A POISON TREE

***by: William Blake (1757-1827)***

**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 watered it in fears,

Night and morning with my tears;

And I sunnèd 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 veiled the pole:

In the morning glad I see

My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

WHEN I HAVE FEARS THAT I MAY CEASE TO BE

***by: John Keats (1795-1821)***

HEN I have fears that I may cease to be

Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,

Before high-pilèd books, in charact'ry,

Hold like rich garners the full-ripened grain;

When I behold, upon the night's starred 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.

PERFECT WOMAN

***by: William Wordsworth (1770-1850)***

HE was a phantom of delight

When first she gleam'd upon my sight;

A lovely apparition, sent

To be a moment's ornament;

Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;

Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;

But all things else about her drawn

From May-time and the cheerful dawn;

A dancing shape, an image gay,

To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,

A Spirit, yet a Woman too!

Her household motions light and free,

And steps of virgin liberty;

A countenance in which did meet

Sweet records, promises as sweet;

A creature not too bright or good

For human nature's daily food;

For transient sorrows, simple wiles,

Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

 And now I see with eye serene

The very pulse of the machine;

A being breathing thoughtful breath,

A traveller between life and death;

The reason firm, the temperate will,

Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;

A perfect Woman, nobly plann'd,

To warn, to comfort, and command;

And yet a Spirit still, and bright

With something of angelic light.

WE'LL GO NO MORE A-ROVING

***by: George Gordon (Lord) Byron (1788-1824)***

O, we'll go no more a-roving

So late into the night,

Though the heart be still as loving,

And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,

And the soul wears out the breast,

And the heart must pause to breathe,

And love itself have a rest.

Though the night was made for loving,

And the day returns too soon,

Yet we'll go no more a-roving

By the light of the moon.

THE MOON

***by: Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)***

I.

ND, like a dying lady lean and pale,

Who totters forth, wrapp'd in a gauzy veil,

Out of her chamber, led by the insane

And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,

The moon arose up in the murky east

A white and shapeless mass.

II.

Art thou pale for weariness

Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth,

Wandering companionless

Among the stars that have a different birth,

And ever changing, like a joyless eye

That finds no object worth its constancy?

KISSES

***by: Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)***

UPID, if storying Legends tell aright,

Once framed a rich Elixir of Delight.

A Chalice o'er love-kindled flames he fixed,

And in it Nectar and Ambrosia mixed:

With these the magic dews, which Evening brings,

Brushed from the Idalian star by faery wings:

Each tender pledge of sacred Faith he joined,

Each gentler Pleasure of the unspotted mind--

Day-dreams, whose tints with sportive brightness glow,

And Hope, the blameless Parasite of Woe.

The eyeless Chemist heard the process rise,

The steamy Chalice bubbled up in sighs;

Sweet sounds transpired, as when the enamoured Dove

Pours the soft murmuring of responsive Love.

The finished work might Envy vainly blame,

And "Kisses" was the precious Compound's name.

With half the God his Cyprian Mother blest,

And breathed on Sara's lovelier lips the rest.

DEATH

***by: John Donne (1573-1631)***

EATH, be not proud, though some have callèd thee

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so:

For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow

Die not, poor Death; nor yet canst thou kill me.

From Rest and Sleep, which but thy picture be,

Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow;

And soonest our best men with thee do go--

Rest of their bones and souls' delivery!

Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,

And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;

And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well

And betterr than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then?

One short sleep past, we wake eternally,

And Death shall be no more: Death, thou shalt die!

DARKNESS

***by: George Gordon (Lord) Byron (1788-1824)***

had a dream, which was not all a dream.

The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars

Did wander darkling in the eternal space,

Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth

Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;

Morn came and went--and came, and brought no day,

And men forgot their passions in the dread

Of this their desolation; and all hearts

Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:

And they did live by watchfires--and the thrones,

The palaces of crowned kings--the huts,

The habitations of all things which dwell,

Were burnt for beacons; cities were consum'd,

And men were gather'd round their blazing homes

To look once more into each other's face;

Happy were those who dwelt within the eye

Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:

A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;

Forests were set on fire--but hour by hour

They fell and faded--and the crackling trunks

Extinguish'd with a crash--and all was black.

The brows of men by the despairing light

Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits

The flashes fell upon them; some lay down

And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest

Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smil'd;

And others hurried to and fro, and fed

Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up

With mad disquietude on the dull sky,

The pall of a past world; and then again

With curses cast them down upon the dust,

And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd

And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,

And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes

Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd

And twin'd themselves among the multitude,

Hissing, but stingless--they were slain for food.

And War, which for a moment was no more,

Did glut himself again: a meal was bought

With blood, and each sate sullenly apart

Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;

All earth was but one thought--and that was death

Immediate and inglorious; and the pang

Of famine fed upon all entrails--men

Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;

The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,

Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,

And he was faithful to a corse, and kept

The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,

Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead

Lur'd their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,

But with a piteous and perpetual moan,

And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand

Which answer'd not with a caress--he died.

The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two

Of an enormous city did survive,

And they were enemies: they met beside

The dying embers of an altar-place

Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things

For an unholy usage; they rak'd up,

And shivering scrap'd with their cold skeleton hands

The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath

Blew for a little life, and made a flame

Which was a mockery; then they lifted up

Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld

Each other's aspects--saw, and shriek'd, and died--

Even of their mutual hideousness they died,

Unknowing who he was upon whose brow

Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,

The populous and the powerful was a lump,

Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless--

A lump of death--a chaos of hard clay.

The rivers, lakes and ocean all stood still,

And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;

Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,

And their masts fell down piecemeal: as they dropp'd

They slept on the abyss without a surge--

The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,

The moon, their mistress, had expir'd before;

The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,

And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need

Of aid from them--She was the Universe.

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER

***by: John Donne (1573-1631)***

ILT Thou forgive that sin where I begun,

Which was my sin, though it were done before?

Wilt Thou forgive that sin, through which I run

And do run still, though still I do deplore?

When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;

For I have more.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won

Others to sin, and made my sins their door?

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun

A year or two, but wallow'd in, a score?

When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;

For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun

My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;

But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son

Shall shine, as He shines now and heretofore:

And having done that, Thou hast done;

I fear no more.

We grow accustomed to the Dark --

When light is put away --

As when the Neighbor holds the Lamp

To witness her Goodbye --

A Moment -- We uncertain step

For newness of the night --

Then -- fit our Vision to the Dark --

And meet the Road -- erect --

And so of larger -- Darkness --

Those Evenings of the Brain --

When not a Moon disclose a sign --

Or Star -- come out -- within --

The Bravest -- grope a little --

And sometimes hit a Tree

Directly in the Forehead --

But as they learn to see --

Either the Darkness alters --

Or something in the sight

Adjusts itself to Midnight --

And Life steps almost straight.

 --Emily Dickinson