

Shakespeare's Sonnet 130

Here is Shakespeare's Sonnet 130, plus my conjecture of the kind of poem he might have been parodying.*

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red, than her lips red:
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,
As any she belied with false compare.

My mistress' eyes shine brighter than the sun;
Her ruby lips put coral to the test;
Her hair of finest golden wire is spun;
As snow on hummocks seems her swelling breast.
No play of breeze-tossed roses, white and red,
Can match the mingled damask of her flesh;
Far Araby has perfumes rare, 'tis said,
No sweeter than her breath, forever fresh.
The music of her discourse when she talks
Would put angelic choirs to harsh compare.
The motion of her body when she walks
Is of a goddess treading on the air.
My love, in short, is fairer and more fine
Than any other lady, mortal or divine!

** It seems to me that a different version of this might have appeared on the screen in class, but I can't see how this could have happened, so maybe it was this one after all, and I just didn't recognize it.*