

*In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn,
 But thou art twice forsworn to me love swearing,
 In act thy bed-vow broke and new faith torn,
 In vowing new hate after new love bearing.
 But why of two oaths' breach do I accuse thee,
 When I break twenty? I am perjured most,
 For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee,
 And all my honest faith in thee is lost:
 For I have sworn deep oaths of thy deep kindness;
 Oaths of thy love, thy truth, thy constancy,
 And to enlighten thee gave eyes to blindness,
 Or made them swear against the thing they see.
 For I have sworn thee fair: more perjured eye,
 To swear against the truth so foul a lie.*

The final admission of betrayals by both the speaker and the mistress begins with an emphatic paradox: "In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn." A wave of despair and indignation reaches its crest after alternating surges of love and hate. Sonnet 150 depicts a relatively positive view of the speaker's love, but Sonnet 151 reveals the instability of it. The woman praised in Sonnet 150 becomes a "gentle cheater" after all; the speaker betrays himself, and the body in all its bawdiness triumphs over the soul. Has the speaker's blindfold been lifted for good?

The revelations of Sonnet 152 are breathtaking. The speaker plays a nasty game of who has betrayed whom more often and more ruinously. He begins by confessing that he is "forsworn" (perjured) in loving his mistress, to whom he speaks. He has not necessarily broken his marriage vows, but that may be so. More likely it is the friend, the "better angel" of Sonnet 144, who has been betrayed. The speaker accuses the woman of being "twice forsworn" (l. 2) because she has broken her "bed-vow" (marriage oath) by adultery ("in act," l. 3) and has broken faith with the speaker by turning from loving to hating him.

Then, surprising us even more, the speaker says that he has no right to make accusations when he himself has broken twenty oaths. Is this yet another hyperbole? He also claims that he is "perjured most" (l. 6)

because all his oaths are “but to misuse” her (l. 7). *Misuse* here means to misrepresent her, because, as we learn next, he has sworn “deep oaths of thy deep kindness” and oaths of “thy love, thy truth, thy constancy” – all of which turned out to be false.

Furthermore, to make her shine brightly (“enlighten thee,” l. 11), he exchanged his eyes for blindness or made them swear to see what they did not. He has sworn (falsely) that she is “fair” (l. 13), implying in both appearance and morality. Therefore he is more perjured in sight (his “eye,” with a pun on “I”) “to swear against the truth so foul a lie.”

The speaker has, yet again, shouldered the greater blame; he betrays himself by not seeing that his own actions are governed by his sexual drive, not his conscience.