

*So are you to my thoughts as food to life,  
 Or as sweet season'd show'rs are to the ground;  
 And for the peace of you I hold such strife  
 As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found:  
 Now proud as an enjoyer, and anon  
 Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure;  
 Now counting best to be with you alone,  
 Then bettered that the world may see my pleasure;  
 Sometime all full with feasting on your sight,  
 And by and by clean starved for a look;  
 Possessing or pursuing no delight,  
 Save what is had or must from you be took.  
     Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day;  
     Or gluttoning on all, or all away.*

The opening simile likens the friend to the speaker's thoughts, "as food to life." The sonnet then proceeds to list alternative comparisons and compound them with other similes and antitheses. The oscillations between polar opposites that constitute the basic motion of the sonnets are here squeezed into one poem, creating the effect of a fast-moving pendulum. The speaker's divided mind weaves a fresh fabric with well-established threads, beginning with food and culminating with "gluttoning" in the couplet. Other threads in the first quatrain are those of the seasons (l. 2), strife or agon (l. 3), and the miser or niggard (l. 4).

The second quatrain enriches the fabric by depicting alternating emotions in a line-for-line and now-then pattern. Carrying over the miser motif from line four, the speaker sees himself as both an enjoyer of, and worrier about, his treasure—namely his friend. Peace alone with him is "best" (l. 7) but even better when the speaker can show off his friend to "the world." The food imagery is combined with sight ("feasting on your sight," l. 9) and developed by its opposite—starvation for a look. The quickness of the shifts takes on a frenetic quality that reflects the anxiety of the speaker as lover.

In this midsection of the sequence, the seeds are also sown for the future. Just as Sonnet 74, with its emphasis on spirit and its sharing of souls (l. 8) looks forward to Sonnet 116's "marriage of true minds," Sonnet 75 hints at Sonnet 129 in the phrase

“possessing or pursuing” (l. 11), which gains even more interest when expanded later into “mad in pursuit and in possession so” (l. 9). The latter shows the speaker in a much more desperate and jealous mode. Finally, to round out the couplet of Sonnet 75, the thread of gluttony surfaces again, anticipating Sonnet 146, with its injunction “Within be fed, without be rich no more.” (l. 12)

Overall, Sonnet 75, in its nervous ups and downs, implies a troubled psyche, the manic insisting on all or nothing and threatening descent into depression. The emotions may be jagged, but the syntax and structure are under tight control.