

*Thus can my love excuse the slow offense
 Of my dull bearer, when from thee I speed.
 From where thou art, why should I haste me thence?
 Till I return, of posting is no need.
 O what excuse will my poor beast then find
 When swift extremity can seem but slow?
 Then should I spur though mounted on the wind;
 In winged speed no motion shall I know.
 Then can no horse with my desire keep pace;
 Therefore desire (of perfect love being made)
 Shall neigh no dull flesh in his fiery race,
 But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade:
 *Since from thee going he went willful slow,
 Towards thee I'll run and give him leave to go.**

As to be expected, speed takes precedence over slowness in this companion poem. The speaker declares that it is his love that excuses his dull beast's slowness on the way out. Arguing his case, he asks his absent friend, if I have been with you, why should I hurry away? Only when I return is great speed ("posting," l. 4) needed.

Now, he asks, sidestepping his own responsibility, how can my "poor beast" (l. 5) find any excuse when even the greatest speed will seem too slow? Then, even if he were taking off on the wind, the speaker would spur (as if on his beast), and feel no motion as he flies off on wings. Now he is going off with the speed of desire, which not even a good horse could match. Since his desire is created by the most perfect love, no dull flesh will weigh him down in his "fiery race." (l. 11)

The speaker can now excuse his nag ("jade," l. 12) for the sake of love. As he says in the conclusion, because the beast was willfully slow, he will run to his friend and let his nag walk. At this point, letting the poor jade walk will be a kindness and perhaps recompense for the speaker's evasion of responsibility. After all, his argument was weak; had he got on with his journey he would have returned sooner!