

**Venus and Adonis** Lines 511-22: 'Franc' talk about money.

Here is a short demonstration of *Venus and Adonis* as it transposes to Oxfordian significance. Lisa Wilson has suggested that my essays are inaccessible, so I'll keep my commentary to a minimum. Two stanzas are included here, ll.511-522. I have shown the original 1593 printing (with a very few spelling changes) side by side with a gloss of those lines. These include metonyms common to all Shakespeare (which are underlined) and polysemic alterations. All transpositions are rationalized below.

What do we have here? In the simplest terms, the negotiation of a financial deal. Stratfordians will howl — "it's only a 'lovely' metaphor!"; alas, it's not. The subject, as any Oxfordian will tell you, is the thousand pound annuity paid to Edward de Vere from 1586 until his death. The key terms all apply: seals, bargains, buy, good (*singular!*)-dealing, pay, purchase, non-payment, debt—a very 'unlovely' exchange. The gentle ribbing about insufficient payment can only mean that the poem has been addressed to Elizabeth herself; she was the lone protectress of her 'wayward' son.

I wish the underlined metonyms were better understood. This aspect of Shakespeare has gone nearly unnoticed; but what a difference they make. Scholars acknowledge their pervasiveness in John Lyly (also an indirect de Vere pseudonym), but disingenuously demur from comment when it comes to their Bard. Metonyms perform the important task of 'marking the trail'—of acting as guideposts to our understanding—not of metaphor, but of literal historic meaning.

The spectacular wordplay on 'touches' or 'toshes', lingua franca for the gold *half-crown* coin, and 'kisses', nearly synonymous as gold *crown* or *sovereign* coins, display the writer's art at full height. They refer to the coins and kisses of the betrayal of the Tudor family (and allude to Christ); they also refer to the debased 'half-crown' of the noble de Vere name compared to the rightful 'crown' of Tudor. Vere has accepted one-thousand sovereigns yearly to wear a Norman name. Should he not receive another thousand for the loss of his royal Welsh title?

Original

~ *Gloss* ~

Pure lips, sweet seales in my soft lips imprinted,

~ *Guiltless speech, child's testimony in my yielding mouth impressed,* ~

What bargains may I make still to be sealing?

~ *What uncertain agreements may I make, E. Ver Sum silencing?* ~

To sell my selfe I can be well contented,

~ *To sell myself, I may be of 'Spring' content.* ~

So thou wilt buy, and pay, and use good dealing,

~ *One's child One will buy and pay and profit [as by] commercial trading;* ~

Which purchase if thou make, for feare of slips,

~ *'Witch' acquisition—if completed—and expecting failure to meet obligations;* ~

Set thy seale manuell, on my wax-red lips.

~ *Press your silencing hand to my Lancaster-yielding voice.* ~

A thousand kisses buyes my heart from me,

~ *A thousand crowns buys my 'Deer-Hart from me;* ~

And pay them at thy leisure, one by one,

~ *And pay them at thy pleasure, [to] One by One.* ~

What is ten hundred touches unto thee,

~ *What is one thousand 'half-crowns' unto thee?* ~

Are they not quickly told, and quickly gone?

~ *Royal they are not, [by] Leicester tolled and [to] Leicester gone?* ~

Say for non-payment, that the debt should double,

~ *Say, for failure to Accede, that the debt [of the crown] should be 'Tu' [halves],* ~

Is twentie hundred kisses such a trouble?

~ *Is two thousand [d'or] crowns of the same 'family confusion'?* ~

Rationalization:

511 *'Pure lips, sweet seals in my soft lips imprinted,*

[**Pure** ('absolute, perfect, not impaired or adulterated\*'; alt.: 'innocent, guiltless, chaste\*') **lips** (voice as used by *Coriolanus*, 'judgement\*', 'vote, suffrage\*', and the means of the **kiss**: the crown, as coin and symbolic headdress; alt.: act of betrayal; alt.: the bond of fidelity; of Elizabeth and Edward = the royal claimants in accord, but unequal in resolve), **sweet** ('kind\*', royal child; alt.: honey: *French honi*: shamed) **seals** (seal: 'to close, to shut\*', to silence; alt.: 'proof, testimony\*', 'to confirm, to ratify\*') **in my soft** ('easily yielding to pressure) **lips** (voice 'judgement\*', 'vote, suffrage\*', as before) **imprinted** ('a lasting impression or effect'),]

