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Beauty is forever

Contemplating literary grace, by Indigo ClarkeA poem "…Should be a friend. To sooth the cares, and lift the thoughts of man," observed John Keats, and in times of quiet reflection can there be a more perfect companion? Simple words become sublime, forever and inextricably linked, in the hands of the poet. A beloved, battered volume rediscovered and mused over in solitude can inspire reverie and introspection, offer solace or even provocation as kindred thoughts expand and enrich the mind.Lovers of the written word are inevitably bound to the Romantic poets as much for their compassionate study of the human condition as their heart-swelling eloquence. The British Romantic poets William Blake, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and their exalted younger counterparts Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron and John Keats, continue to be revered for prose that not only helped define but make modern the world as they knew it. They gracefully and meaningfully shouldered "the tribulations and triumphs of life."Sorrow“As once I wept, if I could weep, My tears might well be shed, To think I was not near to keepOne vigil o'er thy bed; To gaze, how fondly! on thy face, To fold thee in a faint embrace, Uphold thy drooping head; And show that love, however vain, Nor thou nor I can feel again.”Lord Byron 'And Thou Art Dead, as Young and Fair'Love“... and we will shadeOurselves whole summers by a river glade;And I will tell thee stories of the sky,And breathe thee whispers of its minstrelsy,My happy love will overwing all bounds!O let me melt into thee! let the soundsOf our close voices marry at their birth;Let us entwine hoveringly!”John Keats 'Endymion' Book IILoss“Rough wind, that moanest loudGrief too sad for song;Wild wind, when sullen cloudKnells all the night long;Sad storm whose tears are vain, Bare woods, whose branches strain,Deep caves and dreary main,--Wail, for the world’s wrong!”Percy Bysshe Shelley 'A Dirge'Religion“To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the Immortal EyesOf Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought, into EternityEver expanding in the bosom of God, the Human Imagination."William Blake 'Jerusalem'Grace“A thing of beauty is a joy forever:Its loveliness increases; it will neverPass into nothingness; but still will keepA bower quiet for us, and a sleepFull of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.”John Keats 'Endymion' Book IMeditating on the complex emotions we so often repress can reawaken dormant senses, triggering profound thought and creativity – as Coleridge noted, “Deep thinking is attainable only by a means of deep feeling”. Viewing poetry as a pathway to a greater understanding of objective reality, William Blake rejected contemporary cultural conventions to focus on existential themes of good and evil, knowledge and innocence and inner reality versus external. “If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite,” suggested Blake in ‘The Marriage of Heaven and Hell’, “For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.”Stars of popular culture in their own lifetimes, the famed second-generation Romantic poets Shelley, Byron and Keats, deftly cultivated individualism, physical and emotional intimacy (Shelley and Lord Byron both advocates of ‘free love’), aestheticism and mysticism. They challenged the perceived rationality and order of classical and neoclassical artistic precepts to advocate liberty and revolution. The great three established the role of the poet as romantic hero, dying tragically while in the bloom of youth, shadowed by rumours of impassioned and unrequited love, illegitimate children, illicit affairs and suicide. “Poets are the mirrors of the gigantic shadows that futurity casts upon the present,” noted Shelley, aware of the weight the poet has in influencing the soul and character of his audience, and poetry’s adherence to truth, love and noble principles. Shelley maintains in ‘A Defense of Poetry’ that poets are the “unacknowledged legislators of the world,” affecting popular thought by virtue of their fecund imaginations, and perhaps in their case, the breadth of their emotional experience. “Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know,” divined Keats in ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’, underscoring the moral and aesthetic nature of art, and poetry’s potentially edifying influence. Proferring wisdom and examining universal truths, the great poets offer a window into another, all-important realm where the trivialities of our frenetic lives slip away as we consider life’s great practical and philosophical challenges, the unavoidable highs and lows that affect us all. There’s nobility in honouring time and its natural rhythm. To fall out of sync, however briefly, with the everyday and take shelter in an inner world articulated by the Romantic past; to be moved by words that resonate long after they have been read, and humbled by the knowledge that we are a small part of something much greater. Wednesday 02.26.14 Posted by Indigo Clarke Newer / Older {"id":6192191930554,"title":"Leaf Quote - A thing of beauty is a joy forever - John Keats","handle":"leaf-quote-a-thing-of-beauty-is-a-joy-forever-john-keats","description":"\u003cmeta charset=\"utf-8\"\u003e\u003cmeta charset=\"utf-8\"\u003e\u003cp\u003eThis is the first line from the John Keats poem Endymion.\u003c\/p\u003e\u003cblockquote\u003e\u003cdiv style=\"text-indent: -1em; padding-left: 1em;\"\u003eA thing of beauty is a joy for ever: \u003cbr\u003e\u003c\/div\u003e\u003cdiv style=\"text-indent: -1em; padding-left: 1em;\"\u003eIts loveliness increases; it will never \u003cbr\u003e\u003c\/div\u003e\u003cdiv style=\"text-indent: -1em; padding-left: 1em;\"\u003ePass into nothingness; but still will keep \u003cbr\u003e\u003c\/div\u003e\u003cdiv style=\"text-indent: -1em; padding-left: 1em;\"\u003eA bower quiet for us, and a sleep\u003c\/div\u003e\u003c\/blockquote\u003e\u003cdiv style=\"text-indent: -1em; padding-left: 1em;\"\u003e\u003c\/div\u003e\u003cp\u003eJohn Keats (31 October 1795 – 23 February 1821) was an English Romantic poet. 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