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Writing Under the Influence: The Effects of Opium on John Keats' Poetry

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WRITING UNDER THE INFLUENCE: THE EFFECTS OF OPIUM ON JOHN
KEATS'S POETRY

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Bachelor of Arts with
Honors College Graduate Distinction at Western Kentucky University

By

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ABSTRACT

The poetry of John Keats, a Romantic Era poet who lived from 1795 to 1821, has been widely studied, but most critics have dismissed his use of drugs, specifically opium, to alter his writing. This thesis looks at the scientific effects of opium along with personal accounts of the drug's use and combines such an investigation with a close reading of Keats's later poetry to determine what effects opium may have had upon his writing style and content. Particular areas of poetic content include Keats's sensory imagery and dream-state references.

Keywords: John Keats, Romantic Era, opium, poetry, drug use

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FOREWORD

Historically, many writers have used opium in the belief that it enhances their creative powers. This effect is difficult, if not impossible, to prove. However, there is a connection between opium use and literary style and content, for it can relax the writers and allow them to write more freely. According to Barbara Hodgson, author of *Opium: A Portrait of the Heavenly Demon*, “Brilliant writers, able to free themselves from inhibition, shone; dull ones at least had new experiences to write about” (7). While opium may give writers an experience to talk about and improve their writing, they must have talent for creating before they take opium for it to improve their work. Obviously, individuals who have never written poetry and who have no poetic talent should not consume opium and expect it to make them artistic paragons. The people who are discussed in this thesis all had literary talent outside of taking opium, and most created some works before ever consuming the drug; opium just changed the way in which they wrote.

Thomas De Quincey, 1785–1859, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1772-1834, both were Romantic Era writers who admitted to using opium. Coleridge is possibly one of the most famous examples of a writer who used opium, especially while he was composing “Kubla Khan.” Thomas De Quincey wrote *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, which is an autobiographical work that recounts De Quincey’s initial reasons for using opium and his subsequent addiction and struggle to reduce his dependency on the drug. It is one of the first works written on opium use and addiction by an actual addict. The work

depicts his entire struggle with opium and its effect upon his thought processes and overall mind.

Thomas De Quincy's work encouraged others to narrate their own experiences with addiction, one of whom was William Goodluck. Writing a medical text, he included information on the exact effects he experienced and his advice for others trying to beat their opium addiction. He described the various sensations and experiences that different people feel when taking opium for the first time and, indeed, over an extended period of time. These narratives provide useful insight into the drug's effect on the mind, and have been used by Alethea Hayter and others to interpret the effects of opium on the writers who used it.

Records of personal experience with opium are beneficial for learning about the drug; however, modern chemical studies provide more in-depth information on the substance. Current technology allows chemists to break down opium and follow its path through the human body. This understanding of opium and its effects can be used to help enhance the understanding of the influence opium has on poetry. Opium works as a painkiller but also relaxes the muscles of the users. In addition, it has the potential to give the users waking visions or dreams. These effects inspired Romantic writers to use the drug. The relaxation effect also allowed them to create without anxieties. Combining both the modern scientific study of opium with the traditional autobiographical narratives from the nineteenth century allows for one to have a broader understanding of how opium affects the users' writing. The narratives provide a closer look at the effects on individuals. On the other hand, the scientific studies show the effects on a more general level.

The study of Keats's poetry and its reception has changed since he was alive. Initially, his work was negatively received by literary journals, including *Blackwood's*, the *British Critic*, and the *Quarterly* (Schwartz 186). On the other hand, according to Schwartz, "Keats's first volume, *Poems*, was given a generally good reception, but it did not bring the young poet to significant literary attention" (170). Later, *Endymion*, an epic poem that was individually published, was received with much criticism. Even Keats's friend Leigh Hunt was unable to provide positive feedback on the poem. Keats's second collection of poetry was received much more favorably. Curiously, Matthew Arnold, in 1865, while praising Keats's pursuit of artistic perfection, noted how "for six weeks together he was hardly ever sober" (Arnold 331). Arnold claimed that "in shorter things, where the mature power of moral interpretation, and the high architectonics which go with complete poetic development, are not required, he [is] perfect" (341). Following Arnold's positive feedback, in 1893, the Library Edition of Keats's poetry was published, attempting for the first time to arrange Keats's poetry into a new edition and make editorial changes (Forman). Literary criticism following this publication largely dealt with the editorial changes made to the poems. Since then, modern interpretations of Keats's poetry tend to focus mostly on the second collection of poetry that he published.

