

Who Ever Loved, That Loved Not at First Sight?
an interpretation

It lies not in our power to love or hate,
Our feelings are subject to forces beyond our control

For will in us is overruled by fate,
Will power is overruled by the inevitability of fate

When two are stripped long ere the course begins,
Mutual desire signals the birth of a joining that binds

We wish that one should lose, the other win;
We wish life to revolve around ourselves

And one especially do we affect
The more one loves us the more we affect them

Like two gold ingots, like in each respect;
Cast in the same mold we are entranced by our likeness

The reason no mans knows let it suffice
It should be sufficient there is no reasonable explanation

What we behold is censured by our eyes,
We are drawn to some and not to others

Where both deliberate, the love is slight;
The love is slight if we are unsure of how we feel

Who ever loved, that loved not at first sight?
Love at first sight bypasses the thoughts
and goes directly to the heart



"Dante meets Beatrice at Ponte Santa Trinita",
by Henry Holiday, 1883,
oil on canvas.
National Museums and Galleries
on Merseyside, Liverpool.