

# Poets Familiar to Jane Austen Poetry Selections

*For JASNA-NC's Virtual Book Club: February 19, 2023*

## William Collins

### “Ode to Pity”

O Thou, the friend of man assign'd,  
With balmy hands his wounds to bind,  
And charm his frantic woe:  
When first Distress, with dagger keen,  
5 Broke forth to waste his destin'd scene,  
His wild unsated foe!  
By Pella's bard, a magic name,  
By all the griefs his thought could frame,  
Receive my humble rite:  
10 Long, Pity, let the nations view  
Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,  
And eyes of dewy light!  
But wherefore need I wander wide  
To old Ilissus' distant side,  
15 Deserted stream, and mute?  
Wild Arun too has heard thy strains,  
And Echo, 'midst my native plains,  
Been sooth'd by Pity's lute.  
There first the wren thy myrtles shed  
20 On gentlest Otway's infant head,  
To him thy cell was shown;  
And while he sung, the female heart,  
With youth's soft notes unspoil'd by art,  
Thy turtles mix'd their own.  
25 Come, Pity, come, by Fancy's aid,  
Even now my thoughts, relenting maid,  
Thy temple's pride design:  
Its southern site, its truth compleat,  
Shall raise a wild enthusiast heat  
30 In all who view the shrine.  
There Picture's toils shall well relate;  
How chance, or hard involving fate,  
O'er mortal bliss prevail:  
The buskin'd Muse shall near her stand,  
35 And sighing prompt her tender hand,  
With each disastrous tale.  
There let me oft, retir'd by day,  
In dreams of passion melt away,

Allow'd with thee to dwell:  
40 There waste the mournful lamp of night,  
Till, Virgin, thou again delight  
42 To hear a British shell!

## William Cowper

### “The Sofa” (ln. 1-180)

I sing the Sofa. I, who lately sang  
Truth, Hope, and Charity, and touch'd with awe  
The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,  
Escap'd with pain from that advent'rous flight,  
Now seek repose upon an humbler theme;  
The theme though humble, yet august and proud  
Th' occasion — for the Fair commands the song.  
Time was, when clothing sumptuous or for use,  
Save their own painted skins, our sires had none.  
As yet black breeches were not; satin smooth, 10  
Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile:  
The hardy chief upon the rugged rock  
Wash'd by the sea, or on the gravelly bank  
Thrown up by wintry torrents roaring loud,  
Fearless of wrong, repos'd his weary strength.  
Those barb'rous ages past, succeeded next  
The birth-day of invention; weak at first,  
Dull in design, and clumsy to perform.  
Joint-stools were then created; on three legs  
Upborne they stood. Three legs upholding firm 20  
A massy slab, in fashion square or round.  
On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,  
And sway'd the sceptre of his infant realms:  
And such in ancient halls and mansions drear  
May still be seen; but perforated sore,  
And drill'd in holes, the solid oak is found,  
By worms voracious eating through and through.  
At length a generation more refin'd  
Improv'd the simple plan; made three legs four,  
Gave them a twisted form vermicular, 30  
And o'er the seat, with plenteous wadding stuff'd,  
Induc'd a splendid cover, green and blue,  
Yellow and red, of tap'stry richly wrought,  
And woven close, or needle-work sublime.  
There might ye see the peony spread wide,  
The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his lass,