There has been scant scholarly attention directed toward Keats's drug use. Some recent critics, including Roe and Hayter, have briefly mentioned that Keats probably took opium at the very end of his life, but dismiss his having used it early enough in his life for it to have impacted his writing. Nicholas Roe, in his article "Mercury Sent John Keats to an Early Grave," states that mercury may have been responsible for Keats's death rather than consumption, or pulmonary tuberculosis as it is now called. However, the effects of

mercury would have been completely detrimental to the health of the individual taking it. It was prescribed for venereal, or sexually transmitted, diseases such as syphilis, although many who took it died of mercury poisoning rather than any other disease they might have had (Frith). Opium would have made a much more obvious difference in Keats's writing. In her 1998 study entitled *Opium and the Romantic Imagination*, Alethea Hayter looks at the effects of opium on major Romantic Era writers, including Thomas De Quincy and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. While these are only two names associated with opium use, according to Hayter, "Every one, in fact, at that [the Romantic] period took laudanum occasionally. All the Romantic poets, except Wordsworth, [were] on record as having experimented with it," although many of them only took it for its medicinal properties (30). Hayter briefly mentions the possible effects of laudanum on Keats' writing, but dismisses it as not having any significant literary impact. She considers the possibility of his having taken opium as entirely speculative and mainly rejects it because there is no evidence that Keats took opium while still working on his major poems. Hayter argues that either Keats began taking laudanum only after he had finished writing most of his major works or that his use was too occasional for it to have any effect on his work (Hayter 306-328).

Nicholas Roe's 2012 biography on Keats takes a new look at Keats' life and his possible drug use, stating that Keats took laudanum from 1819 until the end of his life. Keats would have begun taking opium when he was nursing his sick brother Tom and while he was sick himself. This, according to Roe, led to his taking opium for the rest of his life. Including when he wrote his second collection of poems. While Roe contends

that Keats was likely taking opium much earlier in his life than previously thought, he does not closely examine the poems in search of evidence of the opium use.

Up to now, no one has combined a close reading of the poems that Keats published both before and after the suspected period of opium usage along with an understanding of the effects of opium from personal accounts and scientific studies. Combining these can show that the poems that Keats wrote in 1819 and published in his second collection of poetry, *Lamia*, greatly differ from his earlier collection of poetry written before he took opium. These changes to his poetry, and arguably improvements, align with the effects that opium has on writers who consume it while creating.

CHAPTER ONE:
THE WORLD KEATS ENTERED: A WORLD RIPE FOR OPIUM

Born on October 31, 1795, John Keats was alive during a time when England's political and economic unrest might have prompted many citizens to seek the relief that opium provided. The biggest, and longest lasting, of the political conflicts was with the French as part of the French Revolution. England was originally supportive of the revolution, believing that France would follow England's example and create a parliament. However, after a few years, the prime minister, William Pitt, became concerned that the revolution could spread into England itself, resulting in the total overthrow of the British government (Gardiner). Systematically declaring war on surrounding European countries, France then declared war on England in 1793 (Tout 593).

While England was still engaged in war with France, an uprising in Ireland occurred between the Catholics and the Protestants. Pitt supported the Catholics, thereby creating a rift between King George III and him that led to Pitt's resignation as prime minister (Tout). Then, several years after this conflict, but while England was still at war with France, England went to war with the United States. Now engaged in two wars, England suffered a manpower shortage and began forcing American sailors to join their navy. Annoyed that England still occupied Canada, the United States wanted all of North America to be free from British rule. This eventually led to the war of 1812 between England and the United States (Fitz).

In addition to the conflicts with the French, Irish, and Americans, England was undergoing internal turmoil with its monarchy. King George III had health problems throughout his life, problems which were perhaps exacerbated by his two-month premature birth. His illness was especially obvious during four major periods: 1788-9, 1801, 1804, and 1810-20 (Peters). Experts disagree on what exactly ailed the King, but most agree it was either acute porphyria or manic-depressive psychosis. These health problems would have created unrest and distrust in the monarchy, as the illness doubtlessly affected the King's judgement even beyond the effects of the four major episodes of illness. In 1810, now incapacitated, King George III was replaced by the Prince Regent, later called George IV.

The military conflict with the French was concluded in 1799 with massive economic drains on the British government. England had to stop all cash payments for bonds issued by the government because it did not have enough money to repay them (Tout). With no increase in trade, England had no way to try to make money to decrease the crippling amount of debt it had accrued. This debt, of course, affected the citizens of England. The price of bread during the war increased so much that it was a treasured commodity that only the well-off could afford (Tout). Most people had very little money, and the government was in no position to improve their quality of life.

