

# Description of Spring



## POEM TEXT

*Wherein each thing renews, save only the lover*

- 1 The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
- 2 With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale:
- 3 The nightingale with feathers new she sings:
- 4 The turtle to her make hath told her tale:
- 5 Summer is come, for every spray now springs,
- 6 The hart hath hung his old head on the pale:
- 7 The buck in brake his winter coat he flings:
- 8 The fishes flete with new repaired scale:
- 9 The adder all her slough away she slings:
- 10 The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale:
- 11 The busy bee her honey now she mings:
- 12 Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.
- 13 And thus I see among these pleasant things
- 14 Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

*heartbreak*, which can overwhelm people even when there's much to feel happy about.

For its first 12 lines, the poem seems to be a straightforward celebration of spring and summer. The "soote" (meaning "sweet") season is a time when the flowers are in "Bud and bloom," greenery covers the landscape, and a whole host of animals seems to enjoy the new lease of life that comes with the warmer months. The world casts off the old and welcomes the new: a snake "slings" away her old skin, a buck deer "flings" off his heavy winter coat, and fish flash their "repaired scale[s]."

The rejuvenation of the seasons seems to grant these creatures a sense of purpose and vitality. Birds eat small flies while the "busy bee" industriously produces more honey. Spring and summer, of course, are also mating season for many creatures. The speaker notes that a turtledove has "told her tale" to her mate (that is, she's sung her song to attract a partner).

But though the plant and animal worlds in the poem seem refreshed and renewed, the speaker doesn't feel the same way at all. In fact, the speaker's "sorrow" just stands out more clearly against the backdrop of the seasons' beauty; these signs of joy and delight are a reminder of how miserable the speaker is because "each thing renews" in spring "save only the lover." In other words, the one thing that *doesn't* refresh along with the rest of the world is this "lover's" affection. Instead, ironically, what "springs" forth with the change of season is the speaker's "sorrow." The speaker's heartache is what grows, as though it too has been given a new lease on life. Happiness, the poem suggests, doesn't keep time with the seasons—and nothing hits as hard as a broken heart.



## SUMMARY

*Everything renews in the spring, except for the lover.*

The sweet season makes plants bud and bloom. The hills and valleys are covered with green. The nightingale sings with fresh new feathers. The turtledove sings her song to her mate. Summer has arrived, and flowers blossom from the ground. The hart has left his old antlers on a fence. The buck has shed his winter coat. Fish dart about with fresh scales. The snake sloughs away her old skin. The swallow quickly chases little flies. The busy bee mixes her honey. Winter, the flowers' enemy, has faded. Yet even as I watch this pleasantness make worries melt away, my sadness blooms.

### Where this theme appears in the poem:

- Lines 1-14



## LINE-BY-LINE ANALYSIS

### BEFORE LINE 1, LINES 1-4

*Wherein each thing renews, save only the lover*  
*The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,*  
*With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale:*  
*The nightingale with feathers new she sings:*  
*The turtle to her make hath told her tale:*

The poem starts with an [epigraph](#) (sometimes written out as a subtitle) that sums up its main idea. This is a "Description of Spring," a season "wherein" (or in which) "each thing renews, save only the lover." In other words, spring is a time when everything is refreshed and rejuvenated—everything, that is,



## THEMES



### NATURE'S BEAUTY VS. HEARTBREAK

Spring and summer in Henry Howard's "Description of Spring" fill the world with nature's beauty, bounty, and variety. These seasons are a time of delight and renewal, yet, for all their joy, they can't cheer the lovelorn speaker up. In fact, the fresh beauty of spring and summer simply throws the speaker's sorrow into starker relief. The poem thus demonstrates the power not just of nature but also of

except for "the lover." Right up top, the poem implies that the speaker's lover has decided to end their relationship (to not "renew" its terms).

The poem itself then begins by declaring that it's the "soote," meaning "sweet," season, that time of year "that bud and bloom forth brings." Gone is the barren misery of winter, replaced by the sweet delights of spring. The bright /b/ [alliteration](#) of this line evokes the way that fresh growth and color burst forth in spring:

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,

Spring has "clad," or clothed, the hills and vales with "green," the speaker continues. The speaker is subtly [personifying](#) both spring and the landscape here, granting it agency and purpose: the season gently cloaks every inch of the land, from tall hills to deep valleys, in life.