~ *Guiltless speech, child's testimony in my yielding mouth impressed, ~*

512 *What bargains may I make, still to be sealing?*

[**What** (*indeterminate* 'interrogative pronoun used to inquire after quality or kind of things\*'; or 'used in exclamations; substantively\*') **bargains** ('agreement, contract\*') **may** ('expressing possibility', uncertainty) **I make** ('[denoting] the performance of the respective action\*'), **still** (Ever, E. Vere, Edward Tudor Seymour in '*quietus*', i.e. 'ever-still') **to be** (the Royal/True self = 'Some', *Latin Sum*: 'small Latin' fragment *Ben Jonson*) **sealing** ('to close, to shut\*', to silence, here suggesting an unfavorable negotiation) ? ]

~ *What uncertain agreements may I make, E. Vere ('Some'/Sum) silencing? ~*

513 *To sell myself I can be well contented,*

[**To sell** (to give in exchange for something) **myself** (Elizabeth; **To sell myself**: 'sold to slavery\*', bondage, self-betray, to lose oneself) **I can** ('to be able\*') **be** (the Royal/True self) **well** (*metonym* 'Spring\*', i.e. de Vere; alt.: 'a deep narrow pit of water\*', see pit: l.242-49, and water: glossary) **contented** (*wordplay* content: 'the things that are held or included in something' used as a verb),]

~ *To sell myself [in slavery], I may be [of] 'Spring' content, ~*

514 *So thou wilt buy and pay and use good dealing;*

[**So** ('in the same degree, as\*'; alt.: *metonym* of **Tudor** Succession, or Tudor descent, i.e. 'what follows, that which proceeds'; see *glossary* of royal progeny: Elizabeth, Oxford, and Southampton) **thou** (Vere) **wilt** (*archaic* second person singular of **WILL**: 'the faculty of the mind by which we desire and purpose\*') **buy** ('to acquire, to procure, to gain\*'; "buy and pay and use" implies the expression 'bought and sold' = 'betrayed\*') **and pay** ('to suffer in requital (*i.e. to suffer in returning*), to fulfill as a punishment\*') **and use** ('utility, advantage, profit\*'; alt.: 'present possession, usufruct\*', usufruct: *Roman Law* 'the right to enjoy the use and advantages of another's property short of the destruction or waste of its substance') **good** (goods: 'saleable commodity', 'property, possession\*', 'advantage, benefit, welfare\*') **dealing** (deal: 'take part in commercial trading of a particular commodity'; alt.: 'proceeding, manner of acting\*'),]

~ *Your child you will buy and pay and profit [as by] commercial trading; ~*

~ *Do as you will with your child, betray and profit by goods dealing; ~*

515 *Which purchase if thou make, for fear of slips,*

[**Which** (*wordplay* **WITCH**, also **WHO**, and **WHOM** = *Tudors*, or *Ones*; in particular; 'information specifying one or more people or things from a definite set' (of **All**, **Tudor**). The three 'Witches, Which Is', or 'Which **Are**' (Regius) 'referring to [previous] sentences\*') **purchase** ('acquisition... \*') **if thou make** ('to effect, to perform\*', 'to complete\*'), **for fear** ('doubt, mistrust\*') **of slips** (slip: 'escape, desertion\*', i.e. failure to meet obligations see *dict.*: *escape clause* )]

~ *Witch acquisition—if you complete [it]—by the expectation of failure to meet obligations, ~*

516 *Set thy seal-manual on my wax-red lips.*

[**Set** ('to fix, to determine, to appoint\*', 'to place in a standing, or any proper and natural posture\*') **thy seal** ('to close, to shut\*', *figuratively* silence)-**manual** ('of or done with the hands', seal-manual: *likely pun* finger-to-the-lips hand signal, signifying secret knowledge or the need for silence ; manual seal = signet:

