

# the morality of pens: a sonnet

*by strannikov*

poets can kill, or at least they once could:  
perhaps poems tamed us, if they are any good.

Villon a manslaughterer? oui, charitably:  
a priest died at his hands amicably.

Marlowe, before he was stabbed in his eye,  
defended himself with a blade, till Bradley died.

(Tom Watson, as skilled with a pen as with a sword,  
nailed Bradley down, Kit escaped then, uncored.)

back in France, the career of Lacenaire  
brought more mayhem than Lemaitre's Robert Macaire.

Nerval hanged himself, Jarry neglected his health—  
but two suicides in our commonwealth.

the moral of this tale, if one is to be found:  
“words” and “sword” can blend in brains—well to leave one down.

—but since either one can threaten lethality,  
both might be preferred to death from morality.

