

# Forbidden Voices - Sonnet XXIX

by Judith Nolan

Once, I was nothing more than a vague thought in the mind of a brilliant man. Some say I may have been the fruitful product of a different mind. Who am I to say which man's hand set my words down? All I know is that I came into being, one summer's morning, as a glorious spark of inspiration, among so many others.

I had worked my way steadily to the surface of his consciousness, and I was finally written down with a quill pen on a scroll of parchment. I was dashed off from beginning to end in a matter of minutes - in what could have been seen as unseemly haste.

He had many such thoughts, that Elizabethan man of sonnets and plays. He worked day and night to pen everything that swirled around within his fertile brain. At times there seemed to be not enough hours in the day to accomplish all he imagined.

But that was how my inventor's mind worked; furiously. As if he'd already glimpsed his end, and knew he had so little time left on this fraught plane of life.

Once applied to the parchment, I eventually evolved again, becoming a small part of the one hundred and fifty-four sonnets that were first published together in a quart, in the glorious year of our Lord, 1609.

I was listed as number twenty-nine. Among so many others, the beauty of my lines and words were commented on, favourably, by many. I knew a pride in being quoted by those who loved my rhyming scheme, fourteen glorious lines, and meter.

I knew I had not been my creator's first thought, but I was most certainly not his last. My master did not rest, but carried on penning new creations until his end came in the night.

He died and was buried, eventually turning to dust. But his name lived on, and grew in size and reputation as the centuries came and went. Linked with his, my name also lived on. My quarto of sonnets was printed and reprinted times beyond counting, down until the present day, where once more I was recreated and placed within a binding of red linen.

In this incarnation I eventually found my way into the unusual hands of one who truly appreciated my rhyming scheme, fourteen lovely lines, and meter. His hands were young when he first received me. I found favour with him, and he kept me by his side throughout the intervening years until, one night, he pressed a dried red rose against my lines, and left me on a balcony to be found by his lady.

You see, by then, my master had committed my lines to memory. He could recall them at will. He sat watching from some distance, as his lady stood holding my red-bound pages in her soft hands.

She opened my book to the page marked with the red rose, and began to read. Once again, my words sang within the mind of one who appreciated my beauty...

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