

Sonnet 73

By William Shakespeare

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day 5
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie, 10
As the death-bed, whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well, which thou must leave ere long.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What time of year can be seen in the speaker of this poem, based on lines 1-4?

- A) the time when snow coats tree branches and the sky is gray
- B) the time when trees are blooming with flowers
- C) the time when the sun shines and birds sing sweetly
- D) the time when few or no leaves hang on boughs

2. Which of these rhyming lines appear right next to each other in the poem?

- A) "That time of year thou mayst in me behold" and "Upon those boughs which shake against the cold"
- B) "As after sunset fadeth in the west;" and "Death's second self, that seals up all in rest."
- C) "That on the ashes of his youth doth lie," and "Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by."
- D) "This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong," and "To love that well, which thou must leave ere long."

3. Read these lines from the poem:

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well, which thou must leave ere long.

Based on these lines, what can be concluded about the addressee of this poem, "thou"?

- A) the addressee loves the speaker of the poem
- B) the addressee is older than the speaker of the poem
- C) the addressee wants to leave the speaker of the poem
- D) the addressee does not care about the speaker of the poem

4. Based on the poem, how could the speaker be described?

- A) very young and childish
- B) teenaged, nearing adulthood
- C) grown up and in the middle of life
- D) old and nearing the end of life

5. Which line best expresses the main message of the poem?

- A) "When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang"
- B) "Death's second self, that seals up all in rest."
- C) "To love that well, which thou must leave ere long."
- D) "In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire"

6. Why might the poet have begun lines 5 and 10 with the same phrase, "In me thou see'st," but ended the two lines differently?

- A) to hint that the speaker himself is not able to see anything
- B) to describe a single characteristic of the speaker in different ways
- C) to demonstrate that the speaker is very self-centered
- D) to show that the addressee ("thou") is very observant

7. Read these sentences from the poem:

In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.

What does the phrase "Death's second self" refer to?

- A) sunset
- B) the twilight
- C) black night
- D) the west

8. What three things does the speaker say can be seen in him or her?

9. Read the last two lines of the poem. In your own words, what do these two lines mean?

10. Currently, there are no “line breaks” between different parts of the poem. If you were to insert breaks into the poem to separate it into four parts, where would you place those breaks? Be sure to consider rhyme scheme, the completion of sentences in the poem, and the ideas expressed at different points in the poem. Use evidence from the text to explain your reasons for dividing the poem in the manner you choose.
