

To His Coy Mistress Quotations

Writer: Andrew Marvell | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

"Had we but world enough and time,

This coyness, lady, were no crime."

In these very first lines, the speaker is setting the tone for the poem. He says they do not have enough time, because youth will fade away and death will come soon. So, he urges his coy mistress to consume love without any delay.

"My vegetable love should grow

Vaster than empires and more slow;"

The speaker says he would admire the lady slowly, taking time, if they had enough time. His love would grow slowly like a giant tree.

"An hundred years should go to praise

Thine eyes..."

The speaker says he would spend 100 years admiring the lady's eyes and forehead. And she deserves this kind of admiration.

"But at my back I always hear

Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;"

The speaker says time is moving fast and coming for them. He imagines time as a fast-moving chariot. The speaker is saying that they will grow old soon and die. So, they must consume love before it is too late.

"The grave's a fine and private place,

But none, I think, do there embrace."

The speaker is making his point to convince the lady. He says nobody can enjoy love in a grave (after death). So, they must consume love now.

"Now let us sport us while we may,"

The speaker says they must enjoy love before the time runs out.