

*The other two, slight air and purging fire,
 Are both with thee, wherever I abide;
 The first my thought, the other my desire;
 These present-absent with swift motion slide:
 For when these quicker elements are gone
 In tender embassy of love to thee,
 My life being made of four, with two alone
 Sinks down to death, oppressed with melancholy.
 Until life's composition be recured
 By those swift messengers returned from thee,
 Who even but now come back again assured
 Of thy fair health, recounting it to me.
 *This told, I joy, but then no longer glad,
 I send them back again and straight grow sad.**

The second poem of the two is, like the first, a tour de force. As a complement, it concentrates on speed and lightness. The movement takes off quickly, and its airyness contrasts neatly with the pained slowness of Sonnet 44. Much of the effect is produced by splitting up the lines. Sonnet 45 has ten broken lines (evidenced in the punctuation), whereas Sonnet 44 has only three. The lighter elements ("slight air and purging fire" [l. 1]) are "with" the friend, whereas earth and water are with the speaker. But all persons were thought to be made of all four elements, and so the speaker has his share: his air is thought and his fire is desire. (l. 3) These are sent to his friend as ambassadors of love, and when they leave, the speaker, weighed down by melancholy, sinks towards death.

The sestet plays with the notion that air and fire are messengers and when they return with news of the friend's good health, the speaker's own balance of all four elements ("composition") is restored ("recured"). (l. 9) Although the couplet insists that the joyous restoration is temporary and that he must send the lighter elements back again, his improvement impresses the reader. Still, *sad* is the last word. Oscillation prevails.