MY MISTRESS’ EYES

Right from reading the title the reader can see that there is an allitteration ( my mistress ); the most relevant word is my: the intelligent reader should ask himself what does it mean, the text seems to be about somebody’s eyes.

Considering the lay out you can notice that it is an Elizabethan sonnet (composed by three quatrains,
and a rhyming couplet), which is also called Shakespearian sonnet because he adopted it.
It usually shows three different aspects of a problem in the quatrains and a possible solution in the rhyming
couplet.

There is a statement in which the speaking voice carries out a comparison between the mistress’ body
and elements generally taken from nature, which everytime result better than the woman: this is rather
strange, Shakespeare turns upside-down the curtly convention.
In the first quatrain the poet introduces the comparison between his mistress and the Sun, corals and
snow and she always loses it.

In the second quatrain he repeats the same comparison, and once more the lady is the loser. He says
that she has not so beautiful cheeks or a perfumed breathe.

In the third quatrain Shakespeare introduces something completely different from the traditional
courtly love conventions in poetry: he loves his mistress even if she does not conform with the traditional
beauty of the time. He wants to revalutate the human aspects, parodying curtly love’s schemes.
The third quatrain which generally illustrate the difficult aspects or situations of the speaker, is here meant to anticipate the conclusion that is expressed in the rhyming couplet, so that they also respond to a climatic
effect.

The poet says that he loves his lady all the same, that is even if she is not the perfect presentation of
the conventional lady of courtly love poetry: Shakespeare’s choice is meant to be the parody of the
conventions of courtly love poetry.
The poet is aware that love is something that goes beyond simple physical aspects and employs
something more.