

AP English 12
Poetry Packet (Sonnets & Renaissance Poetry)



Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* ("song book")
366 poems to Laura

13. *Quando fra l'altre donne ad ora ad ora* ("When among the other women from time to time")

When from hour to hour among the other ladies
Love appears in her beautiful face,
by as much as their beauty is less than hers
by so much the desire that en-amours me grows.
I bless the place, the time, and the hour
in which my eyes gazed to such a height,
and I say: My spirit, give thanks enough
that you were then found worthy of such honor.

From her to you comes loving thought,
that leads to highest good, while you pursue it,
counting as little what all men desire:
from her comes that spirit full of grace
that shows you heaven by the true way':
so that in hope I fly, already, to the heights.

I Find No Peace

Sir Thomas Wyatt (c. 1525)

I find no peace, and all my war is done:

I fear, and hope; I burn, and freeze like ice;

I fly above the wind, yet can I not arise;

And nought I have, and all the world I seize on;

That locketh nor loseth holdeth me in prison,

And holdeth me not, yet can I 'scape nowise:

Nor letteth me live, nor die at my devise,

And yet of death it giveth me occasion.

Without eyen I see, and without tongue I 'plain;

I desire to perish, and yet I ask health;

I love another, and thus I hate myself;

I feed me in sorrow, and laugh in all my pain.

Likewise displeaseth me both death and life,

And my delight is causer of this strife.

Sonnet 130

William Shakespeare

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.

I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

The Lynching

CLAUDE MCKAY (1920)

His spirit is smoke ascended to high heaven.
His father, by the cruelest way of pain,
Had bidden him to his bosom once again;
The awful sin remained still unforgiven.
All night a bright and solitary star
(Perchance the one that ever guided him,
Yet gave him up at last to Fate's wild whim)
Hung pitifully o'er the swinging char.
Day dawned, and soon the mixed crowds came to view
The ghastly body swaying in the sun:
The women thronged to look, but never a one
Showed sorrow in her eyes of steely blue;

And little lads, lynchers that were to be,
Danced round the dreadful thing in fiendish glee.

Sonnet 19

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1917)

TIME does not bring relief; you all have lied

Who told me time would ease me of my pain!

I miss him in the weeping of the rain;

I want him at the shrinking of the tide;

The old snows melt from every mountain-side, ⁵

And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;

But last year's bitter loving must remain

Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide!

There are a hundred places where I fear

To go,— so with his memory they brim! ¹⁰

And entering with relief some quiet place

Where never fell his foot or shone his face

I say, "There is no memory of him here!"

And so stand stricken, so remembering him!

Ozymandias

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1817)

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.

Sonnet XXII

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curvèd point,---what bitter wrong
Can the earth do to us, that we should not long
Be here contented? Think! In mounting higher,
The angels would press on us and aspire
To drop some golden orb of perfect song
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
Rather on earth, Belovèd,---where the unfit
Contrarious moods of men recoil away
And isolate pure spirits, and permit
A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

When all the Others Were at Mass

From Clearances in Memoriam (#3)

Seamus Heaney (1911-1984)

When all the others were away at Mass
I was all hers as we peeled potatoes.
They broke the silence, let fall one by one
Like solder weeping off the soldering iron:
Cold comforts set between us, things to share
Gleaming in a bucket of clean water.
And again let fall. Little pleasant splashes
From each other's work would bring us to our senses.
So while the parish priest at her bedside
Went hammer and tongs at the prayers for the dying
And some were responding and some crying
I remembered her head bent towards my head,
Her breath in mine, our fluent dipping knives—
Never closer the whole rest of our lives.

Sonnet

James Weldon Johnson (c. 1920)

My heart be brave, and do not falter so,
Nor utter more that deep, despairing wail.
Thy way is very dark and drear I know,
But do not let thy strength and courage fail;
For certain as the raven-winged night
Is followed by the bright and blushing morn,
Thy coming morrow will be clear and bright;
'Tis darkest when the night is furthest worn.
Look up, and out, beyond, surrounding clouds,
And do not in thine own gross darkness grope,
Rise up, and casting off thy hind'ring shrouds,
Cling thou to this, and ever inspiring hope:
 Tho' thick the battle and tho' fierce the fight,
 There is a power making for the right.