Lap-dog and lambkin with black staring eyes,  
 And parrots with twin cherries in their beak.  
 Now came the cane from India, smooth and bright  
 With Nature's varnish; sever'd into stripes 40  
 That interlac'd each other, these supplied  
 Of texture firm a lattice-work, that brac'd  
 The new machine, and it became a chair.  
 But restless was the chair; the back erect  
 Distress'd the weary loins, that felt no ease;  
 The slipp'ry seat betray'd the sliding part  
 That press'd it, and the feet hung dangling down,  
 Anxious in vain to find the distant floor.  
 These for the rich: the rest, whom fate had plac'd  
 In modest mediocrity, content 50  
 With base materials, sat on well-tann'd hides  
 Obdurate and unyielding, glassy smooth,  
 With here and there a tuft of crimson yarn,  
 Or scarlet crewel, in the cushion fixt;  
 If cushion might be call'd, what harder seem'd  
 Than the firm oak of which the frame was form'd.  
 No want of timber then was felt or fear'd  
 In Albion's happy isle. The lumber stood  
 Pond'rous and fixt by its own massy weight.  
 But elbows still were wanting; these, some say, 60  
 An alderman of Cripplegate contriv'd:  
 And some ascribe th' invention to a priest  
 Burly and big, and studious of his ease.  
 But, rude at first, and not with easy slope  
 Receding wide, they press'd against the ribs,  
 And bruise'd the side; and, elevated high,  
 Taught the rais'd shoulders to invade the ears  
 Long time elaps'd or e'er our rugged sires  
 Complain'd, though incommodiously pent in,  
 And ill at ease behind. The ladies first 70  
 'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex.  
 Ingenious Fancy, never better pleas'd  
 Than when employ'd t' accommodate the fair,  
 Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devis'd  
 The soft settee; one elbow at each end,  
 And in the midst an elbow it receiv'd,  
 United yet divided, twain at once.  
 So sit two kings of Brentford on one throne;  
 And so two citizens who take the air,  
 Close pack'd, and smiling, in a chaise and one. 80  
 But relaxation of the languid frame,  
 By soft recumbency of outstretch'd limbs,

Was bliss reserv'd for happier days. So slow  
The growth of what is excellent; so hard  
T' attain perfection in this nether world.  
Thus first necessity invented stools,  
Convenience next suggested elbow-chairs,  
And luxury th' accomplish'd Sofa last.

The nurse sleeps sweetly, hir'd to watch the sick,  
Whom snoring she disturbs. As sweetly he, 90  
Who quits the coach-box at the midnight hour  
To sleep within the carriage more secure,  
His legs depending at the open door.  
Sweet sleep enjoys the curate in his desk,  
The tedious rector drawling o'er his head;  
And sweet the clerk below. But neither sleep  
Of lazy nurse, who snores the sick man dead,  
Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour  
To slumber in the carriage more secure,  
Nor sleep enjoy'd by curate in his desk, 100  
Nor yet the dozings of the clerk, are sweet,  
Compar'd with the repose the Sofa yields.

Oh may I live exempted (while I live  
Guiltless of pamper'd appetite obscene)  
From pangs arthritic, that infest the toe  
Of libertine excess. The Sofa suits  
The gouty limb, 'tis true; but gouty limb,  
Though on a Sofa, may I never feel:  
For I have lov'd the rural walk through lanes  
Of grassy swarth, close cropt by nibbling sheep, 110  
And skirted thick with intertexture firm  
Of thorny boughs; have lov'd the rural walk  
O'er hills, through valleys, and by rivers' brink,  
E'er since a truant boy I pass'd my bounds  
T' enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames;  
And still remember, nor without regret  
Of hours that sorrow since has much endear'd,  
How oft, my slice of pocket store consum'd,  
Still hung'ring, pennyless, and far from home,  
I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws, 120  
Or blushing crabs, or berries, that emboss  
The bramble, black as jet, or sloes austere.  
Hard fare! but such as boyish appetite  
Disdains not; nor the palate, undeprav'd  
By culinary arts, unsav'ry deems.  
No Sofa then awaited my return;  
Nor Sofa then I needed. Youth repairs  
His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil

Incurring short fatigue; and, though our years  
As life declines speed rapidly away, 130  
And not a year but pilfers as he goes  
Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep;  
A tooth or auburn lock, and by degrees  
Their length and colour from the locks they spare;  
Th' elastic spring of an unwearied foot  
That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,  
That play of lungs, inhaling and again  
Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes  
Swift pace or steep ascent no toil to me,  
Mine have not pilfer'd yet; nor yet impair'd 140  
My relish of fair prospect; scenes that sooth'd  
Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find  
Still soothing and of pow'r to charm me still.  
And witness, dear companion of my walks,  
Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive  
Fast lock'd in mine, with pleasure such as love  
Confirm'd by long experience of thy worth  
And well-tried virtues, could alone inspire —  
Witness a joy that thou hast doubled long.  
Thou know'st my praise of nature most sincere, 150  
And that my raptures are not conjur'd up  
To serve occasions of poetic pomp,  
But genuine, and art partner of them all.  
How oft upon yon eminence our pace  
Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have borne  
The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,  
While admiration, feeding at the eye,  
And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.  
Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd  
The distant plough slow moving, and beside 160  
His lab'ring team, that swerv'd not from the track,  
The sturdy swain diminish'd to a boy!  
Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain  
Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,  
Conducts the eye along its sinuous course  
Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank,  
Stand, never overlook'd, our fav'rite elms,  
That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;  
While far beyond, and overthwart the stream  
That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale, 170  
The sloping land recedes into the clouds;  
Displaying on its varied side the grace  
Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tow'r,  
Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells

Just undulates upon the list'ning ear,  
Groves, heaths, and smoking villages, remote.  
Scenes must be beautiful, which, daily view'd,  
Please daily, and whose novelty survives  
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years.  
Praise justly due to those that I describe. 180

Excerpt from *The Task*, Book VI: "The Winter Walk at Noon"

Thus heav'n-ward all things tend. For all were once  
Perfect, and all must be at length restor'd.  
So God has greatly purpos'd; who would else  
In his dishonour'd works himself endure  
Dishonour, and be wrong'd without redress.  
Haste then, and wheel away a shatter'd world,  
Ye slow-revolving seasons! we would see,  
(A sight to which our eyes are strangers yet)  
A world that does not dread and hate his laws,  
And suffer for its crime; would learn how fair  
The creature is that God pronounces good,  
How pleasant in itself what pleases him.  
Here ev'ry drop of honey hides a sting,  
Worms wind themselves into our sweetest flow'rs,  
And ev'n the joy that haply some poor heart  
Derives from heav'n, pure as the fountain  
Is sully'd in the stream; taking a taint  
From touch of human lips, at best impure.  
Oh for a world in principle as chaste  
As this is gross and selfish! over which  
Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway,  
That govern all things here, should'ring aside  
The meek and modest truth, and forcing her  
To seek a refuge from the tongue of strife  
In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men:  
Where violence shall never lift the sword,  
Nor cunning justify the proud man's wrong,  
Leaving the poor no remedy but tears:  
Where he that fills an office, shall esteem  
Th' occasion it presents of doing good  
More than the perquisite: Where law shall speak  
Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts  
And equity; not jealous more to guard  
A worthless form, than to decide aright:  
Where fashion shall not sanctify abuse,  
Nor smooth good-breeding (supplemental grace)  
With lean performance ape the work of love.

...

He is the happy man, whose life ev'n now  
Shows somewhat of that happier life to come;  
Who, doom'd to an obscure but tranquil state,  
Is pleas'd with it, and, were he free to chuse,  
Would make his fate his choice; whom peace, the fruit  
Of virtue, and whom virtue, fruit of faith,  
Prepare for happiness; bespeak him one  
Content indeed to sojourn while he must  
Below the skies, but having there his home.  
The world o'erlooks him in her busy search  
Of objects more illustrious in her view;  
And, occupy'd as earnestly as she,  
Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the world.  
She scorns his pleasures, for she knows them not;  
He seeks not hers, for he has prov'd them vain.  
He cannot skim the ground like summer birds  
Pursuing gilded flies, and such he deems  
Her honors, her emoluments, her joys.  
Therefore in contemplation is his bliss,  
Whose pow'r is such, that whom she lifts from earth  
She makes familiar with a heav'n unseen,  
And shows him glories yet to be reveal'd.

