

# Sonnets

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In the old age black was not counted fair,  
Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;  
But now is black beauty's successive heir,  
And beauty slandered with a bastard shame:  
For since each hand hath put on nature's power, 5  
Fairing the foul with art's false borrowed face,  
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,  
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.  
Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven-black,  
Her brow so suited, and they mourners seem 10  
At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,  
Sland'ring creation with a false esteem.  
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,  
That every tongue says beauty should look so.