

U6- The Romantic Period (1798-1832)  
Romantic Poetry Texts

William Blake  
“The Lamb”

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.  
By the stream & o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing woolly bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice!  
Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb I'll tell thee!  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb:  
He is meek & he is mild,  
He became a little child:  
I a child & thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.  
Little Lamb God bless thee.  
Little Lamb God bless thee.

“The Tyger”

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?  
In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare sieze the fire?  
And what shoulder, & what art.  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?

And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? & what dread feet?  
What the hammer? what the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?  
When the stars threw down their spears,  
And watered heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?  
Tyger! Tyger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

“A Poison Tree”

I was angry with my friend;  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,  
Night & morning with my tears:  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night.  
Till it bore an apple bright.  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,  
When the night had veild the pole;  
In the morning glad I see;  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

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William Wordsworth  
“The World Is Too Much With Us”

The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our  
powers;—  
Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid  
boon!  
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping  
flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less  
forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn

Samuel Taylor Coleridge  
“Kubla Khan”

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.  
So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round;  
And there were gardens bright with sinuous  
rills,  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing  
tree;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which  
slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!  
A savage place! as holy and enchanted

As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil  
seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were  
breathing,  
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:  
And mid these dancing rocks at once and  
ever  
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
Then reached the caverns measureless to  
man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean;  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!  
The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.  
It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw:  
It was an Abyssinian maid  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,  
That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

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Lord Byron (George Gordon)  
“She Walks in Beauty”

She walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
And all that's best of dark and bright  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;  
Thus mellowed to that tender light  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,  
Had half impaired the nameless grace  
Which waves in every raven tress,  
Or softly lightens o'er her face;  
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,  
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,  
But tell of days in goodness spent,  
A mind at peace with all below,  
A heart whose love is innocent!

Percy Bysshe Shelley  
“Ozymandias”

I met a traveller from an antique land  
Who said: “Two vast and trunkless legs of  
stone  
Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the  
sand,  
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose  
frown,  
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold  
command,  
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read  
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless  
things,  
The hand that mocked them, and the heart  
that fed:  
And on the pedestal these words appear:  
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.”

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John Keats  
“Ode on a Grecian Urn”

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:  
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape  
Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?  
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?  
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave

Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair! 20

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
For ever piping songs for ever new;  
More happy love! more happy, happy love!

For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,  
For ever panting, and for ever young;  
All breathing human passion far above,  
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,  
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?  
What little town by river or sea-shore, 35  
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?  
And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
Will silent be; and not a soul, to tell  
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return. 40

O Attic shape! fair attitude! with brede  
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
With forest branches and the trodden weed;  
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought  
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral! 45  
When old age shall this generation waste,  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,  
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.'

“When I Have Fears That I May  
Cease to Be”

WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be  
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,  
Before high pil'd books, in charact'ry,  
Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd grain;  
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,

Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
And feel that I may never live to trace  
Their shadows, with the magic hand of  
chance;  
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!  
That I shall never look upon thee more,

Never have relish in the faery power  
Of unreflecting love;—then on the shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,  
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.