...

So life glides smoothly and by stealth away,  
More golden than that age of fabled gold  
Renown'd in ancient song; not vex'd with care  
Or stain'd with guilt, beneficent, approv'd  
Of God and man, and peaceful in its end.  
So glide my life away! and so at last,  
My share of duties decently fulfill'd,  
May some disease, not tardy to perform  
Its destin'd office, yet with gentle stroke,  
Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat,  
Beneath a turf that I have often trod.  
It shall not grieve me, then, that once, when call'd  
To dress a Sofa with the flow'rs of verse,  
I play'd awhile, obedient to the fair,  
With that light task; but soon, to please her more  
Whom flow'rs alone I knew would little please,  
Let fall th' unfinish'd wreath, and rov'd for fruit;  
Rov'd far, and gather'd much: some harsh, 'tis true,

Pick'd from the thorns and briars of reproof,  
But wholesome, well-digested; grateful some  
To palates that can taste immortal truth,  
Insidious else, and sure to be despis'd.  
But all is in his hand whose praise I seek.  
In vain the poet sings, and the world hears,  
If he regard not, though divine the theme.  
'Tis not in artful measures, in the chime  
And idle tinkling of a minstrel's lyre,  
To charm his ear, whose eye is on the heart;  
Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,  
Whose approbation—prosper even mine.

## George Crabbe

### “The Village” (ln. 170-263)

Oh! trifle not with wants you cannot feel,  
Nor mock the misery of a stinted meal;  
Homely not wholesome, plain not plenteous, such  
As you who envy would disdain to touch.  
Ye gentle souls, who dream of rural ease,  
Whom the smooth stream and smoother sonnet please;  
Go! if the peaceful cot your praises share,  
Go, look within, and ask if peace be there:  
If peace be his—that drooping weary sire,  
Or theirs, that offspring round their feeble fire,  
Or hers, that matron pale, whose trembling hand  
Turns on the wretched hearth th' expiring brand.  
Nor yet can time itself obtain for these  
Life's latest comforts, due respect and ease;  
For yonder see that hoary swain, whose age  
Can with no cares except his own engage;  
Who, propped on that rude staff, looks up to see  
The bare arms broken from the withering tree,  
On which, a boy, he climbed the loftiest bough,  
Then his first joy, but his sad emblem now.  
He once was chief in all the rustic trade,  
His steady hand the straightest furrow made;  
Full many a prize he won, and still is proud  
To find the triumphs of his youth allowed.  
A transient pleasure sparkles in his eyes,  
He hears and smiles, then thinks again and sighs:  
For now he journeys to his grave in pain;  
The rich disdain him, nay, the poor disdain;



Alternate masters now their slave command,  
And urge the efforts of his feeble hand;  
Who, when his age attempts its task in vain,  
With ruthless taunts of lazy poor complain.  
Oft may you see him, when he tends the sheep,  
His winter-charge, beneath the hillock weep;  
Oft hear him murmur to the winds that blow  
O'er his white locks and bury them in snow;  
When, roused by rage and muttering in the morn,  
He mends the broken hedge with icy thorn:  
"Why do I live, when I desire to be  
At once from life and life's long labour free?  
Like leaves in spring, the young are blown away,  
Without the sorrows of a slow decay;  
I, like yon withered leaf, remain behind,  
Nipped by the frost, and shivering in the wind;  
There it abides till younger buds come on,  
As I, now all my fellow-swains are gone;  
Then, from the rising generation thrust,  
It falls, like me, unnoticed to the dust.  
"These fruitful fields, these numerous flocks I see,  
Are others' gain, but killing cares to me;  
To me the children of my youth are lords,  
Slow in their gifts but hasty in their words:  
Wants of their own demand their care, and who  
Feels his own want and succors others too?  
A lonely, wretched man, in pain I go,  
None need my help and none relieve my woe;  
Then let my bones beneath the turf be laid,  
And men forget the wretch they would not aid."  
Thus groan the old, till, by disease oppressed,  
They taste a final woe, and then they rest.  
Theirs is yon house that holds the parish poor,  
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door;  
There, where the putrid vapours, flagging, play,  
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day;  
There children dwell, who know no parents' care,  
Parents, who know no children's love, dwell there;  
Heart-broken matrons on their joyless bed,  
Forsaken wives, and mothers never wed;  
Dejected widows with unheeded tears,  
And crippled age with more than childhood-fears;  
The lame, the blind, and, far the happiest they!  
The moping idiot and the madman gay.  
Here too the sick their final doom receive,  
Here brought, amid the scenes of grief, to grieve,

