

*Thine eyes I love, and they as pitying me,  
 Knowing thy heart torment me with disdain,  
 Have put on black and loving mourners be,  
 Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.  
 And truly not the morning sun of heav'n  
 Better becomes the gray cheeks of the east,  
 Nor that full star that ushers in the ev'n  
 Doth half that glory to the sober west  
 As those two mourning eyes become thy face:  
 O let it then as well beseem thy heart  
 To mourn for me since mourning doth thee grace,  
 And suit thy pity like in every part.  
     Then will I swear beauty herself is black,  
     And all they foul that thy complexion lack.*

This sonnet's ending revises the verdict at the close of Sonnet 131: "In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds." (l. 13) The deeds are forgotten as the poem slips back into the mood and imagery of the first poem in this section (Sonnet 127). Because the mistress' "raven black" eyes (127. 9) return and still seem to be in mourning, the initial thread is carried forward, but the focus and emotions change. Sonnet 132 seems to be smooth, sober and unflinching in its loyalty to the woman. It also confirms the speaker's oath to praise the beauty of blackness (see Sonnet 130) if the mistress gives in to his plea for pity. Now he thinks that the mourning eyes which become her face (l. 9) show that her heart pities him.

It is important to remember at this point that the eye-heart dichotomy is a thread that subtly reappears in the first two lines. The mistress' eyes pity the speaker but her heart torments him with disdain. In earlier sonnets the eyes were often false, but not the heart. Now the appearance versus reality thread is deftly strengthened. Because the mistress' eyes "have put on black" (l. 3), they are like mourners, whose apparel (an appearance) can be removed. However, what the speaker needs is not visual appearance but the reality of a true heart.

The second quatrain is a long comparison of the eyes to celestial lights. The light of morning (with a pun on mourning) becomes the "gray cheeks of the east" (l. 6), and the evening star (Hesperus) ushers glory

in to the "sober west" (l. 8). The mistress' mourning eyes become her face more than the celestial lights become the sky; however, all these lights are transitory appearances. The speaker asks for pity from her heart, which in the Petrarchan tradition is frequently a veiled request for sexual favor. But relief from sexual urgency is also transient, as Sonnet 129 makes very clear.

In the couplet, the speaker refocuses on external beauty and follows "the world" in preferring black. If, he says, the mistress will pity him, he will swear beauty itself to be black and those women foul that do not have his mistress' black complexion. What the speaker forgets is a pair of axioms from key sonnets. In Sonnet 18 he instructed the youth that the sun's glory is often dimmed and that "every fair from fair sometime declines." (ll. 6-7) And in Sonnet 116, he warned that the true lover does not "bend with the remover to remove." (l. 4) The speaker needs to heed his own advice, as the end of the sequence makes abundantly clear.