The unrest and poverty prevalent during the early 1800's caused many people to turn to opium. It was widely available and inexpensive. In 1821, Thomas De Quincey wrote, "I was informed by several cotton manufacturers that their work-people were rapidly getting into the practice of opium-eating... The immediate occasion of this practice was the lowness of wages, which, at the time, would not allow them to indulge in

ale or spirits; and, wages rising, it may be thought that this practice would cease” (212). The drug was cheaper than alcohol or spirits, and opium relaxed the workers and alleviated the tensions caused by all the unrest. Laudanum, during the Victorian era, a few decades later, was recorded as being a penny for “twenty or twenty-five drops” (Castelow). That amount would have lasted the average person a considerable amount of time as the drug was further diluted in water. William Goodluck, an opium addict who wrote about his experiences in the 1820s, stated that he began by taking eight to ten drops and recommended that someone who was in pain and taking opium for the first time should take ten drops in half a wine glass of water (9,12). To avoid addiction, one would only drink or eat the drug occasionally. Also, users would not need so great a dose if they were using the drug for pleasure. Twenty or twenty-five drops of laudanum would therefore last the user a couple of weeks. Opium could also be bought in the form of a powder, in one, two, or three-grain amounts. The strength of both the powder and the laudanum could vary greatly; however, Thomas De Quincy estimated that “twenty-five drops of laudanum [were] equivalent to one grain of opium” (401). Beer, on the other hand, was recorded in 1888 as being three and a half pence for a pint, or sixteen fluid ounces (Patterson). This would have lasted the consumer for only a few nights and was considerably more expensive. Obviously, the masses would have turned to laudanum for pleasure and relief from poverty or war.

John Keats grew up during this period of war, poverty, and increased drug use. He would have been exposed to laudanum through most, if not all, of his life. In addition to the problems going on in the country as a whole, Keats underwent considerable unrest within his personal life. He experienced his first loss with the death of an infant brother.

Subsequently, he and his two surviving brothers were sent to Clarke's Academy at Edmonton. Just six months after they began to attend the school, Keats's father died from being thrown off a horse when returning from a visit to the school (Roe). Not only did Keats lose his father, but a few months later his mother decided to wed William Rawlings and effectively disappeared from her children's lives shortly after her remarriage. This created turmoil within the Keats family, and the children were sent to live with their grandmother, Alice Jennings. Adding to the turmoil of Keats's childhood, a few years after this happened, his mother became ill (Roe). The illness turned out to be consumption, which was the disease that would plague the Keats family and eventually led to John Keats's taking opium. During Frances' fight with consumption, Keats helped to nurse and care for her until her death.

After his mother died, Keats began an apprenticeship with Thomas Hammond to become an apothecary. In his apprenticeship, he would have learned the basics of caring for patients and administering and prescribing drugs. He continued his education to become an apothecary at St. Thomas and Guy's Hospital, undergoing several years of training, although he did not complete the full apprenticeship period. According to the Apothecary Act of 1815, all apprentices had to undergo five years of training before taking the certifying examinations (Bishop & Gelbiet). Despite this ruling, Keats did manage to take the exam and become a certified apothecary.

At Guy's Hospital, Keats studied the fundamentals of medicine, diseases, and chemistry. In addition to this he served as a surgeon's dresser, working at the hospital doing basic duties, checking on patients, and dissecting cadavers to learn more about the human body. One of the more commonly used medicines during this time was opium.

According to Nicholas Roe, “Opium was the only reliably effective treatment” (91). It was employed for almost every ailment. It would help with pain, act as a laxative, assist people with falling asleep, and help with suppressing coughs. It could also help to quiet and calm restless infants. Since anesthesia was not developed until 1846, opium was incredibly useful for performing any form of operation (Robinson & Toledo). Opium could not actually cure any disease, but it would relieve pain and other troublesome symptoms. Keats would have been thoroughly educated in opium and its numerous uses while attending these classes. In addition to learning about these uses, he would have been both qualified and sometimes required to write prescriptions for patients.

A scientific examination of the effects of opium allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the effects that it had on Keats and on his writing. Opium is a mixture of about twenty-five chemical alkaloids, each of which is a compound containing at least one nitrogen atom bonded to a carbon atom that makes the compound alkaline, or basic. The most prominent of the alkaloids are morphine, narcotine, codeine, thebaine, papaverine, and narceine (“The Opium Alkaloids”). Morphine, codeine, and thebaine are phenanthrene alkaloids; they “act upon the central nervous system and are analgesic, narcotic, and potentially addicting compounds” (Friedli, “Alkaloid”). Papaverine and narcotine are benzyl-isoquinoline alkaloids and “act only to relax involuntary (smooth) muscles” (Friedli, “Alkaloid”). Codeine is the second largest component of opium. It is commonly “used for its analgesic, antitussive, and sedative properties” (“Codeine Solution”). Morphine makes up the largest portion of opium. It is about ten percent, or more, of the weight of raw opium (“The Opium Alkaloids”). Morphine is synthesized from opium for medical purposes and is used in the production of pain killers such as

oxycodone and Vicodin. It is also the base for the further synthesis of heroin, an illicit and more addictive drug with similar, but stronger, properties than morphine.