Where the loud groans from some sad chamber flow,  
Mixed with the clamors of the crowd below;  
Here, sorrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan,  
And the cold charities of man to man:  
Whose laws indeed for ruined age provide,  
And strong compulsion plucks the scrap from pride;  
But still that scrap is bought with many a sigh,  
And pride embitters what it can't deny.  
Say ye, oppressed by some fantastic woes,  
Some jarring nerve that baffles your repose;  
Who press the downy couch, while slaves advance  
With timid eye to read the distant glance;  
Who with sad prayers the weary doctor tease  
To name the nameless ever-new disease;  
Who with mock patience dire complaints endure,  
Which real pain, and that alone, can cure;  
How would ye bear in real pain to lie,  
Despised, neglected, left alone to die?  
How would ye bear to draw your latest breath,  
Where all that's wretched paves the way for death?

## Charlotte Smith

### “Written at the Close of Spring” from *Elegiac Sonnets*

The garlands fade that Spring so lately wove,  
Each simple flow'r, which she had nurs'd in dew,  
Anemonies that spangled every grove,  
The primrose wan, and harebell, mildly blue.  
No more shall violets linger in the dell,  
Or purple orchis variegates the plain,  
Till Spring again shall call forth every bell,  
And dress with humid hands her wreaths again. —  
Ah, poor Humanity! so frail, so fair,  
Are the fond visions of thy early day,  
Till tyrant Passion, and corrosive Care,  
Bid all thy fairy colours fade away!  
Another May new buds and flow'rs shall bring;  
Ah! Why has Happiness — no second Spring?

### “To Melancholy” from *Elegiac Sonnets*

When latest Autumn spreads her evening veil  
And the gray mists from these dim waves arise,

I love to listen to the hollow sighs,  
Thro' the half leafless wood that breathes the gale.  
For at such hours the shadowy phantom, pale,  
Oft seems to fleet before the poet's eyes;  
Strange sounds are heard, and mournful melodies,  
As of night wand'rers, who their woes bewail!  
Here, by his native stream, at such an hour,  
Pity's own Otway, I methinks could meet,  
And hear his deep sighs swell the sadden'd wind!  
Oh Melancholy! — such thy magic power,  
That to the soul these dreams are often sweet,  
And soothe the pensive visionary mind!

“Composed during a Walk on the Downs, Nov. 1787” from *Elegiac Sonnets*

HE dark and pillowy cloud; the fallow trees,  
Seem o'er the ruins of the year to mourn;  
And cold and hollow, the inconstant breeze  
Sobs thro' the falling leaves and wither'd fern.  
O'er the tall brow of yonder chalky bourn,  
The evening shades their gather'd darkness fling,  
While, by the ling'ring light, I scarce discern  
The shrieking nightjar, sail on heavy wing.  
Ah! yet a little — and propitious Spring,  
Crown'd with fresh flow'rs, shall wake the woodland strain;  
But no gay change revolving seasons bring,  
To call forth Pleasure from the soul of Pain,  
Bid syren Hope resume her long lost part,  
And chase the vulture Care, that feeds upon the heart.

