

"AITCH" ACHES (PIERCE ON IT!)

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Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
 Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd.
 And every fair from fair sometimes declines,
 By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
 Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st.

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Shakespeare's immortal Sonnet 18 has endured various indignities at the hands of logologists. In the May 1995 Kickshaws, Dave Morice wrote an inverse version ("Will you contrast me with the winter's night...") and elsewhere in this issue Jan Anderson throws the book at the Bard. Here are two full-dress Anguish Languishes by Anthony Sebastian. (He prefers to exclude homonyms because "one cannot tell that a word is a homonym when the covertext is heard as opposed to read"):

Shell icon party tuna somber stay?
 Tao erred mar lowly end mar tampered wit;
 Roof wince to check dub star links buzz off maize,
 End somber's least hat altar shortened dit.
 Psalm dime dew ought dub dye off haven chimes,
 End ovens hisses galled convection deem'd;
 End ovary fur frump fur psalm dime day climbs,
 Bay champs soar nadirs chain link curse undream'd;
 Bud thigh infernal somber shell nut fed,
 Snore lutes position offtrack fur tao ovids;
 Norse shell depth brac tao wondrous innings shed
 Win any turn all lanes toot dime tao gross'd
 Sore lung adz mannikin breed, are ice ken zee,
 Sore lung lipstick, end stick gifts lysed tooth he.

Chalet comb pair dee dual psalmer's daze?
 Dow heart moor low flea end moor damper id.
 Roof wince douche ache dud air link butts amaze,
 End psalmer's leashed had tall dew shored awed aid.

Zoom tame dew ought dud die up heft in chains,
 End oven sisses gulled comb pleasant dinned;
 End ovary fear fra fear zoom tame dock lanes,
 Bay chants soar nadir's jangling curse on trend;
 Putt thigh he torn nail psalmer shale nut fit;
 Gnarl ooze pose section up dad fear tao oats;
 North's hell Depth brake tao won destin'd anise-shit;
 Win internalize toot tame tao groats;
 Salon-gas mend kin braid, are ides concede,
 Salon-lips disk, end disk gifts lice do deed.

My Anguish Languish closely follows the consonant-substitution rules outlined in the November 1997 Word Ways, but allows homonyms:

Shawl Ike impair the two as sun nurse stay?
 Dhow Ardmore--luff, flee, wend nor tamper wit;
 Ruff whims due sheik (thud!)--Arlene puts off "neigh"
 End sum (her sleaze), a tall douche whored (add "eight");
 Sum thyme (do what?), tee I off Evan's Heinz;
 Ann, doff ten whizzes--galled Camp Lex undimmed
 End Avery fare (Fran fare?) sum thyme, teak lines
 Bites ant, sore Nate shirrs chain-jink core hunt-rimmed
 Bud thigh we turn all sum, myrrh shell nut, frayed,
 More loose pose cession off tat vert (ow!) host
 Norse Hal debt: bray "Go, wonders!" tennis-aid
 Win any turn! Aligns two-dime Dow grossed.
 Sow lawn, gas-men; con Brie, Thor, I scan "Zee".
 Soul on glyphs, Tess, and Tess gaffs leaf tooth he.

Because of the stronger restrictions on consonants, this version makes even less sense than Sebastian's. The pictures generated by this kind of constrained writing are in some ways even more vivid than those arising from palindromes; they are certainly at least as disjointed. One sees images like a human golf-tee (line 5), a deflated Dow-Jones index (line 12), an Arabian vessel named after a Philadelphia suburb (line 2), a lady of doubtful virtue (line 4), a Middle Eastern bridge game (line 3), gasoline-station attendants moonlighting as gardeners (line 13), and an unspecified device for winning tennis games (lines 11-12)!