Morphine works by spreading over the brain until it finds special neurons, specifically the mu opioid receptor (Powell). It then “rapidly attaches and detaches from these opioid receptors,” mimicking the effects of natural opioid neurotransmitters within the brain (Young). These opioid neurotransmitters are endorphins, enkephalins, and dynorphins (Young). After repeated use of opioids, the naturally-created opioid neurotransmitters, which are needed for normal functions, quit being created by the brain. Endorphins, one of the opioid neurotransmitters that is affected by addiction, are “endogenous compounds with opiatelike properties that include the potential to alter pain perception, mood, respiration, and the release of pituitary hormones” (Wilson and Elmassian 722). They primarily work as natural pain killers in the body. If people are addicted to morphine, though, their bodies’ abilities to produce endorphins are depleted, and the addicts must continue to take more morphine, building a dependence on the opiate.

One of the other physical effects of opiate use is a change in users’ reaction time. In a study entitled “Action of some Opium Alkaloids on the Psychological Reaction Time,” Macht and Isaacs found that shortly after ingesting a small dose of opium, people reacted more quickly and scored higher in a simple mathematical test (26). This improvement lasted for a short period, about thirty minutes, occasionally followed by a depressive period (26). Such results mimic the opium users’ euphoric stage and later depressive stage. However, the same study found that in larger doses the period of improved reaction times was significantly shortened, and it was always followed by a

depressive stage in which the participants' reaction times increased and they made more errors on a simple math test (26-7). The study accredited a large amount of the improvement of the subjects in the math portion of the experiment with a reduction in the anxiety the subjects felt when taking the test. The experiment focused on subjects taking doses of opium that were, at most, less than one-fourth of a grain of opium. This was done for the safety of the participants; however, this amount of opium would have been greatly exceeded by most addicts or opium users in nineteenth-century England.

Another mental effect of opium use is a higher level of impulsivity. A study by Baldacchino and Balfour on the impacts of heroin use upon neuropsychological functioning observed that "Illicit heroin users showed increased motor impulsivity and impaired strategic planning" (Baldacchino and Balfour). The study tested the impulsivity of people who had previously developed an addiction to heroin, showing that heroin addicts were more likely to make larger bets and risk more than a control group of non-opium users (Baldacchino and Balfour). The opiate users had less control and deliberation over their risky choices.

The drugs used in the above-mentioned studies were slightly different from the opium that would have been taken in the nineteenth century. One of the major differences is that the former drugs were not mixed with alcohol, otherwise known as ethanol. And yet, a study performed by Zacny and Gutierrez showed that in an experiment testing the effects of oxycodone alone, ethanol alone, and the two in combination, there was no significant difference between the effects of oxycodone alone on the participants and the effects of the combination of ethanol and oxycodone on the participants.

According to Hayter, “At the start of the nineteenth century ... most doctors and patients still thought of opium not as a dangerous addictive drug but mainly as a useful analgesic and tranquillizer of which every household should have a supply” (29-30). The drug was commonly prescribed for a variety of ailments, as it was believed to cure almost everything, and did have a positive impact on many illnesses. It could relieve pain, relax spasms, reduce fevers, and induce sleep. “Acting as an analgesic, or pain reliever, the morphine block[ed] the message of pain to the brain, producing euphoria and deadening anxieties and tensions. It also suppress[ed] coughs ... inhibit[ed] the flow of gastric juices, slow[ed] down respiration and dilate[d] the blood vessels in the skin” (Hodgson 15-17)

Opium was incredibly useful in medicine when there were few other drugs that had such a wide array of beneficial effects. In addition to the doctors who recommended opium for ailments, people could freely buy opium for their own use. As with the Egyptians, opium was a common additive to calming cordials for young children, and it worked extremely well. The only problem was that it could lead to life-long addiction or even death (Hayter). De Quincey stated that opium was so readily available that “on a Saturday afternoon the counters of the druggists were strewed with pills of one, two, or three grains, in preparation for the known demand of the evening” (212). Chemists would prepare for the incoming rush of people looking to buy opium either for pleasure or for subduing unruly children. Opium was used for its intoxicating effects, much as alcohol was. It was also popular because its price was cheaper than alcohol; even the poor could afford to purchase opium (Hayter 33).

The effects of opium have been studied in almost every culture that used it, often with case studies performed upon the researchers themselves. The English also understood the process of addiction that typically occurred. New users would start with a relatively small dose of opium, maybe even less than the equivalent of one grain. This would be taken for only a few days to help with an ailment or taken on occasion, once every few weeks or so, for its euphoric qualities. During this time, the users could stop taking the drug, for the drug had no power over them. They would experience only the more beneficial and enjoyable effects of taking opium.