## **William Wordsworth**

“I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” (Daffodils poem)

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.

“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 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, 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.

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!

“Nutting”

—It seems a day  
(I speak of one from many singled out)  
One of those heavenly days that cannot die;  
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth  
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,  
A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my steps  
Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint,  
Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds  
Which for that service had been husbanded,  
By exhortation of my frugal Dame—  
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile  
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and, in truth,  
More ragged than need was! O'er pathless rocks,  
Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,  
Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook  
Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign  
Of devastation; but the hazels rose  
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,  
A virgin scene!—A little while I stood,  
Breathing with such suppression of the heart  
As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint  
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
The banquet;—or beneath the trees I sate  
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;  
A temper known to those, who, after long  
And weary expectation, have been blest  
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.  
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves  
The violets of five seasons re-appear  
And fade, unseen by any human eye;  
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam,  
And—with my cheek on one of those green stones  
That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,  
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep—  
I heard the murmur, and the murmuring sound,  
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay  
Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,  
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,



Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,  
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash  
And merciless ravage: and the shady nook  
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
Their quiet being: and, unless I now  
Confound my present feelings with the past;  
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned  
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.—  
Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades  
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

## **Sir Walter Scott**

"The Western Waves of Ebbing Day" from *Lady of the Lake*

The western waves of ebbing day  
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;  
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,  
Was bathed in floods of living fire.  
But not a setting beam could glow  
Within the dark ravines below,  
Where twined the path in shadow hid,  
Round many a rocky pyramid,  
Shooting abruptly from the dell  
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;  
Round many an insulated mass,  
The native bulwarks of the pass,  
Huge as the tower which builders vain  
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.  
The rocky summits, split and rent,  
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,  
Or seemed fantastically set  
With cupola or minaret,  
Wild crests as pagod ever decked,  
Or mosque of Eastern architect.  
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,  
Nor lacked they many a banner fair;  
For, from their shivered brows displayed,  
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,  
All twinkling with the dewdrop sheen,

The brier-rose fell in streamers green,  
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,  
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,  
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.  
Here eglantine embalmed the air,  
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;  
The primrose pale, and violet flower,  
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;  
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,  
Emblems of punishment and pride,  
Grouped their dark hues with every stain  
The weather-beaten crags retain.  
With boughs that quaked at every breath,  
Gray birch and aspen wept beneath;  
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak  
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;  
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung  
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,  
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,  
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.  
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,  
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,  
The wanderer's eye could barely view  
The summer heaven's delicious blue;  
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem  
The scenery of a fairy dream.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep  
A narrow inlet, still and deep,  
Affording scarce such breadth of brim  
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.  
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,  
But broader when again appearing,  
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face  
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;  
And farther as the hunter strayed,  
Still broader sweep its channels made.  
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,  
Emerging from entangled wood,  
But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,  
Like castle girdled with its moat;  
Yet broader floods extending still  
Divide them from their parent hill,  
Till each, retiring, claims to be

An islet in an inland sea.

And now, to issue from the glen,  
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,  
Unless he climb, with footing nice  
A far projecting precipice.  
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,  
The hazel saplings lent their aid;  
And thus an airy point he won,  
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,  
One burnished sheet of living gold,  
Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled,  
In all her length far winding lay,  
With promontory, creek, and bay,  
And islands that, empurpled bright,  
Floated amid the livelier light,  
And mountains, that like giants stand,  
To sentinel enchanted land.  
High on the south, huge Benvenue  
Down to the lake in masses threw  
Craggs, knolls, and mountains, confusedly hurled,  
The fragments of an earlier world;  
A wildering forest feathered o'er  
His ruined sides and summit hoar,  
While on the north, through middle air,  
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

