

*When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
 I summon up remembrance of things past,
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste;
 Then can I drown an eye (unused to flow)
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
 And weep afresh love's long since canceled woe,
 And moan th'expense of many a vanished sight.
 Then can I grieve at grievances fore-gone,
 And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
 The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
 Which I new pay as if not paid before.*

*But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
 All losses are restored and sorrows end.*

Both Sonnet 29 and 30 center on the remembrance of love, its joys and anguish; but Sonnet 30 ends in broader, unqualified contentment. All losses are restored, all sorrows ended. The flood tide of grief subsides, but not without repeated lesser waves. The emotion is not exuberance (singing hymns at heaven's gate) or scorn (refusal to change places with kings); rather it is a sweet satisfaction of justice done and the wretched past put to rest.

The focus on justice and payment of debts begins with the word *sessions* (l. 1), which denotes the sittings of a court. The court that is held is not that of "the world" but that in the speaker's own mind. The injustices done to him, his losses and his failures, have caused great grief in recollection, seemingly as great as when they were new.

The speaker continues his list of woes (parallel to his array of complaints in Sonnet 29) with his lost loves, vanished sights, and grievances of long ago. Like an accountant, he tallies—and repeats—moans that he has moaned before. Extending the financial imagery, he speaks of paying debts again as if he had not paid them before.

Throughout, the speaker is vague about the "things" remembered. (In fact, this poem is more general than the preceding one.) He has

many times failed to find what he has sought, causing him to sigh. He has "old woes" (l. 4) that he can bewail again, some destruction ("waste," l. 4) of things dear to him. Particularly striking are his renewed tears "for precious friends hid in death's dateless night" (l. 6), a relatively specific description. Elsewhere Shakespeare's art of suggestion is much in evidence; the reader can feel the intense emotion without knowing details of the cause. What we feel swings again from emotional bankruptcy to renewed elation.