MENSA[®] for k(ds

Poem #6

Sonnet II: "Time Does Not Bring Relief" by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Time does not bring relief: you all have lied Who told me time would ease me of my pain! I miss him in the weeping of the rain; I want him at the shrinking of the tide; The old snows melt from every mountain-side, And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane; But last year's bitter loving must remain Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide!

There are a hundred places where I fear To go, - so with his memory they brim! And entering with relief some quiet place Where never fell his foot or shone his face I say, "There is no memory of him here!" And so stand stricken, so remembering him!



Edna St. Vincent Millay was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for poetry. In this poem, she defies the conventional logic that time heals all wounds.

If this poem seems to much for you, try this very short one, perhaps her best known:

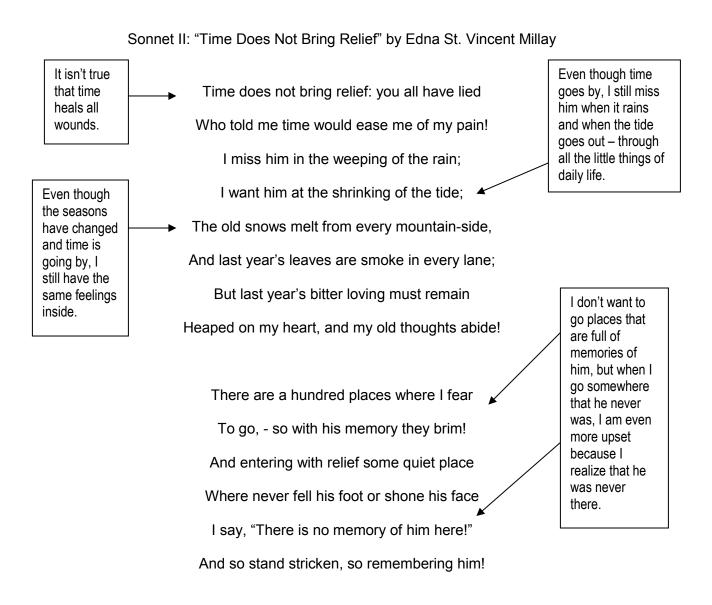
"First Fig" from A Few Figs from Thistles

My candle burns at both ends; It will not last the night; But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends--It gives a lovely light!





Taking it apart



Later, you will read a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Although not the one included here, his poem "The Cross of Snow" shares the idea of Millay's work. Eighteen years after his wife's death, he wrote:

Such is the cross I wear upon my breast These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes And seasons, changeless since the day she died





Memorizing it

Can you find the rhyme scheme on this one by yourself? How is it similar to that of Donne's poem? This poem has a unique divide for a sonnet – the first two quatrains are grouped together, and then the third quatrain is grouped with the couplet. Do you see a reason for this? What is the connection?

To work on memorizing this poem, say it through out loud three times. First, say it as if you were angry with a particular person. Next, say the first line softly, then the next line loudly. Repeat until the end. Lastly, say the poem with strong pauses at the ending punctuation and blending the lines where there is no punctuation at the end of the line.

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Memorizing it

Every other word has been left blank. Can you fill them in?

Time not relief: all lied told time ease of pain! ____ miss ____ in ____ weeping ____ the ___; I ____ him ____ the ____ of ____ tide; ____ old ____ melt ____ every ____, And ____ year's ____ are ___ in ____ lane; ____ last ____ bitter ____ must ____ Heaped ____ my ___, and ___ old ___ abide! are hundred where fear go, - with memory brim! ____ entering ____ relief ____ quiet ____ Where _____fell ____foot _____shone _____face ____ say, "____ is ____ memory ____ him ___!" And _____ stand _____, so ____ him!

