Romantic Poetry Unit

**Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

“Kubla Khan—Or, a vision in a dream. A Fragment.” Ms. Moriconi Expert

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 momently 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 momently 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.In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure-dome decree:

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Through caverns measureless to man

   Down to a sunless sea.

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**William Wordsworth:**

“Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour.” July 13, 1798—Ms. Moriconi Expert

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 hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, 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 unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,

As have no slight or trivial influence

On that best portion of a good man's life,

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 thro' the woods,

         How often has my spirit turned to thee!

   And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,

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, not 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.

                                            Nor perchance,

If I were not thus taught, should I the more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay:

For thou art with me here upon the banks

Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,

My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch

The language of my former heart, and read

My former pleasures in the shooting lights

Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while

May I behold in thee what I was once,

My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,

Knowing that Nature never did betray

The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,

Through all the years of this our life, to lead

From joy to joy: for she can so inform

The mind that is within us, so impress

With quietness and beauty, and so feed

With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all

The dreary intercourse of daily life,

Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb

Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold

Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon

Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;

And let the misty mountain-winds be free

To blow against thee: and, in after years,

When these wild ecstasies shall be matured

Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind

Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,

Thy memory be as a dwelling-place

For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,

Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,

And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance—

If I should be where I no more can hear

Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams

Of past existence—wilt thou then forget

That on the banks of this delightful stream

We stood together; and that I, so long

A worshipper of Nature, hither came

Unwearied in that service: rather say

With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,

That after many wanderings, many years

Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,

And this green pastoral landscape, were to me

More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

**William Wordsworth Poetry Group**

“I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”

I wandered lonely as a cloud

That floats on high o'er vales and hills,

When all at once I saw a crowd,

A host, of golden daffodils;

Beside the lake, beneath the trees,

Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine

And twinkle on the milky way,

They stretched in never-ending line

Along the margin of a bay:

Ten thousand saw I at a glance,

Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they

Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:

A poet could not but be gay,

In such a jocund company:

I gazed—and gazed—but little thought

What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie

In vacant or in pensive mood,

They flash upon that inward eye

Which is the bliss of solitude;

And then my heart with pleasure fills,

And dances with the daffodils.

“Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802”

Earth has not anything to show more fair:

Dull would he be of soul who could pass by

A sight so touching in its majesty:

This City now doth, like a garment, wear

The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,

Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;

All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep

In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;

Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

The river glideth at his own sweet will:

Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;

*And all that mighty heart is lying still!*

“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.

**William Blake: Poetry Group**

“The Chimney Sweeper”-from *Songs of Innocence*

When my mother died I was very young,   
And my father sold me while yet my tongue   
Could scarcely cry 'Weep! weep! weep! weep!'   
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,   
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,   
'Hush, Tom! never mind it, for, when your head's bare,   
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,   
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight! -   
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,   
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,   
And he opened the coffins, and set them all free;   
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run   
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,   
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind:   
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,   
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,   
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.   
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm:   
So, if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

“The Chimney Sweeper”—from *Songs of Experience*

A little black thing among the snow,  
Crying! 'weep! weep!' in notes of woe!  
'Where are thy father and mother? Say!' -  
'They are both gone up to the church to pray.

'Because I was happy upon the heath,  
And smiled among the winter's snow,  
They clothed me in the clothes of death,  
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

'And because I am happy and dance and sing,  
They think they have done me no injury,  
And are gone to praise God and His priest and king,  
Who made up a heaven of our misery.'

“The Lamb,” *Songs of Innocence*

Little lamb, who made thee?  
Does thou know who made thee,  
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed  
By the stream and 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?  
Does 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, and He is mild,  
He became a little child.  
I a child, and thou a lamb,  
We are called by His name.  
Little lamb, God bless thee!  
Little lamb, God bless thee!

“The Tyger,” *Songs of Experience*

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 seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art   
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?   
And, when thy heart began to beat,   
What dread hand and 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?

**George Gordon, Lord Byron GROUP**

“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 mellow'd to that tender light 5  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,   
Had half impair'd the nameless grace   
Which waves in every raven tress,   
Or softly lightens o'er her face; 10  
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, 15  
But tell of days in goodness spent,  
A mind at peace with all below,   
A heart whose love is innocent!

“Canto IV,” *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*

*1*

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,

There is a rapture on the lonely shore,

There is society where none intrudes,

By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:

I love not Man the less, but Nature more,

From these our interviews, in which I steal

From all I may be, or have been before,

To mingle with the Universe, and feel

What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

*2*

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean--roll!

Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;

Man marks the earth with ruin--his control

Stops with the shore;--upon the watery plain

The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain

A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,

When for a moment, like a drop of rain,

He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,

Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

*3*

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy  
I wantoned with thy breakers--they to me  
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror--'twas a pleasing fear,  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane--as I do here.

4

My task is done--my song hath ceased--my theme  
Has died into an echo; it is fit  
The spell should break of this protracted dream.  
The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit  
My midnight lamp--and what is writ, is writ -  
Would it were worthier! but I am not now  
That which I have been--and my visions flit  
Less palpably before me--and the glow  
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

5

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been -  
A sound which makes us linger; yet, farewell!  
Ye, who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene  
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell  
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell  
A single recollection, not in vain  
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop shell;  
Farewell! with HIM alone may rest the pain,  
If such there were--with YOU, the moral of his strain.

**Percy Bysshe Shelley Group**

Ozymandias” by Shelley

I met a traveler 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.

“Ode to the West Wind”

**I**

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,

Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead

Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,

Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,

Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,

Each like a corpse within its grave,until

Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill

(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)

With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;

Destroyer and Preserver; hear, O hear!

**II**

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,

Loose clouds like Earth's decaying leaves are shed,

Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread

On the blue surface of thine airy surge,

Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge

Of the horizon to the zenith's height,

The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night

Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre

Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere

Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: O hear!

**III**

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams

The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,

Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,

And saw in sleep old palaces and towers

Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers

So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou

For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below

The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear

The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,

And tremble and despoil themselves: O hear!

**IV**

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;

If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;

A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free

Than thou, O Uncontrollable! If even

I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,

As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed

Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.

Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!

I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed

One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

**V**

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:

What if my leaves are falling like its own!

The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,

Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,

My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe

Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!

And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth

Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!

Be through my lips to unawakened Earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

**John Keats Poetry Group**

“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!

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,

Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

Is emptied of this 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.

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!

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”

When I have fears that I may cease to be

Before my pen has glean’d my teeming brain,

Before high piled 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 think 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.