It's not just the landscape that renews in spring, either: animals, too, are rejuvenated by the shifting season. The "nightingale," decked out with fresh feathers, "sings" her song, while the turtledove warbles out a tune to her "make," or mate. Again, the poem's sounds help make its [imagery](#) more vibrant. Listen to the alliteration and [consonance](#) of line 4:

The turtle to her make hath told her tale:

Those flitting /t/ and lilted /t/ sounds recreate the bright, joyful music of spring's natural orchestra. The mention of the turtledove's mate, meanwhile, is a sad, subtle reminder that the speaker's own beloved has left.

"Description of Spring" is a [sonnet](#). (Henry Howard played a major role in the development of the sonnet in English-language poetry.) This opening quatrain features an alternating, ABAB [rhyme scheme](#) and is written in iambic pentameter: a [meter](#) containing five [iamb](#)s, poetic feet with a da-DUM rhythm, per line.

The soote | season, | that bud | and bloom | forth  
brings,  
With green | hath clad | the hill | and eke | the vale:

There's a [trochee](#) (the opposite foot of an iamb, DUM-da) in the second foot of line 1 ("season"). This adds some emphasis to the word "seasons," subtly conveying spring's power. Overall, though, the regular rhyme scheme and meter lend the poem a steady, propulsive music.

## LINES 5-8

*Summer is come, for every spray now springs,  
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale:  
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings:  
The fishes flete with new repaired scale:*

Next, the speaker declares that summer has arrived (the speaker seems to be using both seasons somewhat interchangeably to refer to the time of year when the weather turns). With summer, every "spray now springs": every little branch and sprig burst into life. The world is in bloom.

The [trochee](#) at the start of line 5 gives summer a metrical spring in its step, a subtle bounce that evokes the boldness of the warmer weather:

Summer | is come, | for ever- | y spray | now springs,

The [alliterative sibilance](#) of this line ("Summer," "spray," "springs") suggests the delicate abundance of those "sprays." The speaker then lists out all the other ways that life responds to the changing season. The "hart," or adult male deer, sheds his antlers, [metaphorically](#) hanging them "on the pale," or fence post. Likewise, the "buck" sheds his winter coat (buck can refer to a number of male animals, including deer and sheep). And the fish float about with "new repaired scale." Everything is looking lighter, shinier, fresher.

Alliteration ("hart hath hung his old head," "buck in brake," "fishes flete") fills these lines with bold, bright music, evoking the lively, joyous attitude of the creatures being described. [Anaphora](#) and [asyndeton](#) also make it sound like this list could go on and on (and it *does* go on for another three lines!), as though there's no limit to spring's rejuvenating effects:

The hart hath hung his old head on the pale:  
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings:  
The fishes flete with new repaired scale:

Note, too, how the [personification](#) of these lines—the way that hart hands "his" antlers like a hat or how that buck "flings" off "his winter coat"—highlights the *contrast* between the speaker and the rest of the world. While other creatures seem to have a new lease on life, the speaker remains saddled with the same old heartbreak and misery.

## LINES 9-12

*The adder all her slough away she slings:  
The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale:  
The busy bee her honey now she mings:  
Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.*

The speaker mentions other creatures that are rejuvenated by spring/summer. The "adder," a type of snake, "slings" off her old skin as though tossing out an old outfit. The verb "sling," like "flings" earlier in the poem, conveys the snake's carefree attitude and eagerness to shed her former skin. Meanwhile, a "swift swallow" chases a little fly and a "busy bee" mixes her honey. The world is in motion, filled with energy and vitality.

These lines are again rich with sonic devices that make all this [imagery](#) more vivid and exciting for readers. The poem simply

sounds vibrant. Listen to the [sibilance](#) of "slough"/"slings" or "swift swallow" evokes the adder's hiss or the rustling of the little bird's wings. Similarly, the alliteration of "busy bee" adds a bright burst of energy to the next line.

These lines also continue the [anaphora](#) that began back in line 6, with some broader grammatical [parallelism](#) to boot:

The adder all her slough away she slings:  
The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale:  
The busy bee her honey now she mings:

The poem sounds orderly, as though all of nature suddenly slots neatly into place. Nature, the poem implies, is filled with harmony.

Line 12 then concludes the section of the poem that describes spring. Note that this line echoes line 5:

Summer is come, for every spray now springs,  
[...]  
Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.

