**William Blake: \"And Did Those Feet\"**

| And did those feet in ancient time |
| Walk upon England's mountains green? |
| And was the holy Lamb of God |
| On England's pleasant pastures seen? |

| And did the Countenance Divine |
| Shine forth upon our clouded hills? |
| And was Jerusalem builded here |
| Among these dark satanic mills? |

| Bring me my bow of burning gold! |
| Bring me my arrows of desire! |
| Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold! |
| Bring me my chariot of fire! |

| I will not cease from mental fight, |
| Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand, |
| Till we have built Jerusalem |
| In England's green and pleasant land |

**Blake in this poem draws upon a legend that Jesus visited Britain (do a Google search if you are curious).**

**But the poem quickly opens up and departs from that notion, wondering in amazement if England ever had a sublime presence (this ultimately isn't a Christian poem), given its transformation from a \"green\" world to one of early Industrial age belching out of foulness (the \"dark satanic mills\")**.

**The \"Lamb\" then, transformed into the prophetic figure of Blake speaking as \"me,\" proclaims he will fight for a new, apocalyptic resurrection of \"Jerusalem.\"**

**Blake is condemning a real blighting of England, but sees the solution in the power of the imagination, \"mental fight.\"**

**Read the poem aloud to get the strong pounding rhythms achieved through repetition and a simple ballad form.**

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**William Wordsworth: \"The World Is Too Much with Us\" (1807)**

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,  
This poem is (roughly) in a traditional sonnet form, and the imagery and allusions may seem \"poetic\" in a fashion that made you hate poetry in high school.

So, you have to read aloud, slowly, letting the sad poignancy of Wordsworth's voice speak to you. In the first 2 lines: think of how tired you are at the end of your work or school day, planning out your future to get out
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; (1)
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea, (2)
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus (3) rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton (4) blow his wreathed horn.

(1) Brought up in an outdated religion.
(2) Meadow.
(3) Greek sea god capable of taking many shapes.
(4) Another sea god, often depicted as trumpeting on a shell.

of debt, or more money, or whatever.
It's all “getting and spending” and you
hardly have time to delight in the
aesthetic power of nature.

Wordsworth, tired and depressed,
cannot respond to nature: it “moves”
him “not,” and he imagines the
alternative of seeing nature as full of
mysterious powers.

Note this poem parallels Blake's wish
for imaginative power. Both Blake and
Wordsworth critique the “modern”
world that kills aesthetic/spiritual
delight… but both also, implicitly,
recognize that the power is within: we
rejuvenate the world thru an act of
imaginative will.

More psychological and a bit strange:
Wordsworth wants to “suck,” as it
were, on the “bosom” of the sea. The
imagery suggests a psychological
desire to return to some natal unity
with a maternal being; you can’t take
that literally, but in some ways our
restless dissatisfaction (a need to buy
things at the mall) derives from our
“fallenness” from a psycho-bliss state
of being when we were united with our
moms (I make this point because we’ll
be reading Freud down the road.)

William Wordsworth:
"The Tables Turned"

Up! up! my friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double.
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble. . . .

Books! 'tis a dull and endless trifle: 5
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it. . . .

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man, 10
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;

I don't particularly like this poem, but
it usefully conveys the typical
Romantic desire to return to Nature
("vernal woods") and the sense that
the Enlightenment, scientific way of
looking (remember Mr. Peale in his
museum) can deaden appreciation
("we murder to dissect").
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things--
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art,
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

William Wordsworth:
"Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey" on
Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur. Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye;
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration: -feelings too
Of unrembered pleasure; such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,

This is a challenging poem. It takes me
at least a whole class period to cover
just the basics. It is considered one of
the best poems of the Romantic
period.

So, start with a clear image of where
Wordsworth is at. He's standing on a
hillside looking downward/across the
distance to a river, some farm fields,
and an old church. He's been here
before, and starts the poem by
comparing what he feels now to what
he feels then.

The first section describes a pleasant
bucolic scene. It's “pretty” but not
sublime; it isn't overpowering... just
pleasant.

Curiously, decorating this scene is
some "vagrant" folk. Notice how
Wordsworth doesn't wonder whether
these are, say, workers out of a job
because during the early Industrial
Revolution killed whole categories of
work. It's as if you were to go to the
beach, and see some “bum” roasting
a hotdog in a fire, and say “how
quaint.”

My point is that this is a poem that is
so concentrated on the psychological
process of memory and nostalgia that
Wordsworth doesn't really see poverty
at all (Marx, who we will be reading
soon, would cut through
Wordsworth's bourgeois
sentimentality).

The image about the blind man is a bit
hard to follow. Imagine yourself
where you are, right now, in the
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: -that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on
-Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft -
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart -
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished though
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led -more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. -I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. -That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear -both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

John Keats. 1795–1821:
“Ode to a Nightingale”

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South!
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:
Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.
Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.
I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglandine;
Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.
Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—

into his garden and gets “high,” all-too-briefly, in just being able to experience the bird and its song. The poignancy of the poem is the intimate clash of sensations of beauty and the certitude of death.

Read the poem slowly, softly; with some Chopin in the background (see the enhancement site at the top of the main Romanticism lecture). If the poem does not melt your heart, you are made of wood!
To thy high requiem become a sod.  

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
No hungry generations tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
The same that oftentimes hath  
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.  

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell  
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!  
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.  
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades  
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep  
In the next valley-glades:  
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep?