for me, helas, I may no more:	B	5
The vayne travaill hath weried me so sore.	B	5
I ame of theim that farthest commeth behinde;	A	5.5
Yet may I by no meanes my weried mynde	A	5
Draw from the Diere: but as she fleeth afore,	B	5
Faynting I folowe. I leve of therefore,	B	5
Sins in a nett I seke to hold the wynd.	A	5
Who so list to hount, I put him owte of dowbte,	C	5.5
As well as I may spend his tyme in vain:	D	5
And graven Diamonds, in letters plain	D	4.5
There is written her fairer neck rounde abowte:	C	5.5
Noli me tangere, for Caesers I ame;	E	5
And wyld for to hold, though I seme tame.	E	4.5

problem discussed in octave

mild volta shown with repeating phrase, confirming previous problem; a resolution is provided in ending sestet

Wyatt, Sir Thomas. *The Essential Wyatt*. W.S. Merwin, ed. New York: Ecco Press, 1982.

Sonnet Types

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English imitatio *(Thomas Wyatt) in modern wording*

Who so wishes to hunt, I know where is an hind,   *< a female deer*

But as for me, alas, I may no more:

The vain travel has wearied me so sore.

I am of them that furthest come behind;

Yet may I by no means my wearied mind

Draw from the deer, but as she flees afore,

Fainting I follow; I leave off therefore,

Since in a net I seek to hold the wind.

Who desires her, hunt, I put him out of doubt,

As well as I, may spend his time in vain:

And graven with diamonds in letters plain,

There is written her fair neck round about:

Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am;   *< touch me not*

And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.

Sonnet Types

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503 — 1542)

The Louer for shamefaltness hideth his desire within his faithfull hart.

	Rhyme scheme || Meter
The longe love, that in my thought doeth harbar	**A**	**5.5**
And in myn hert doeth kepe his residence,	**B**	**5**
Into my face preseth with bolde pretence,	**B**	**5**
And therin campeth, spreding his baner.	**A**	**5.5**
She that me lerneth to love and suffre,	**A**	**5**
And willes that my trust and lustes negligence	**B**	**5**
Be rayned by reason, shame and reverence,	**B**	**5**
With his hardiness taketh displeasur.	**A**	**5**
Wherewithall, vnto the hertes forrest he fleith,	**C**	**5.5**
Leving his entrprise with payn and cry;	**D**	**5**
And ther him hideth, and not appereth.	**C**	**4.5**
What may I do when my maister fereth	**C**	**5.5**
But in the feld with him to lyve and dye?	**D**	**5**
For goode is the liff, ending faithfully.	**E**	**4.5**

problem discussed in octave

mild volta confirming previous problem;

a resolution is provided in ending sestet

Wyatt, Sir Thomas. *The Essential Wyatt*. W.S. Merwin, ed. New York: Ecco Press, 1982.

Sonnet Types

Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374)

Modern English translation

190.

A pure white hind appeared to me

with two gold horns, on green grass,

between two streams, in a laurel's shade,

at sunrise, in the unripe season.

Her aspect was so sweet and proud

I left all my labour to follow her:

as a miser, in search of treasure,

makes his toil lose its bitterness in delight.

Touch me not, in diamonds and topaz,

was written round about her lovely neck:

it pleased my Lord to set me free.

The sun had already mounted to mid-day,

my eyes were tired with gazing, but not sated,

when I fell into water, and she vanished.

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503 — 1542)

English imitatio

Who so list to hount, I knowe where is an hynde,

But as for me, helas, I may no more:

The vayne travaill hath weried me so sore.

I ame of theim that farthest commeth behinde;

Yet may I by no meanes my weried mynde

Draw from the Diere: but as she fleeth afore,

Faynting I folowe. I leve of therefore,

Sins in a nett I seke to hold the wynd.

Who so list to hount, I put him owte of dowbte,

As well as I may spend his tyme in vain:

And graven Diamonds, in letters plain

There is written her fairer neck rounde abowte:

Noli me tangere, for Caesers I ame;

And wyld for to hold, though I seme tame.

Petrarch, Francesco. *The Complete Canzoniere*. A. S. Kline, Trans. London: Poetry in Translation. 2001.
Wyatt, Sir Thomas. *The Essential Wyatt*. Selected by W. S. Merwin. New York: Eco Press, 1989.

Sonnet Types

Francesco Petrarch (1304 - 1374)

from *Rime Sparse*   *original Italian*   *Modern English translation*

189.   ### 189.

Passa la nave mia colma d'oblio   **A**   My ship, full of oblivion, sails

per aspro mare, a mezza notte il verno,   **B**   on a bitter sea, at winter's midnight,

enfra Scilla et Caribdi; et al governo   **B**   between Scylla and Charybdis: at the helm

siede 'l signore, anzi 'l nimico mio.   **A**   sits that Lord, or rather my enemy.

A ciascun remo un penser pronto et rio   **A**   At each oar there's a cruel eager thought,

che la tempesta e 'l fin par ch'abbi a scherno;   **B**   that scorns the tempest and its end:

la vela rompe un vento humido eterno   **B**   the sail's torn by an eternal moist wind

di sospir', di speranze, et di desio.   **A**   of sighs, of hopes, and of desire.

Pioggia di lagrimar, nebbia di sdegni   **C**   A rain of tears, a mist of disdain

bagna et rallenta le già stanche sarte,   **D**   drench and slacken the already tired shrouds,

che son d'error con ignorantia attorto.   **E**   woven from error and ignorance.

Celansi i duo mei dolci usati segni;   **C**   My two usual guiding lights are so hidden:

morta fra l'onde è la ragion et l'arte,   **D**   reason and art so drowned by the waves,

tal ch'incomincio a desperar del porto.   **E**   that I begin to despair of finding harbour.

Petrarch, Francesco. *The Complete Canzoniere*. A. S. Kline, Trans. London: Poetry in Translation. 2001.

Sonnet Types

Francesco Petrarch

Modern English translation (A.S. Kline)

189.

My ship, full of oblivion, sails	**A**
on a bitter sea, at winter's midnight,	**B**
between Scylla and Charybdis: at the helm	**B**
sits that Lord, or rather my enemy.	**A**
At each oar there's a cruel eager thought,	**A**
that scorns the tempest and its end:	**B**
the sail's torn by an eternal moist wind	**B**
of sighs, of hopes, and of desire.	**A**
A rain of tears, a mist of disdain	**C**
drench and slacken the already tired shrouds,	**D**
woven from error and ignorance.	**E**
My two usual guiding lights are so hidden:	**C**
reason and art so drowned by the waves,	**D**
that I begin to despair of finding harbour.	**E**

Sir Thomas Wyatt

English imitatio

My galy[1] charged with forgetfulnes	**A**	**4.5**
Thorrough sharpe sees in wynter nyghtes doth pas	**B**	**5**
Twene Rock and Rock; and eke myn ennemy, Alas,	**B**	**6**
That is my lorde, sterith[2] with cruelnes;	**A**	**4.5**
And every owre[3] a thought in redines,	**A**	**5**
As tho that deth were light in suche a case.	**B**	**5**
An endles wynd doeth tere the sayl apase[4]	**B**	**5**
Of forced sightes and trusty ferefulnes[5].	**A**	**4.5**
A rayn of teris[6], a clowde of derk disdain,	**C**	**5**
Hath done the wered[7] cordes great hinderaunce,	**D**	**5**
Wrethed with errour and eke with ignoraunce.	**D**	**5**
The starres be hid that led me to this pain;	**C**	**5**
Drowned is reason that should me confort[8],	**E**	**4.5**
And I remain dispering of the port.	**E**	**5**

1 galy = galley
2 sterith = steereth
3 owre = oar
4 tere the sayll a pase = tear the sail apace
5 ferefulnes = fearfulness
6 teris = tears
7 wered = wearied
8 confort = comfort

Petrarch, Francesco. *The Complete Canzoniere*. A. S. Kline, Trans. London: Poetry in Translation. 2001.
Wyatt, Sir Thomas. *The Essential Wyatt*. Selected by W. S. Merwin. New York: Eco Press, 1989.

Sonnet Types

Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374)

from *Rime Sparse*   *original Italian*

Modern English translation (A.S. Kline)

140.

Italian	English
Amor, che nel penser mio vive e regna	Love that lives and reigns in my thought
e 'l suo seggio maggior nel mio cor tene,	and holds the central place in my heart,
talor armato ne la fronte vene;	sometimes comes to my brow fully armed,
ivi si loca et ivi pon sua insegna.	takes his stand there, and sets up his banner.
Quella ch'amare e sofferir ne 'nsegna,	She who teaches love and suffering,
e vol che'l gran desio, l'accesa spene,	and wishes great desire and burning hope
ragion, vergogna, e reverenza affrene,	to be restrained by reason, reverence, shame,
di nostro ardir fra se stessa si sdegna.	is angered in herself by our ardour.
Onde Amor paventoso fugge al core,	Then Love retreats in fear to the heart,
lasciando ogni sua impresa, e piange e trema;	relinquishing his aim, trembles, weeps:
ivi s'asconde e non appar piu fore.	hides himself there, and no more appears.
Che poss'io far, temendo il mio signore,	What can I do, now my lord's afraid,
se non star seco infin a l'ora estrema?	but stay with him until the final hour?
che bel fin fa chi ben amando more.	For he ends well, who dies loving well.

Petrarch, Francesco. *The Complete Canzoniere*. A. S. Kline, Trans. London: Poetry in Translation. 2001.

Sonnet Types

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503 — 1542)

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517 — 1547)

The longe love, that in my thought doeth harbar
    And in myn hert doeth kepe his residence,
    Into my face preseth with bolde pretence,
    And therin campeth, spreding his baner.
She that me lerneth to love and suffre,
    And willes that my trust and lustes negligence
    Be rayned by reason, shame and reverence,
    With his hardiness taketh displeasur.
Wherewithall, vnto the hertes forrest he fleith,
    Leving his entrprise with payn and cry;
    And ther him hideth, and not appereth.
What may I do when my maister fereth
    But in the feld with him to lyve and dye?
    For goode is the liff, ending faithfully.

Love, that doth reign and live within my thought,
And built his seat within my captive breast,
Clad in the arms wherein with me he fought,
Oft in my face he doth his banner rest.
But she that taught me love and suffer pain,
My doubtful hope and eke my hot desire
With shamefast look to shadow and refrain,
Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire.

And coward Love, then, to the heart apace
Taketh his flight, where he doth lurk and plain,
His purpose lost, and dare not show his face.
For my lord's guilt thus faultless bide I pain,
Yet from my lord shall not my foot remove:
Sweet is the death that taketh end by love.

Howard, Earl of Surrey, Henry. *The Making of a Sonnet*. Edward Hirsch & Eavan Boland, Eds. New York: W. W. Norton. 2008.
Wyatt, Sir Thomas. *The Essential Wyatt*. W. S. Merwin, Ed. New York: Ecco Press. 1989.