This symmetry hammers home spring/summer's triumph over winter. Winter, which was like an evil force (a bale) for the flowers, is over. The world is full of life and beauty once more.

## LINES 13-14

*And thus I see among these pleasant things  
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.*

The last two lines form a rhyming [couplet](#), an innovation to the [sonnet](#) form introduced by Howard himself (this closing couplet is now considered one of the defining features of the English, a.k.a. Shakespearean, sonnet). This couplet also contains the poem's *volta*, or turn: the moment when the poem's tone or argument abruptly changes.

So far, the speaker has spent the poem describing how spring and summer rejuvenate the world. In this couplet, the speaker reiterates that the season is filled with "pleasant things" that make worries seem to drift away: "Each care decays" in the warmer months, [metaphorically](#) wilting much like flowers do when winter rolls around.

And "yet," the speaker continues, "my sorrow springs." The speaker's "care" does *not* decay. On the contrary, it just gets worse. Spring "renews" the speaker's heartache. [Ironically](#) for the speaker, then, spring is a time of pain and sorrow rather than joy and excitement. The poem hammers home this irony with a [pun](#): the speaker says, "my sorrow springs," meaning that this sorrow grows, that it blooms or blossoms like a flower in springtime. While spring makes other "cares" fade away, the speaker's heartache feels vivid and fresh.



## POETIC DEVICES

### ALLITERATION

"Description of Spring" is bursting with [alliteration](#), which fills the poem with joyful music right from its opening line:

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,

The gentle [sibilance](#) of "soote season" suggests the soothing sweetness of spring, while those plosive /b/ sounds practically bounce off the page. Alliteration makes the poem feel vibrantly alive, just as the warming weather rejuvenates the natural world.

Alliteration can also evoke the specific [imagery](#) at hand. Take the crisp /t/ sounds of line 4, which suggests the gentle chirping of that turtledove:

The turtle to her make hath told her tale:

Later, the sibilance of "slough"/"slings" fits right in with the image of a snake shedding her skin. Similarly, the /sw/ sounds of "swift swallow" might make readers think of the rustle of the bird's wings through the spring air. In the next line, the bouncy alliteration of "busy bee" highlights the little bug's industrious activity.

Nearly every line in the poem features some alliteration, and this abundance of *sound* mirrors the abundance of spring itself. Alliteration makes the poem's language more pleasant and exciting, just as spring makes the earth lovelier.

#### Where Alliteration appears in the poem:

- **Line 1:** "soote season," "bud," "bloom," "brings"
- **Line 3:** "nightingale," "new"
- **Line 4:** "turtle to," "told," "tale"
- **Line 5:** "Summer," "spray," "springs"
- **Line 6:** "hart hath hung his," "head"
- **Line 7:** "buck," "brake"
- **Line 8:** "fishes flete"
- **Line 9:** "slough," "slings"
- **Line 10:** "swift swallow," "smale"
- **Line 11:** "busy bee"
- **Line 12:** "Winter," "worn"
- **Line 14:** "sorrow springs"

### IRONY

The speaker spends most of the poem rendering spring in all its vivid, colorful, and various detail. Flowers come into bloom, animals get a new lease on life, and the whole world seems fresh and rejuvenated. The speaker knows spring is meant to be a happy time; it's full of "pleasant things" that make every

worry melt away.

And yet, this isn't a happy *poem*. The speaker presents spring as a season of joy and beauty, making it [ironic](#) that what "springs" forth from the speaker during this time of year is "sorrow."

Readers might expect the glories of spring to cheer the speaker up, yet all they do is highlight the speaker's misery. Spring refreshes and nourishes the speaker's heartache, something the speaker would rather stay cold and buried back in winter. The [pun](#) on the word "springs" hammers home the irony of the speaker's situation: "to spring" means to bloom or rush forth, but this is also, of course, the name of the "soote season" described throughout the poem. The pun links spring with the speaker's sadness.

The speaker hints at this irony in the poem's [epigraph](#)/subtitle, which promises a description of spring "*Wherein each thing renews, save only the lover.*" Everything becomes new again—as promised—except for the speaker's lover's affections. Their romantic commitment fades, making the speaker's sorrow bloom anew.

#### Where Irony appears in the poem:

- **Before Line 1:** "Wherein each thing renews, save only the lover"
- **Lines 13-14:** "And thus I see among these pleasant things / Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs."