"My Native Land" (Canto VI.I) from *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
    This is my own, my native land!  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,  
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd  
    From wandering on a foreign strand!  
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;  
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;  
High though his titles, proud his name,  
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;—  
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,  
The wretch, concentr'd all in self,  
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down  
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

Excerpt from "Introduction to Canto First" from *Marmion* (ln. 1-70)

November's sky is chill and drear,  
November's leaf is red and sear:  
Late, gazing down the steepy linn  
That hems our little garden in,  
Low in its dark and narrow glen  
You scarce the rivulet might ken,  
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,  
So feeble thrilled the streamlet through:  
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen  
Through bush and briar, no longer green,  
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,  
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,  
And foaming brown, with doubled speed,  
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red  
Upon our forest hills is shed;  
No more, beneath the evening beam,  
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam:  
Away hath passed the heather-bell  
That bloomed so rich on Needpath Fell;  
Sallow his brow, and russet bare  
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.  
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,  
To sheltered dale and down are driven,  
Where yet some faded herbage pines,  
And yet a watery sunbeam shines:  
In meek despondency they eye  
The withered sward and wintry sky,  
And far beneath their summer hill,  
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill:  
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,  
And wraps him closer from the cold;  
His dogs no merry circles wheel,  
But, shivering, follow at his heel;  
A cowering glance they often cast,  
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,  
As best befits the mountain child,  
Feel the sad influence of the hour,  
And wail the daisy's vanished flower;  
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,  
And anxious ask: "Will spring return,  
And birds and lambs again be gay,

And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?"

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower  
Again shall paint your summer bower;  
Again the hawthorn shall supply  
The garlands you delight to tie;  
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,  
The wild birds carol to the round,  
And while you frolic light as they,  
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things  
New life revolving summer brings;  
The genial call dead Nature hears,  
And in her glory reappears.  
But oh! my country's wintry state  
What second spring shall renovate?  
What powerful call shall bid arise  
The buried warlike and the wise;  
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,  
The hand that grasped the victor steel?  
The vernal sun new life bestows  
Even on the meanest flower that blows;  
But vainly, vainly may he shine,  
Where glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine;  
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,  
That shrouds, O Pitt, thy hallowed tomb!  
Deep graved in every British heart,  
Oh never let those names depart!

## **George Gordon, Lord Byron**

Canto I.I from *The Corsair* (ln. 1-42)

"O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,  
"Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,  
"Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,  
"Survey our empire and behold our home!  
"These are our realms, no limits to their sway—  
"Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.  
"Ours the wild life in tumult still to range  
"From toil to rest, and joy in every change.  
"Oh, who can tell? not thou, luxurious slave!  
"Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave;10  
"Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease!  
"Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure cannot please—  
"Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,

"And danc'd in triumph o'er the waters wide,  
 "The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,  
 "That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?  
 "That for itself can woo the approaching fight,  
 "And turn what some deem danger to delight;  
 "That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,  
 "And where the feebler faint—can only feel—20  
 "Feel—to the rising bosom's inmost core,  
 "Its hope awaken and its spirit soar?  
 "No dread of death—if with us die our foes—  
 "Save that it seems even duller than repose:  
 "Come when it will—we snatch the life of life—  
 "When lost—what recks it—by disease or strife?  
 "Let him who crawls enamoured of decay,  
 "Cling to his couch, and sicken years away;  
 "Heave his thick breath; and shake his palsied head;  
 "Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.30  
 "While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,  
 "Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes controul.  
 "His corse may boast it's urn and narrow cave,  
 "And they who loath'd his life may gild his grave:  
 "Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,  
 "When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.  
 "For us, even banquets fond regret supply  
 "In the red cup that crowns our memory;  
 "And the brief epitaph in danger's day,  
 "When those who win at length divide the prey,40  
 "And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each brow,  
 "How had the brave who fell exulted *now!*"

"Unquenched, unquenchable" from *The Giaour* (ln. 751-780)

