“Then and Now”

By

Paul Laurence Dunbar

THEN

He loved her, and through many years,
    Had paid his fair devoted court,
Until she wearied, and with sneers
    Turned all his ardent love to sport.

That night within his chamber lone,
    He long sat writing by his bed
A note in which his heart made moan
For love; the morning found him dead.

NOW

Like him, a man of later day
Was jilted by the maid he sought,
And from her presence turned away,
Consumed by burning, bitter thought.

He sought his room to write—a curse
Like him before and die, I ween.
Ah no, he put his woes in verse,
And sold them to a magazine.