## IMAGERY

As its title suggests, this poem is filled with "descriptions of spring" and [imagery](#) meant to convey the beauty and vibrancy of the season.

For example, in line 2, the speaker notes that the hills and valleys are "clad" in "green." The word "clad" subtly [personifies](#) the earth, depicting it as though it were wearing green clothing. Note, too, that "the hill" and "the vale" are essentially opposites; the vibrant growth of spring reaches up high and down low. Every bit of the world, the image implies, is vibrantly alive.

Later, the speaker describes a "hart," or adult male dale, leaving his old antlers "on the pale" (or a fencepost), the "buck" flinging off his "winter coat," fish floating about with fresh-looking scales, a snake sloughing off her old skin, a swallow flitting around to catch flies, and a buzzing bee industriously making honey.

All of these images evoke the sights and sounds of the world in spring and summer. They suggest an atmosphere filled with joy and delight, where creatures big and small exuberantly toss off bits of their older selves. These animals move through the world with replenished strength and a renewed sense of purpose.

#### Where Imagery appears in the poem:

- Lines 2-3
- Lines 5-11

## PERSONIFICATION

"Description of Spring" [personifies](#) the natural world throughout. The poem begins by describing how the "soote," or sweet, "season" bringing forth "bud and bloom" and clothing the hills and valleys in green. These lines subtly portray spring as an intentional force (like a human or a god). These lines personify the countryside as well, presenting it as though it's dressed up in its best green clothes to mark the start of the season.

The poem also discusses many of its animals in human terms. The turtledove tells a "tale" to her mate. The hart hangs "his old head" (that is, his antlers) on the fence like a hat, and the buck similarly "flings" off his winter coat. Literally, he sheds his thick winter fur; figuratively, this sounds like he's a man happily tossing away his cold-weather gear now that the spring has finally arrived.

The use of gendered pronouns here and throughout the poem makes the natural world seem more human, more alive. In turn, this personification makes the speaker seem all the more isolated and out of sync with the season; the "busy bee" and "adder" are joyfully going about their springtime business, while the speaker wallows in misery.

#### Where Personification appears in the poem:

- **Lines 1-2:** "The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings, / With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale:"
- **Line 4:** "The turtle to her make hath told her tale:"
- **Lines 6-7:** "The hart hath hung his old head on the pale: / The buck in brake his winter coat he flings:"
- **Line 9:** "The adder all her slough away she slings:"
- **Line 11:** "The busy bee her honey now she mings:"

## PARALLELISM

"Description of Spring" is a very [repetitive](#) poem. Most of this repetition comes in the form of [anaphora](#) (the repetition of "The" at the start of multiple consecutive lines) and broader [parallelism](#). All the lines that describe different creatures sound very similar:

The nightingale with feathers new she sings:  
 The turtle to her make hath told her tale:  
 [...]  
 The hart hath hung his old head on the pale:  
 The buck in brake his winter coat he flings:  
 The fishes flete with new repaired scale:  
 The adder all her slough away she slings:  
 The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale:

The busy bee her honey now she mings:

The intensely repetitive language of this list suggests abundance, as though the speaker picks examples from a seemingly never-ending catalog of happy animals. Note, too, that there aren't any conjunctions between list items to break up the poem's flow. This [asyndeton](#) adds to the sense that the speaker could go on and on; spring's bounty is endless.

The vast, even relentless, beauty of spring also makes the speaker's "sorrow" stand out all the more plainly. *Everything* is feeling better except for the speaker.

Note, too, how parallelism bookends the second and third quatrains:

Summer is come, for every spray now springs,  
[...]  
Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.

Again, the repetitive language hammers home the fact of the warm weather's arrival. Winter is definitely gone—except for within the speaker's heart.

#### Where Parallelism appears in the poem:

- **Line 3:** "The nightingale," "she sings"
- **Line 5:** "Summer is come"
- **Line 6:** "The hart"
- **Line 7:** "The buck," "he flings"
- **Line 8:** "The fishes"
- **Line 9:** "The adder," "she slings"
- **Line 10:** "The swift swallow"
- **Line 11:** "The busy bee," "she mings"
- **Line 12:** "Winter is worn"



## VOCABULARY

**Soote** (Line 1) - Sweet.

**Hath** (Line 2, Line 4, Line 6) - Has.

**Clad** (Line 2) - Clothed/covered.

**Eke** (Line 2) - Also.

**Vale** (Line 2) - Valley.

**Turtle** (Line 4) - That is, a turtledove: a species of bird known for forming strong pair bonds with its mate. Not coincidentally, turtledoves commonly [symbolize](#) love and devotion. The mention of the birds in the poem hammers home the speaker's comparative solitude.