. . . Unquenched, unquenchable,  
 Around, within, thy heart shall dwell;  
 Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell  
 The tortures of that inward hell!  
 But first, on earth as vampire sent,  
 Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:  
 Then ghastly haunt thy native place,  
 And suck the blood of all thy race;  
 There from thy daughter, sister, wife,  
 At midnight drain the stream of life;  
 Yet loathe the banquet which perforce  
 Must feed thy livid living corse:  
 Thy victims ere they yet expire

Shall know the demon for their sire,  
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,  
Thy flowers are withered on the stem.  
But one that for thy crime must fall,  
The youngest, most beloved of all,  
Shall bless thee with a father's name —  
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!  
Yet must thou end thy task, and mark  
Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,  
And the last glassy glance must view  
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;  
Then with unhallowed hand shalt tear  
The tresses of her yellow hair,  
Of which in life a lock when shorn  
Affection's fondest pledge was worn,  
But now is borne away by thee,  
Memorial of thine agony!

## **Jane Austen**

### "Ode to Pity"

I

Ever musing I delight to tread  
The Paths of honour and the Myrtle Grove  
Whilst the pale Moon her beams doth shed  
On disappointed Love.  
While Philomel on airy hawthorn Bush  
Sings sweet and Melancholy, And the thrush  
Converses with the Dove.

II

Gently brawling down the turnpike road,  
Sweetly noisy falls the Silent Stream—  
The Moon emerges from behind a Cloud  
And darts upon the Myrtle Grove her beam.  
Ah! then what Lovely Scenes appear,  
The hut, the Cot, the Grot, and Chapel queer,  
And eke the Abbey too a mouldering heap,  
Conceal'd by aged pines her head doth rear  
And quite invisible doth take a peep.

"In measured verse"

In measured verse I'll now rehearse  
The charms of lovely Anna:  
And, first, her mind is unconfined  
Like any vast savannah.

Ontario's lake may fitly speak  
Her fancy's ample bound:  
Its circuit may, on strict survey  
Five hundred miles be found.

Her wit descends on foes and friends  
Like famed Niagara's Fall;  
And travellers gaze in wild amaze,  
And listen, one and all.

Her judgment sound, thick, black, profound,  
Like transatlantic groves,  
Dispenses aid, and friendly shade  
To all that in it roves.

If thus her mind to be defined  
America exhausts,  
And all that's grand in that great land  
In similes it costs—

Oh how can I her person try  
To image and portray?  
How paint the face, the form how trace  
In which those virtues lay?

Another world must be unfurled,  
Another language known,  
Ere tongue or sound can publish round  
Her charms of flesh and bone.

"Camilla, good humoured, & merry, & small"

Camilla, good humoured, & merry, & small  
For a Husband was at her last stake'  
And having in vain danced at many a Ball  
Is now happy to jump at a Wake.

"When Winchester races first took their beginning"

When Winchester races first took their beginning



It is said the good people forgot their old Saint  
Not applying at all for the leave of Saint Swithin  
And that William of Wykeham's approval was faint.  
The races however were fixed and determined  
The company came and the Weather was charming  
The Lords and the Ladies were satine'd and ermined  
And nobody saw any future alarming.--  
But when the old Saint was informed of these doings  
He made but one Spring from his Shrine to the Roof  
Of the Palace which now lies so sadly in ruins  
And then he addressed them all standing aloof.  
'Oh! subjects rebellious! Oh Venta depraved  
When once we are buried you think we are gone  
But behold me immortal! By vice you're enslaved  
You have sinned and must suffer, ten farther he said  
These races and revels and dissolute measures  
With which you're debasing a neighboring Plain  
Let them stand--You shall meet with your curse in your pleasures  
Set off for your course, I'll pursue with my rain.  
Ye cannot but know my command o'er July  
Henceforward I'll triumph in shewing my powers  
Shift your race as you will it shall never be dry  
The curse upon Venta is July in showers--'.