Upon initially taking the drug, a wide array of effects would be experienced, most of which would be perceived as positive for the users. As already suggested, one of the main reasons why adults would take opium for medical reasons would have been to reduce pain. Any pain the users were experiencing would be immediately lessened or completely eliminated. In addition to this reduction of pain, opium also “[caused] sensations of the most exquisite pleasure which [was] peculiar to itself and unlike every other pleasure” (Goodluck 13). One of the major effects was a dream-like trance the users entered, a state somewhere between waking and sleeping. Such fantastic dreams were the source of inspiration for many writers, most notably Coleridge, who purportedly created and composed “Kubla Khan” during an opium dream. Later, after waking up or having the drug wear off enough for him to fully function again, he wrote the poem down on paper. Unfortunately, he was interrupted while writing and forgot the rest of the poem (Hayter 215-6). As shown by Coleridge’s poem, the dreams the users experienced were not normal dreams: “Ordinary dreams do not have such intensity and coherence; opium, by strengthening the combining power and heightening the emotion, brought these dreams

half-way to conscious literary creation” (Hayter 126-7). Stimulating the imaginative powers of the users, these dreams were only experienced when the users were relaxed and reclining after taking a dose of opium.

The effects of opium are many and vary from person to person and also depend upon the quantity of opium consumed by the person. However, some case studies from people who used opium in the eighteen-hundreds give a general idea of what other symptoms could be expected. William Goodluck, a contemporary of Keats, described the sensation he had shortly after taking opium for the first time: “an uncommon liveliness and activity, an extraordinary quick and alert spirit pervade[d] [my] whole frame, [my] body and soul both seem[ed] to have received double strength, [my] nerves seem new strung ... nothing [could] give [me] uneasiness” (17-8). This sensation happened if the users were physically active at the time of taking opium. On the other hand,

If instead of some active employment the Opium taker [lay] down when he [had] taken his dose, or [sat] perfectly still, he [fell] into a state of undecipherable content, in a state between sleeping and waking, a kind of dosing half slumber, in which the most agreeable images and thoughts [were] presented to the mind. (17)

This was the dream-like trance previously described. According to De Quincy, opium “introduce[d] ... the most exquisite order, legislation, and logic” (383). His experience with opium showed that it helped to clear the mind. He further stated that “opium always seems to compose what had been agitated, and to concentrate what had been distracted” (384). Opium helped him to order his thoughts.

Some interesting effects that would have been beneficial, especially to writers, were synesthesia and hyperaesthesia, and a reduction of fear and anxiety (Hayter). All

worries would have been temporarily assuaged. The writers were then free to write without fear of how their works sounded or if they were appropriate for the time or audience. They could freely write and then review and edit their work later on. While most writers were unable to write a finished and polished product while intoxicated, they could allow the drug to help with the flow of ideas and get a rough draft, then refine that work later when they were free of the drug's influence.

The above effects occurred when people used opium occasionally and in generally small doses. However, if users took the drug more frequently, they would slowly become more resistant to the drug's benefits. This would force the users to take an ever-increasing amount of the drug to get the same effects, and in the process they would become addicted (Baker). Opium addicts could build up such a strong tolerance to the drug that they could take an amount that would have been fatal for someone who had never previously taken opium (De Quincy). For the addicted souls, the euphoric stage ended, and they were left with less enjoyable side effects. The sleep that was once so easily gained from ingesting a small dose of opium now became restless and riddled with horrible night terrors. These were so bad that Thomas De Quincy described himself as "descend[ing] into chasms and sunless abysses, depths below depths, from which it seemed hopeless that [he] could ever re-ascend" (435). Others reported waking up screaming and being completely unable to remember what had caused them so much terror while asleep. This state was followed by complete lethargy.

The only time the users would feel energy and motivation to be productive was shortly after taking a dose. Goodluck battled his addiction down to a more reasonable level, described the effects of opium when the users were in the addiction phase.

According to him, opium addicts suffered a decrease in memory through “the alienation of their memories by the relaxation of the brain, and [through the] deadening of the acuteness of their mental faculties, except during the operation of the Opium” (Goodluck 54-5). The addicts’ memory impairment made it hard for them to work on sustained, long-term projects, as they would forget what they had already done. An apothecary from the eighteen-hundreds said that opium “paralyze[d] the digestive apparatus, weaken[ed] the muscles, and cause[d] the skin to become yellow and shriveled. It lessen[ed] the appetite for food, interfere[d] with sleep, and a failure to increase the dose [was] attended with agonizing pains” (Baker 14). Overall, the effects of opium addiction were negative and detrimental to the health and productivity of the addict.

Long-term users often claimed that they never experienced an enjoyable or euphoric stage from the drug. Others who tried to wean themselves off the drug experienced withdrawal symptoms, sometimes extreme. However, upon consuming the drug again, the users experienced a temporary restoration of the euphoric symptoms of the drug. This revival of euphoric effects would have been very short lived, leading some addicts to work in a vicious cycle of addiction, temporary withdrawal, and then addiction again (Hayter). Others realized the sway that opium held over them and struggled to quit taking the drug. This was extremely difficult to do, given the side effects of withdrawal. Indeed, they might never be free (Goodluck). Some of this information Keats would have learned while attending classes at Guy’s Hospital.