**Make** (Line 4) - Mate.

**Spray** (Line 5) - Bloom of flowers.

**Hart** (Line 6) - An adult male deer. Harts shed and re-grow their

antlers each year.

**Old head** (Line 6) - Antlers. Male deer shed their antlers in the winter or early spring.

**Pale** (Line 6) - Fence/boundary.

**Buck** (Line 7) - This could be a number of male animals but probably refers to a male deer, goat, or wild sheep, all of whom shed their thick winter coats in the spring.

**Flete** (Line 8) - An old-fashioned spelling of "fleet," meaning quick and nimble.

**Brake** (Line 7) - A hedge.

**Adder** (Line 9) - A small venomous snake.

**Slough** (Line 9) - Old outer skin. (Snakes shed their skin multiple times a year.)

**Swift** (Line 10) - Quick.

**Swallow** (Line 10) - A small bird.

**Pursueth** (Line 10) - An old-fashioned spelling of "pursues," meaning chases after.

**Mings** (Line 11) - Mixes.

**Bale** (Line 12) - Harmful or destructive force.

**Care** (Line 14) - Worry.



## FORM, METER, & RHYME

### FORM

"Description of Spring" is a [sonnet](#). Sonnets got their start in Italian, but Henry Howard helped pioneer the form in English. Howard is in fact credited with starting the trend of breaking the sonnet up into three [quatrains](#) followed by a final rhyming [couplet](#). The quatrains of an English sonnet also follow an alternating [rhyme scheme](#): ABAB CDCD EFEF.

"Description of Spring" follows this form, with one variation: the three quatrains here are pretty inseparable because they all use the *same* rhyme sounds (the end rhymes all end with "-ings"/"-ale"), making their rhyme scheme is ABAB ABAB ABAB. Technically, then, the poem can be broken up into one stanza of 12 lines plus a closing couplet.

English sonnets typically contain something called a *volta*, or turn, in that final couplet: a moment marked by an abrupt shift in tone, or when the speaker responds in some way to the poem's previous 12 lines. The volta here is clear, as the speaker switches from describing the rejuvenating beauty of spring to describing the persistence of their sorrow.

### METER

"Description of Spring" is written in [iambic](#) pentameter: lines containing five iambs, metrical feet that follow an unstressed-stressed pattern of syllables (da-DUM). This is the

typical meter for English-language sonnets.

lambd approximate the sound of conversational English, and, here, they also fill the poem with a steady heartbeat and sense of momentum that evoke the vibrancy of the world in spring. Listen to this meter in action in line 7, for example:

The buck | in brake | his wint- | er coat | he flings:

There are some variations on this meter throughout the poem, which keep things interesting and add emphasis to important moments. Line 1, for example, contains a [trochee](#) (a metrical foot that follows a stressed-unstressed pattern) in its second foot:

The soote | season, | that bud | and bloom | forth brings,

This trochee adds force to the phrase "soote season," subtly relaying the power that the dawning spring has over the natural world. Something similar happens with the trochee at the start of line 5:

Summer | is come, | for eve- | ry spray | now springs,

Here, the opening stress grants the line a sense of urgency; summer has arrived, and it demands everyone's attention.

## RHYME SCHEME

Typical English [sonnets](#) feature three [quatrains](#) of alternating rhyme followed by a rhyming [couplet](#): ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. Howard's poem follows this general *pattern*, but it relies on just two rhyme sounds throughout: "-ings" or "-ale." The [rhyme scheme](#) of "Description of Spring" thus runs ABAB ABAB ABAB AA.

In a way, the poem reflects the influence of earlier Italian sonnets, which rely on fewer rhyme sounds (their opening two quatrains rhyme ABBA ABBA; it's easier to rhyme in Italian than it is in English). On one level, the rhymes, like the poem's bountiful [alliteration](#), fill "Description of Spring" with bouncy, joyous music. At the same time, the repetitive nature of these rhyme sounds might make them seem relentless or even oppressive. Their music might be an affront to the mournful speaker, just as spring's beauty is a constant reminder that the lovesick speaker is out of step with the rest of the world.



