

'TIS BETTER TO BE VILE

Wm. Shakespeare (Sonnet CXXI)

(from "Book of Sonnets" - for Leslie)

Michael A. Gray (Los Angeles, 2022)

graymichael.com

(2/♩) ♩ = 96

Soprano

Alto

Baritone

Piano

7

bet - ter to be vile, 'Tis bet - ter to _ be vile, Then vile Then vile _ es - teem'd, then vile _ es -

bet - ter to be vile, 'Tis bet - ter to _ be vile, Then vile, Then vile, then vile _ es -

'Tis bet - ter to be vile, 'Tis bet - ter to _ be vile then vile, Then vile _ es teem'd, es -

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 2

14

teem'd, 'Tis bet - ter to be vile, 'Tis bet - ter to be vile, Then vile, Then vile es-

-teem'd, 'Tis bet - ter to be vile, 'Tis bet - ter to be vile, Then vile, Then vile, then

-teem'd, 'Tis bet - ter to be vile, 'Tis bet - ter to be vile, Then vile es-teem'd, then

21

teem'd Es - teem'd When not to be, When not to be re - ceives re-proach of

vile es-teem'd, When not to be, When not to be, Re - ceives re-proach of be - ing, _____

vile es-teem'd, When not to be, When not to be _____ re - ceives re-proach of be - ing, Re -

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 3

28

be-ing, ___ And the just, and the just_ pleas - ure, And the just_ pleas - ure, pleas - ure

And the just, and the just_ pleas - ure, And the just_ pleas - ure lost,

-ceises re-proach of be-ing, ___ And the just, and the just_ pleas - ure

mf

35

lost, Which is So deem'd Not by our feel - ing But

lost, Which is So deem'd Not by our feel - ing, But

lost, Which is So deem'd Not by our feel - ing Not by our feel - ing But

mf

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 4

42

by oth - ers' see - ing. For why _____ should oth - ers' false a - dul - ter - ate eyes, For
 by ___ oth - ers' see - ing. For why, For why _____ should
 by oth - ers' see - ing. For why, For why _____ should oth - ers' false a - dul - ter - ate eyes

49

why, Give sal - u - ta - tion to _____ my sport - ive blood? My sport - ive blood?
 oth - ers' false a - dul - ter - ate eyes Give sal - u - ta - tion ___ to _____ my sport - ive blood?_
 Give sal - u - ta - tion, _ Give sal - u - ta - tion to _____ my sport - ive blood? Or

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 5

56

Or on my frail - ties, Or on my frail - ties, Why, Why are
Or on my frail - ties, Or on my frail - ties, Why are frail - er, frail - er spies;
on my frail - ties, Or on my frail - ties, Why are frail - er spies, Why are

63

frail - er, frail - er spies; Which in their wills count bad
frail - er, frail - er spies; Which in their wills count bad what I think good?
frail - er, frail - er spies; Which in their wills count bad what I think good?

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 6

70

what I think good? *ff* No! I am that I am! I

No! I am that I am! I

No! I am that I am! I

ff *f*

77

am that I *f* am!

am, Am that I am! *mf* And they that lev-el At my a-bus-es__ reck-on up their

am. that I am! ..Am that I am. And they that lev-el at my a-

mf

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 7

84 *mf*

And they that lev-el At my a - bus - es_ reck - on up their own, I may Be straight
 own, And they that lev - el At my a - bus - es... I may Be straight Though
 bus - es_ reck - on up their own, I may, I may Be straight Though

90

Though they them - selves be bev - el By their rank thoughts, I may Be straight
 they them-selves be bev - el By their rank thoughts, ..Be straight Though
 they them-selves be bev - el By their rank thoughts, Though they them -

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 8

95

Though they them-selves be bev-el By their rank thoughts, My deeds must not be shown, Un- less this gen-er-al

they them-selves be bev-el By their rank thoughts,

selves be bev-el By their rank thoughts, My deeds must not be shown, Un- less this gen-er-al

101

- less this gen-er-al e-vil they main-tain: My deeds must not be shown, Un-less this gen-er-al e-vil they main-tain,

My deeds must not be shown, Un-less this gen-er-al e-vil they main-tain,

e-vil they main-tain, My deeds must not be shown, Un-less this gen-er-al e-vil they

Gray: 'Tis better to be vile p. 9

107

ff (3/8) (2/8)

shown Un - less this gen - er - al.. "All men are bad, All men are

cresc. They main - tain, they main - tain: "All men are bad, All men are

cresc. main - tain, they main - tain: "All men are bad, All men are

cresc.

112

(3/8) (2/8)

bad," And in their bad - ness reign!

bad," And in their bad - ness reign!

bad," And in their bad - ness reign!

ff *non rit.*