During Keats’s medical apprenticeship, he began to write poetry and continued to do so throughout his last few months working as a surgeon dresser. He was introduced by Charles Cowden Clark, a childhood friend from Edmonton, to Leigh Hunt, a prominent

poet of the time, who then later introduced him to other major poets, including Percy Bysshe Shelley. After these individuals encouraged Keats to take writing poetry more seriously, he decided to leave his position at the hospital and devote himself exclusively to his art (Roe). His decision to do so must have been difficult, for medical training was not cheap, and the expenses at Guy's Hospital combined with his habit of lending money and not asking to be repaid led to his having financial difficulties for the rest of his life. As Keats struggled to figure out how to support himself and to pay for both his and Tom's care, the stress would have been severe. After all, Keats's poetry did not make him much money during his lifetime (Roe).

A few months after the publication of Keats's first poetry collection, in June 1818, he went on a walking tour of Scotland with his friend Charles Brown. While on this journey, Keats's brother Tom, who was still at his home and who had already been ill for some time, declined in health (Roe 234). Keats also became ill and in August of the same year was forced to return to England early (263). He began nursing Tom while both were sick. During this period, Keats almost certainly would have taken and given laudanum to help reduce the pain that his brother and he were both experiencing. There is no definitive proof that Keats took laudanum this early in his life or that he took it for any length of time. The only time that it is known that he was regularly taking laudanum was at the very end of his life. Yet, Keats's medical training also meant that he would have been familiar with the numerous benefits of opium, and he likely would have given it to Tom and taken it for himself to help both of them with their illnesses. Tom died of consumption on December 1, 1818.

Keats never fully recovered from his own illness. From 1818 until his death, Keats probably used opium on a regular basis, initially to relieve the pain of his chronic ailment and later to help stimulate him creatively. Keats continued to write poetry and published a second collection of poems in 1820 (Roe 372). The changes in Keats's writing style were marked, suggesting a link between these poems and Keats's opium use. This second collection of poetry came largely from the summer of 1819 when he began writing at a much faster pace and producing more works. Opium would have assisted Keats in composing his major odes. The energy that Keats experienced during this time suggests that he continued to take opium after Tom's death and that it influenced his work.

While Keats probably did not begin taking opium to improve his writing, but rather as a pain-killer, it did change his work. For example, he experienced a period of phenomenally intense creation and work in the summer of 1819 when he wrote six major odes all in a matter of just a few months. These odes all show signs of opium use throughout. At this time, Keats was in the beginning stages of drug use and was experiencing the positive side effects of the drug: increased energy, dream-like states with visions that provide inspiration, and presumably a decrease in pain. However, after this period of writing, he almost ceased to create. His decreased motivation corresponded to the addiction stage of opium use. Keats was less able to create, as evidenced by his inability to complete *Hyperion*.

After publishing the last poetry collection, Keats found that his illness was worsening. He moved to Italy in hopes that the warmer air would improve his health, and was certainly using laudanum at the end of his life. Unfortunately, his friend and

caretaker, Severn, took “every destroying mean from his reach,’ including the laudanum that should and could have helped him to an easeful death like Tom’s” (Roe 392). Keats’s desire to gain access to laudanum was so strong that “The bottle of opium Keats had relied upon to salve the misery of a protracted death [was] given to Clark, for Severn no longer trust[ed] himself to resist Keats’s demands” (394). John Keats died of consumption on the 23rd of February 1821 at the age of twenty-five (379).

CHAPTER TWO: JOHN KEATS'S OPIUM-LACED POETRY

As indicated earlier, John Keats published two major collections of poetry, the first in 1817, entitled *Poems 1817*, and the second in 1820, entitled *Lamia, Isabella, Etc.* The former was written while Keats was in relatively good health and free from the influence of drugs, while the latter appeared after Keats' brother Tom had died from consumption and Keats himself had become ill.

Poems 1817 surfaced just a few months after Keats decided to leave Guy's Hospital and differed from his later poetry in that it made a clear distinction between the real world that humans live in and a world composed of fairies and elves. This first collection also made no mention of opium or laudanum but referenced it multiple times in his later work. "I stood tip-toe upon a little hill" was one of the first works in *Poems 1817*. The poem is mostly comprised of descriptions of natural scenery. The poem then transitions into talking about a poet creating poetry based upon traditional Greek tales, focusing on the perception of the seen versus the unseen, with the unseen being a matter of viewer perception (Norris). It is not a conflict between waking and dreaming. There are references to sleep, as in "O'er which it might well take a pleasant sleep," but it is very clearly separated from waking and dreaming (109). The poem has a strong concentration on natural elements, especially birds. In addition, Keats used references to supernatural elements. These mainly involve fairies or Greek Gods and mythology. Nature blends with these mythological and fantastical creatures, yet there is a clear