## SPEAKER

The poem's speaker is someone observing the beauty and bounty of spring through the lens of their own heartache. The poem's epigraph/subtitle hints at the speaker's misery before the poem even begins:

*Wherein each thing renews, save only the lover*

That "save only the lover" hangs over the entire poem: the speaker acknowledges that spring's arrival rejuvenates the world, yet it can't "renew" a lover's affection. Readers can guess that the speaker's beloved has rejected them; as a result, the lovesick speaker can't enjoy the beauty of the season. The speaker's "sorrow" is all that blooms this time of year, implying that the "pleasant" beauty of spring only makes the speaker's loneliness and pain more acute.

The poem doesn't say much about the identity of the speaker, but there might be an element of autobiography. The Tudor court was a lustful place, and both Howard and his fellow sonnet pioneer Sir Thomas Wyatt frequently wrote about their amorous adventures.



## SETTING

The poem takes place in spring and summer: the "soote," or sweet, time of year when the natural world comes vibrantly alive. Flowers bloom and the hills are "clad" with greenery. Mammals shed their winter coats and snakes slough off their old skins; birds are singing, fish are swimming, and bees are making honey. In short, the whole world seems to be happy and flourishing.

The speaker recognizes the beauty of the world now that "Winter is worn" and "Each care decays," but they're unable to actually enjoy any of the "pleasant things" that now surround them. The speaker remains miserable: their "sorrow springs," blooming like the flowers that now fill the countryside. The speaker's heartache prevents their own worries from fading away along with winter's cold, and the beauty of the season makes the speaker's pain stand out more clearly.



## CONTEXT

### LITERARY CONTEXT

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey was a poet and nobleman who served in the court of Henry VIII. He was born in either 1516 or 1517 and met an untimely end in 1547.

Together with his friend and fellow courtier Sir Thomas Wyatt, Howard introduced the [sonnet](#) form into the English language. Howard is credited with developing the [couplet](#) ending now inextricably linked with English sonnets (and which is on display here in "Description of Spring"). Though the form is commonly called the "*Shakespearean* sonnet," Howard's work actually predates that of the Bard (Shakespeare would, of course, go on to make such poems enduringly popular).

Both Howard and Wyatt were greatly inspired by the 14th-century Italian poet Petrarch (Francesco Petrarca). Indeed,

many of their sonnets are loose translations of Petrarch's poems. "Description of Spring" is no exception, taking its cues from "Zefiro torna (CCCX)." Howard's version makes a number of drastic changes, doing away with references to classical mythology and the spiritual realm. The poem was published in the first printed English-language poetry anthology, *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557).

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, lived and died under the rule of the notorious English king Henry VIII. His life was colorful, sometimes violent, and always eventful. Howard's father was next in line to throne, failing Henry VIII's infamous efforts to produce a male heir. Howard was also first cousin to Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, both of whom were beheaded by the king.

The court was a place of romantic intrigue in Howard's day, and numerous poems of the era present sex and love as a kind of power game not unlike those taking place at the political level. Poetry also played an important role in political life at the English court. Courtiers would recite poems to win favor from the king and to express personal and political grievances indirectly. This was an important and difficult project during Henry VIII's reign: he was a famously difficult and moody king who often lashed out against those who served him. As a result, court life, though lavish, could be quite dangerous. In fact, Henry Howard has the dubious honor of being the last person to be executed on the instruction of Henry VIII, having been found guilty of treason.



## MORE RESOURCES

### EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- [The Petrarchan Original](#) – Check out the poem that inspired "Description of Spring." ([https://www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Zefiro\\_torna\\_e\\_il\\_bel\\_tempo\\_rimena](https://www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Zefiro_torna_e_il_bel_tempo_rimena))
- [Howards Biography](#) – Learn more about Howard's life and work via the Poetry Foundation. (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/henry-howard>)
- [Tottel's Miscellany](#) – Explore the first English-language poetry anthology, which includes poems by Henry Howard. ([https://sourcetext.files.wordpress.com/tottels\\_1557](https://sourcetext.files.wordpress.com/tottels_1557))
- [The Tudor Court](#) – Learn more about life in the court of Henry VIII, a world of suspicion, plotting, danger, and lust. (<http://www.tudorbritain.org/court/courtlife.asp#:~:text=The%20court%20was%20often%20the.v>)



## HOW TO CITE

### MLA

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