'small seal... to give authentication to an official document'\* + possible indirect pun cygnet: 'young swan' see *King John V vii 21*: Prince Henry refers to King John, "I am the cygnet to this pale faint swan", the white swan was the royal supporter of Henrys IV and V, and the relationship of Elizabeth and Vere is played upon) **on my wax** (soft, yielding; impressionable; alt.: 'the substance which bees form into cells for the reception of their honey', with indirect wordplay on be/bees and honey from French *Honnir* honi: shamed)-**red** (color of the House of Lancaster; alt.: represents the Catholic Church; alt.: stalwart courage) **lips** (voice as used by Coriolanus, 'judgement\*', 'vote, suffrage\*', the means of the **kiss**: the bond of fidelity).]

~ Press your silencing hand to my Lancaster-yielding voice. ~

~ Affix your princely seal on my usurped authority. ~

*Honi soit qui mal y pense* = 'Dishonored is he who evil there thinks', or 'Shamed is he who evil there finds', is the motto of *The Most Noble Order of the Garter*, arguably the honor most coveted by Edward de Vere—though not of his 'protean twin', Edward Tudor Seymour.

The use of **honey** appears to refer to disgraced royalty, whereas **sweet** is applied without taint?

### 517 'A thousand kisses buys my heart from me;

[**A thousand** (probably refers to the one-thousand pound annuity de Vere began receiving in 1586; alt.: 'often used to denote any great number'\* , or so a Stratfordian would think) **kisses** (wordplay **kiss**: 'touch' of the lips, with wordplay on 'Tush'—a half-crown coin; further wordplay follows *ll.519, 522* , where 'crowns' and 'sovereigns' are used interchangeably for 'gold'; the upshot of this beautiful syllogism is Two-d'or; alt.:

a bond, commitment, obligation) **buys** (**buy**: secure, obtain; alt.: probably 'betray') **my** (Elizabeth's) **heart** (*metonym* hart: deer, dear, child; alt.: 'considered as the motive of activity'\* , Action) **from me;**]

~ 'A thousand betrayals buys my 'Will-child' from me; ~

~ 'A thousand crowns buys my 'Deer-Hart' from me; ~

~ 'A thousand sovereigns buys my child from me; ~

Roger Stritmatter has covered the subject of de Vere's annuity in his essay: *Venus And Adonis And The Authorship Question*. I would like to comment on the mention of Edward's "love affair with [Queen Elizabeth]" p.338 . This supposition is likely an artifact of rumors current in the Court of Elizabeth in 1571-74, and of the conflation of an Ovid-based love poem and an independent political narrative. I repeat an earlier note: no substantive word or idea from the love poem should be construed to transfer to the narrative. While this is difficult to prove, I believe *Venus and Adonis* is the warrant for assuming it. If de Vere had committed incest with his mother, it would violate his reprehension of incest A Law Case in Verse, Roger Stritmatter, 2004, *Tennessee Law Review* Vol. 72: pp.336-9.

### 518 And pay them at thy leisure, one by one.

[**And pay** ('payment, the giving [of] something in compensation') **them at thy leisure** ('pleasure, liking'\*; alt.: 'freedom from hurry, contrary to haste'\*), **one** (a Prince; the first in rank, the highest ranking; synonymous with Royal family) **by** (pun buy) **one** (as before).]

~ And pay them at thy pleasure, [to] One by One. ~

~ And exchange them at One's pleasure—Prince, buys Prince.

The five stanzas from ll. 493-522 are fascinating. As always, indeterminacy rules. The reader can clearly spot that the subject concerns Elizabeth and her son equally. Yet by giving the words to 'Venus' we understand that de Vere is not quibbling about the precise sum being settled, as much as the weight of the question itself; the separation of mother and child is bargained for—and the separation of man from inheritance.

Assuming the use of metonyms, I see that the transfer is 'to a Prince, by a Prince'.