distinction between reality and the characters. Keats imagined a world where Psyche and Love are first meeting. While Keats went into detail on their meeting, he kept their story in the context of mythology. According to Loredana Mihani, “Keats’s poem is far from being escapist: it is visionary but not a dreamy refuge from the struggles of life. Rather, Keats [found] strength in the ideal to deal with the real” (100). He did not enter a dreamy state where he became a part of a mythological world; he used the world he created to reinforce the real world and help him to understand it. This world was separate from the English world in which he lived, where these Gods—Psyche and Love—no longer existed.

In “Calidore: a fragment,” the separation of real and unreal is more prominent as the speaker does not have a part in the poem. The poem follows Calidore in a medieval setting as he travels to a castle. Interacting with the castle inhabitants, he ultimately joins them for dinner. Very little action actually happens throughout the poem; most of it consists of descriptions of the surroundings, especially in the beginning when Calidore is outside. Calidore is the center of the poem, but “I” is never used to include the speaker. This technique creates a more distinct separation of the worlds despite the mythological imagery being used. In addition to this, otherworldly creatures are mentioned but are separate from reality; they are used to describe something real: “A dimpled hand, / Fair as some wonder out of fairly land” (93-4). Keats used the beauty of fairies to describe how beautiful this hand was metaphorically, keeping the fairy realm and reality separated. Whether it be through a text that someone was reading, a simple comparison, or a reminiscence about older tales, Keats always had some form of separation, making clear what was real and what was a fictional creation. The poems in his first collection of

poetry use mythological figures as allusions, metaphors, and similes, but they do not actually become a part of reality.

The separation of the poem from the speaker also occurs in “Specimen of an Induction to a Poem,” which may be thematically connected to “Calidore: a fragment.” Describing the need for the speaker to create a tale of chivalry, the poem begins, “Lo! I must tell a tale of chivalry; / For large white plumes are dancing in mine eyes” (1-2). The line “I must tell a tale of chivalry” is echoed twice more throughout the poem with the last saying, “Yet must I tell a tale of chivalry” (45). The speaker does make an appearance in the poem in the last stanza, addressing Edmund Spenser, the author of “The Faerie Queene.” The speaker says, “Spenser! thy brows are arches, open, kind, / And come like a clear sun-rise to my mind” (49-50). The speaker, though, plays no part in the chivalrous world; his world and the poetic world are separate.

Written in “one of the more famed periods of mania in literary history [during] the summer of 1819,” Keats’s second collection contains poems probably composed while he was under the influence of opium (H. Scott). The poems from this collection suggest the effects of opium through their subject matter and through the dream-like states represented in each. The results of opium consumption on the poetry are more apparent when one compares the two collections, some differences being quite obvious. As noted earlier, for example, opium is only mentioned directly in the second collection. A second major difference is that, while both collections show an interweaving between realistic and supernatural elements, the first collection differentiates between waking and sleeping, while the second collection focuses on a dream-state and the blending of waking and sleeping.

“Lamia” thoroughly blends the real and the unreal, with the serpent-turned-beautiful woman perhaps being a symbol for opium, according to Hayter. “Lamia” follows a nymph who is transformed into a human by the god Hermes. She becomes human because of her infatuation with the sight of Lycius. After she seduces him, they begin a tumultuous relationship. One can argue that the path of love that occurs between Lamia and Lycius follows the same path that an addict takes to become addicted. Opium seems pleasurable and enticing when first consumed, as does the experience with Lamia when Lycius first meets her:

Ah, happy Lycius!—for she was a maid
More beautiful than ever twisted braid,
Or sigh’d, or blush’d, or on spring-flowered lea
Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy:
A virgin purest lipp’d, yet in the lore
Of love deep learned to the red heart’s core:
Not one hour old, yet of sciential brain
To unperplex bliss from its neighbor pain;
.....
As though in Cupid’s college she had spent
Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,
And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment. (1.185-199)

Lamia is this beautiful and enticing lover who is so attractive that there is no way for Lycius to resist her. She has even attended Cupid’s college to learn how to be a lover. Opium is attractive in the same way; it offers a cure for almost everything along with

euphoric effects to entice new users to try it. All seems to be well at first for both opium users and Lycius. However, Lycius soon feels that he will be heartbroken if Lamia should leave him. He pleads, “Ah Goddess, see / Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee! ... Even as thou vanishest so I shall die” (1.257-60). Lycius is so attached he feels that being left would kill him. He has become addicted to Lamia. He even feels symptoms of withdrawal from her leaving temporarily: “He, sick to lose / The amorous promise of her lone complain, / Swoon’d, murmuring of love and pale with pain” (1.247-9). After she agrees to stay with him, they retire together and everything again appears to be harmonious. They develop a relationship by lying together and reposing on a bed while almost asleep. Later, when Lycius begins to have thoughts of leaving their carefully constructed world, he is not able to do so:

... The lady’s cheek
Trembled; she nothing said, but pale and meek,
Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain
Of sorrows at his words; at last with pain
Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,
To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,
Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim
Her wild and timid nature to his aim:
Besides for all his love, in self despite
Against his better self, he took delight
Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new. (2.64-74).

