

Duke Gyrth Oldcastle Smackdown Virtual On Site

Prompt

Poets of Atlantia! Today's virtual on site challenge is to make an erasure poem from a poem written in period. Erasure poetry is "written" by erasing words from an extant poem, with the new poem made from what is left. Following will be a lot of information to help you get inspired, but please don't be overwhelmed by that! The actual process itself can be as simple as my own enthusiastically slapdash example at the end of this document. I look forward to seeing what you come up with! Invisible bonus points awarded for silliness, redeemable for 1 (or more!) smiles.

Resources for poems to use include but are not limited to:

[English Broadside Ballad Archive](#)

[Poetry Foundation: Renaissance Poets](#)

[Poetry Foundation: Middle English Poets](#)

[Poetry Foundation: Middle East](#) (dates underneath poet name)

[Poetry Foundation: East Asia](#) (dates underneath poet name)

[Manyoushu: Ten Thousand Leaves](#)

[The Complete Ci Poems of Li Qingzhao](#)

[300 Tang Poems](#)

[Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry](#)

[Egyptian Literature](#)

Yours in poetical service,

Lady Talia de Morales, Poeta Atlantiae

From "[Erasure](#)", [poets.org](#):

"Erasure poetry, also known as blackout poetry, is a form of found poetry wherein a poet takes an existing text and erases, blacks out, or otherwise obscures a large portion of the text, creating a wholly new work from what remains.

Erasure poetry may be used as a means of collaboration, creating a new text from an old one and thereby starting a dialogue between the two, or as a means of confrontation, a challenge to a pre-existing text."

Erasure Poems as Visual Art

Erasure poems often function as visual poetry and are left on the page as erased as an art object, or can be rearranged into more cohesive lines. The extant poems of Sappho often come to us as fragments, erasure poems where the eraser is time itself. Anne Carson, in her translations of Sappho, calls attention to gaps in the fragments on the page to beautiful effect:

Fragment 22

]
]work
]face
]
]
if not, winter
]no pain
]]I bid you sing
of Gongyla, Abanthis, taking up
your lyre as (now again) longing
floats around you,

you beauty. For her dress when you saw it
stirred you. And I rejoice.
In fact she herself once blamed me
Kyprogeneia

because I prayed
this word:
I want

Erasure Poems and Form Transformation

Invisible bonus point, redeemable for 1 unit of me being impressed with you, for anyone who manages to make an erasure poem that conforms to the rules of the same or another form. A fantastic (though please note the poem being erased is out of period) example of this is Ravi Shankar's "[Lines on a Skull](#)", which forms a renga from the erasure of Lord Byron's "[Lines Inscribed Upon a Cup Formed from a Skull](#)".

"Lines Inscribed Upon a Cup Formed from a Skull"

*Start not—nor deem my spirit fled:
In me behold the only skull
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.*

*I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee:
I died: let earth my bones resign;
Fill up—thou canst not injure me;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.*

*Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of Gods, than reptiles' food.*

*Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine;
And when, alas! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine?*

*Quaff while thou canst—another race,
When thou and thine like me are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.*

*Why not? since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce;
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use*

-Lord Byron

"Lines on a Skull"

*Start spirit; behold
the skull. A living head loved
earth. My bones resign*

*the worm, lips to hold
sparkling grape's slimy circle,
shape of reptile's food.*

*Where wit shone of shine,
when our brains are substitute,
like me, with the dead,*

*life's little, our heads
sad. Redeemed and wasting clay
this chance. Be of use.*

-Ravi Shankar

"Flow my Fall From Your Springs" is my attempt to make a Dowland song cheerful:

Wholesome Dowland

Flow my ~~teares~~ fall from your springs,
~~For euer~~ for euer: Let mee ~~live~~
Where nights black bird hir ~~infamy~~ infamy sings,
There let mee liue ~~there~~

Downe ~~your~~ lights shine you ~~more~~,
No nights are dark ~~enough~~ for those
That in ~~their~~ their last fortunes ~~are~~
Light doth but ~~showe~~ disclose.

~~Neuer~~ may my woes be relieved,
Since ~~pittie~~ is fled,
~~And~~ teares, and sighes, and grones my ~~weeke~~
dayes, my ~~weeke~~ dayes,
Of all ioyes haue ~~deprived~~

Frō the highest spire of contentment,
My fortune is ~~throwne~~
~~And~~ ~~for~~ ~~griefe~~ ~~and~~ ~~paine~~ for my
deserts, for my deserts,
Are my hopes since hope is gone.

Harke you shadowes that in darcknesse ~~dwell~~
Learne ~~to~~ ~~behold~~ light,
Happie, happie they that ~~in~~ ~~it~~
Feele not the worlds despite.

Flow, my ~~teares~~ fall from your
springs!
~~Lived~~ for ever, let me ~~live~~;
Where night's black bird her ~~owne~~
infamy sings,
There let me live ~~there~~

Down ~~your~~ lights, shine you ~~more~~
more!
No nights are dark ~~enough~~ for those
That in ~~their~~ their last fortunes
~~are~~
Light doth but ~~showe~~ disclose.

~~Neuer~~ may my woes be relieved,
Since ~~pittie~~ is fled;
~~And~~ ~~teares~~ and sighs and groans my
~~weeke~~ days, my ~~weeke~~ days
Of all joys haue ~~deprived~~

From the highest spire of
contentment
My fortune is ~~throwne~~
~~And~~ ~~for~~ ~~griefe~~ ~~and~~ ~~paine~~ for my
deserts, for my deserts
Are my hopes, since hope is ~~gone~~

Hark! you shadowes that in darkness
~~dwell~~
Learn ~~to~~ ~~behold~~ light
Happy, happy they that ~~in~~ ~~it~~
Feel not the world's despite.

—"Flow my ~~teares~~ fall from your springs"
from *The Second Booke of Songs or Ayres,*
of 2.4.and 5.parts: *With Tableture for the Lute or*

—Modern transcription