



Customized Views:

Course Materials

Alan Liu

Sir Thomas Wyatt, "They Flee From Me" (1557)

They flee from me that sometime did me seek 1
 With naked foot, stalking in my chamber. 2
 I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek, 3
 That now are wild and do not remember 4
 That sometime they put themself in danger 5
 To take bread at my hand; and now they range, 6
 Busily seeking with a continual change. 7

they
this
what

Thanked be fortune it hath been otherwise 8
 Twenty times better; but once in special, 9
 In thin array after a pleasant guise, 10
 When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall, 11
 And she me caught in her arms long and small; 12
 Therewithall sweetly did me kiss 13
 And softly said, "dear heart, how like you this?" 14

naked / dressed
animal / woman
hunter / hunted
man / woman
wild / fashion
present / past

It was no dream: I lay broad waking. 15
 But all is turned thorough my gentleness 16
 Into a strange fashion of forsaking; 17
 And I have leave to go of her goodness, 18
 And she also, to use newfangledness. 19
 But since that I so kindly am served 20
 I would fain know what she hath deserved. 21

gentle / gentle
kind
good

"small" = slender

"fain" = gladly