

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 94

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow,

5 They rightly do inherit heaven's graces¹

And husband² nature's riches from expense³;

They are the lords and owners of their faces,

Others but stewards⁴ of their excellence⁵.

The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,

10 Though to itself it only live and die,

But if that flower with base infection⁶ meet,

The basest weed outbraves⁷ his dignity⁸:

For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;

Lilies⁹ that fester smell far worse than weeds.

(106 Wörter)

¹**heaven's graces** divine gifts – ²**husband** carefully protect – ³**expense** waste – ⁴**stewards** managers – ⁵**excellence** finer passions, noble qualities – ⁶**base infection** corruption – ⁷**outbraves** surpasses, is more splendid than – ⁸**his dignity** its beauty – ⁹**Lilies** flowers symbolising purity