

Before analysing the sonnet consider the following information

The poem opens with an **epigraph**:

Item I gyve unto my wief my second best bed...

This is a quote taken from William Shakespeare's will, in which the playwright leaves his "second best bed" to his wife. While this sounds like an insult, it probably wasn't: in Shakespeare's day, the "best bed" was usually reserved for visitors and later bequeathed to one's children/heirs. The "second best bed," here, is actually the bed that Shakespeare and his wife, Anne Hathaway, would have shared.