

## *In Honor of the Order of the White Knights*

*Edited and with an Introduction by: Max Zhong*

Far from the court of King Arthur and Disney films, the timeless White Knights still gallantly sacrifice body and mind for the damsels in distress. They might have neither trusty steed or lustrous armor, however, their pen is their sword and their words are their great deeds. Perhaps, even you are a member of the Order of the White Knights! White Knight Syndrome is the psychological need to protect someone and focus on their problems rather than one's own during the pursuit of love. Although it is often considered a psychological fault or just plain foolishness; I find such selfless behavior in the pursuit of love both romantic and worthy of praise. This collection of poetry is put together to honor all those selfless heroes whose deeds often go without gratitude.

This collection of poems consists of sonnets from Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* sonnet sequence and William Shakespeare's sonnet sequence. One can't deny that Astrophel and the speaker in Shakespeare's sonnets are both the epitome of White Knight Syndrome. This collection will offer a snippet of the sacrifices these two characters have made for the ones they loved. They are willing to give up both body and mind to keep their damsels content and safe from the suffering and criticisms of the world. Perhaps, the White Knights of the modern day can relate to the sonnets in this collection and continue the tradition of putting their deeds into words of beauty through their sword, the pen!

### *The White Knight in Shakespeare*

“Sonnet 71”

NO longer mourn for me when I am dead  
 Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell  
 Give warning to the world that I am fled  
 From this vile world, with vile worms to dwell:  
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not  
 The hand that writ it; for I love you so,  
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,  
 Or if (I say) you look upon this verse,  
 When I perhaps compounded am with clay,  
 Do not so much as my poor name rehearse;  
 But let your love even with my life decay;  
*Lest the wise world should look into your moan,  
 And mock you with me after I am gone.*

“Sonnet 72”

O, LEST the world should task you to recite  
 What merit liv'd in me, that you should love  
 After my death,—dear love, forget me quite,  
 For you in me can nothing worthy prove;  
 Unless you would devise some virtuous lie,  
 To do more for me than mine own desert<sup>1</sup>,  
 And hang more praise upon deceased I  
 Than niggard<sup>2</sup> truth would willingly impart;  
 O, lest your true love may seem false in this,  
 That you for love speak well of me untrue,  
 My name be buried where my body is,  
 And live no more to shame me nor you.  
*For I am sham'd by that which I bring forth,  
 And so should you, to love things nothing worth.*

“Sonnet 73”

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 seest 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.  
 In me thou seest the glowing of such fire,  
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
 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:*

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1 Desert - Deserving

2 Niggard -Mean or Stingy

“Sonnet 74”

BUT be contented: when that fell arrest  
 Without all bail shall carry me away,  
 My life hath in this line some interest  
 Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.  
 When thou reviewest this, thou dost review  
 The very part was consecrate to thee.  
 The earth can have but earth, which is his due;  
 My spirit is thine, the better part of me:  
 So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,  
 The prey of worms, my body being dead;  
 The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,  
 Too base of thee to be remembered.  
*The worth of that is, is that which it contains,  
 And that is this, and this with thee remains.*

“Sonnet 88”

WHEN thou shalt be dispos'd to set me light,  
 And place my merit in the eye of scorn,  
 Upon thy side against myself I'll fight,  
 And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn<sup>3</sup>.  
 With mine own weakness being best acquainted,  
 Upon thy part I can set down a story  
 Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted;  
 That thou, in losing me, shalt win much glory:  
 And I by this will be a gainer too;  
 For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,  
 The injuries that to myself I do,  
 Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.  
*Such is my love, to thee I so belong,  
 That for thy right myself will bear all wrong.*

*Sidney's Astrophel the White Knight*

## "Sonnet 64"

NO more, my deare, no more these counsels trie;  
 O giue my passions leaue to run their race;  
 Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;  
 Let folke orecharg'd with braine against me crie;  
 Let clouds bedimme my face, breake in mine eye;  
 Let no steps but of lost labour trace;  
 Let all the earth with scourne recount my case,—  
 But do not will me from my loue to flie.  
 I do not enuie Aristotle's wit,  
 Nor do aspire to Cæsar's bleeding fame;  
 Nor ought do care though some abuse me sit;  
 Nor hope nor wish another course to frame,  
 But that which once may win thy cruell hart:  
 Thou art my wit, and thou my vertue art.

## "Sonnet 75"

OF all the kings that euer here did raigne,  
 Edward, named fourth, as in praise, I name:  
 Not for his faire outside, nor well-lined braine,  
 Although lesse gifts impe feathers oft on fame.  
 Nor that he could, young-wise, wise-valiant, frame  
 His sire's reuenge, ioynd with a kingdome's gaine;  
 And gain'd by Mars, could yet mad Mars so tame,  
 That balance weigh'd, what sword did late obtaine.  
 Nor that he made the floure-de-luce so 'fraid,  
 —Though strongly hedg'd—of bloody Lyons' pawes,  
 That wittie Lewes to him a tribute paid:  
 Nor this, nor that, nor any such small cause;  
 But only for this worthy knight durst proue  
 To lose his crowne, rather then faile his loue.

## “Sonnet 87”

WHEN I was forst from Stella euer deere—  
Stella, food of my thoughts, hart of my hart—  
Stella, whose eyes make all my tempests cleere—  
By Stella's lawes of duetie to depart;  
Alas, I found that she with me did smart;  
I saw that teares did in her eyes appeare;  
I sawe that sighes her sweetest lips did part,  
And her sad words my sadded sense did heare.  
For me, I wept to see pearles scattered so;  
I sigh'd her sighes, and wailèd for her wo;  
Yet swam in ioy, such loue in her was seene.  
Thus, while th' effect most bitter was to me,  
And nothing then the cause more sweet could be,  
I had bene vext, if vext I had not beene.

## *Bibliography*

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