### 519 What is ten hundred touches unto thee?

[**What** ('used to inquire after quality or kind of things') **is ten hundred touches** (**touch**: slang gold coin; **Tush**, Tosh, Tusheroon: derived from Lingua Franca for half-crown piece (2 shillings/6 pence), term used in commerce throughout the Mediterranean in the Renaissance—here with wordplay on noble titles, or half-crowns, as opposed to full crowns; 'touch' and 'kiss' are apparently synonymous as terms of

betrayal; alt.: sovereign = *wordplay* So-Vere-reign = crown: gold coin equal to one English Pound, but used principally as gold bullion) **unto thee?** ]

~ *What is one thousand 'half-crowns' unto thee?* ~

~ *What is one thousand sovereigns unto thee?* ~

The use of 'touches' here is critical. Intending to signify the 'half-crown' gold coin, we thereby understand that de Vere is bargaining for full payment. He slyly jokes that a thousand half-crowns is only adequate for half a crown; it will require double that amount to compensate for the full crown in question.

520 *Are they not quickly told and quickly gone?*

[**Are** (R: regnant, reigning; 'To be royal', from *Latin Regius*: 'Royal', *Regina*: 'Queen', *Rex*: 'King') **they not quickly** (quick: *metonym* applying to Leicester; ephemeral, passing, unstable) **told** (*wordplay toll*: OE 'denoting a charge, tax, or duty', exacted) **and quickly** (*as before*) **gone** (go: 'to vanish\*', 'to give up for lost\*')? ]

~ *Royal they are not, [by] 'Leicester's Commonwealth' exacted and [to] Leicester gone?*

~ *Are they not quickly used for assigned purposes and quickly paid out?* ~

It has been noted that de Vere's annuity was apparently free of obligations; this implies otherwise.

521 *Say, for non-payment that the debt should double,*

[**Say** (), **for non-payment** (failure to 'accede', not realize 'rightful accession') **that the debt** () **should** () **double** (Two),]

~ *Let us say, for failure [to Accede], that the debt [of the Crown] should be 'Tu' [halves], ~*

522 *Is twenty hundred kisses such a trouble?*

[**Is** () **twenty hundred** () **kisses** (*wordplay crown*: = two 'Tushes' or half-crowns referred to l.519; alt.: gold, pieces of gold, sovereigns) **such** ('of that or the like kind or degree\*', 'of the like kind\*', 'of the same kind\*', see *Sonnet 105*: "all alike my songs and praises be, To one, of one, still such, and ever so" see *glossary for all underlined metonyms*) **a trouble** ('disturbance\*', 'pain, labor\*'; alt.: from *Latin turbidus*: 'confused', hence confusion, agitation)? ]

~ *Is two thousand crowns of the same 'family confusion'?*

~ *Is two thousand betrayals a like disturbance of 'degree'?*

Much play on touch & kiss, crown & half-crown. Take note of 'double' l.521 looking for its golden 'crown'—Tu searching for d'or .

Though the lines shown here belong ostensibly to 'Venus', they express 'the same' concerns troubling 'Adonis' and, in fact, the author.

Dr. Daniel Wright has asked two important questions: "How do editorial changes affect this sort of transposition?" and "What about differing versions of the plays?" I think you will discover that de Vere doesn't write literary works free of wordplay including surname fragments, polysemy, and amphiboly—or his signature glossary; see *The Puzzling Life of Edward de Vere*, [devereshakepeare@wordpress.com](mailto:devereshakepeare@wordpress.com). Since *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* were probably published under the supervision of de Vere, there should be few editorial changes worth loss of sleep.

Regarding the second question—I find this distinctive 'transposability' in all the plays. Different versions obviously require individual attention; if they are authentic, 'The de Vere Method' will immediately show itself. If transpositions differ among different versions of a play, it simply means the authors concerns differ at different times.

I have found it useful to cross reference modern editions with the First Folio. The Folio may not have the most finished example of a play, but the wordplay and indeterminacy will be more apparent. Action in the plays is carried forward with less emphasis on 'contrivance' or 'invention', while banter, and especially the great 'set pieces', are heavily laced with it.

Finally, this 'Method' may be used to unmask other works by de Vere. I believe, in time, we'll include in the Shakespeare canon, the 'amatory Sonnets' by one B. Griffin—*Fidessa: More Chaste than Kinde*.