

Structure: Sonnet
Themes:

The title is important as it introduces her as the speaker and the most important thing in the poem.

METAPHOR
Establishes very quickly, what they did in this bed. It is not literally piled high with these things, their sex was so magical, that she feels as though she has seen all of these things. It also links to Shakespeare being a story-teller.

This is rude. Use your imagination.

METAPHOR
On a literal level this is rude - but it also means that she is at the centre of everything he writes. In this poem, love is like sex and sex is like love - both involve repetition, forms ... etc.

WORD CHOICE
Unlike Shakespeare's work - which is fiction - what she writes about is real. It's sensual: their relationship consists of touches, smells and tastes. While sex and writing are made to sound similar - here Anne states that sex is better. His writing is good - but the act is better.

Anne Hathaway

'Item I gyve unto my wief my second best bed...'
(from Shakespeare's will)

The bed we loved in was a spinning world
of forests, castles, torchlight, cliff-tops, seas
where he would dive for pearls. My lover's words
were shooting stars which fell to earth as kisses
on these lips; my body now a softer rhyme
to his, now echo, assonance; his touch
a verb dancing in the centre of a noun.
Some nights I dreamed he'd written me, the bed
a page beneath his writer's hands. Romance
and drama played by touch, by scent, by taste.
In the other bed, the best, our guests dozed on,
dribbling their prose. My living laughing love -
I hold him in the casket of my widow's head
as he held me upon that next best bed.

ALLITERATION
A loving sound accompanies her loving description. Her imagination keep him alive after his death.

WORD CHOICE
The last line of the poem leaves sex behind (we are at the end of sex) as he holds her, and she remembers him holding her and plays on the joke that their bed was anything but the best to her.

METAPHOR
Holds him in her memories - her head is a tomb for all of their memories.

WORD CHOICE

IMAGERY

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Epigraph. This is a line from Shakespeare's will. Critics first thought this was a negative gift but, actually, this would be their marital bed. And therefore it is a symbol of their loving relationship.

DOUBLE METAPHOR
Anne Hathaway tries to emulate her husband's work here - she honours his way with words by recreating them to describe his love for her. She is proud of what a wordsmith he was - and she implies that this was all for her.

ASSONANCE
The soft sound of the vowels imitates the soft touch of their bodies together. Although rude, their nookie is intimate.

METAPHOR
Hathaway imagines that she is Shakespeare's creation - that he has created her.

METAPHOR
This sort of implies, again, that she is a product of Shakespeare's creation. He takes the lead here.

WORD CHOICE
This refers to the action (or lack of!) that the guests experience in the other bed. While they are 'writing poetry', their guests are moving slowly through long stories. They are asleep. This is why she would want the other bed.