

The three sonnets that follow are the results of three different motivations. The first, "Past Friends Know No Ends," echoes a theme I occasionally use, that memorable literary characters can make good company. There is no reason to ever feel totally isolated or alienated as long as memories of stories you have spent significant time with exist. There is never any reason for an intelligent, thoughtful person to claim to be alone. These characters always accompany such a person --- and I include myself here. However, one does not have to be an English teacher or professor to have such entities to fall back on in times that call out for friendship.

The second poem that follows, "Lillian's Sonnet," is much more personal. One of our teachers had left our school, where she had worked as a Teaching Assistant, to work her first position as a full-fledged, totally qualified teacher, and all of us in the department as well as her students missed her. She was a consummate professional as well as a friend. A few years passed. Then something occurred which seldom happens: She was rehired by our school and was able to return to our department, as a full-time teacher, this time to stay --- and we were all excited and thrilled! This sonnet celebrates her return with a combination of humor and deeply felt affection.

"A Sad Sonnet" is the least personal one. It is a model, an example for students showing what a Shakespearean sonnet looks like --- in form if not in substance and quality. It deals with the subject of love turned to sadness because of the abandonment of one of the lovers --- a popular theme among teens. Why did one leave? Was it a matter of choice or fate? That is the fodder of discussion. You tell me what you think. Why did Richard Cory kill himself? Were Romeo and Juliet correct in their mutual suicides? Why did the lovers in this sonnet separate?