Lamia pulls him back to herself, pulls him back to his addiction. One of the reasons why this works is that he enjoys the newly-found sensation of her begging for him to come back after his trying to leave. Opium addicts experience the same effect if, after they have become addicted, they temporarily give up the drug. When they begin taking opium again, they gain a resurgence in the euphoric symptoms that have been dulled by their addiction. Lycius gives into this begging, and the two lovers plan to marry. The wedding is foiled, however, when an old teacher of Lycius, Apollonius, arrives at the wedding uninvited. Apollonius sees through Lamia's disguise and reveals her true nature as a serpent. By calling her a "foul dream," Apollonius reinforces her connection with opium (2.271). After she is revealed, Lamia leaves with horrible consequences for Lycius:

‘A Serpent!’ echoed he; no sooner said,
Than with a frightful scream she vanished:
And Lycius’ arms were empty of delight,
As were his limbs of life, from that same night. (2.305-8)

The sudden removal of Lamia leads to Lycius' death; he experiences extreme withdrawal symptoms. His death is very similar, though more sudden, to that of addicts who completely quit or are unable to access opium.

There is some contention among critics for why Lycius dies, rather than being rejuvenated, after finding out that Lamia is not human. The reason is that Lycius cannot possibly live without the pleasure that Lamia brings him. Keats was undergoing a similar shift in his writing as he moved away from more philosophical writings and towards more pleasurable and emotional writings. Roberts describes "Lamia" as "the outpourings of a mind released at last from the self-imposed duty of writing a poetry of humanitarian

philosophy and allowed to indulge its creative genius for the poetry of sensation” (550). Keats is freed from his philosophical thoughts and allowed to indulge in the sensory pleasure of poetry. As Roberts points out, when the narrator asks ““Do not all charms fly [/] At the mere touch of cold philosophy?”” the poet makes “a definite statement against knowledge and in favour of sensuousness” (550). This shift away from philosophy and towards a more sensuous writing style would have been assisted by opium, as the drug helped to relax Keats’s mind and allowed for thoughts to flow more easily onto paper with less deliberation.

The intensification of the senses appears in many of Keats’s later poems where he makes use of different types of figurative language and synesthesia, the blending of one or more of the senses together. A line from *Isabella*, for example, reads: “Taste the music of that pale vision” (392). Combining the sense of taste with vision produces a more impactful description of the music. A study of the poems by Stephen de Ullmann shows that there are 208 instances of synesthesia throughout Keats’s work. According to de Ullmann, “Keats reshapes the external material, brings it into relation with events in his own sense life and imaginative experience, and, even where he fails to interpret what is unique and incommunicable ... his intricate imagery has a ring of sincerity (821). In addition to his prolific use of synesthesia, Keats is also known for his use of hyperaesthesia, the intensification of sense and emotions. This intensification can be seen in the word choice and figurative language used throughout his poetry, especially in the employment of onomatopoeia, which establishes a link between the sound of a word and the emotion or sense that the word evokes. According to Harrison, this is similar to the way that “umbulu” evokes the image of a shape with round sides while “kikiriki” creates

the image of a shape with pointed or sharp sides, although the words do not actually mean anything. Both synesthesia and hyperaesthesia are two well-documented effects of opium; the drug heightens one's interpretation of sensory intake.

"To Autumn" makes use of both synesthesia and hyperaesthesia. The poem has no action; it personifies autumn as a season when all the crops become ready for harvest and all the animals are enjoying the weather. The final stanza of the poem is especially rife with both forms:

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, Where are they?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—

While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,

And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn

Among the river shallows, borne aloft

Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;

Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft

The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;

And gathering swallows twitter in the skies. (23-33)

Keats blends touch and sight when he writes, "And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue," which utilizes synesthesia and enhances the image of the sunset (26). He continues to create very rich imagery with his descriptions of the gnats' "wailful choir," the lambs bleating, crickets singing, and birds whistling and twittering (27-33).

Contrasting words also add to the image being created as the day is described as "soft-

dying” (25). In the first stanza, there are many descriptive words that fall under the category of hyperaesthesia:

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells. (1-11).

According to Harrison, “all these lines are full of round, heavy images of the fruits of harvest so ripe they are ready to fall. And to back these images up, Keats gives us sounds that by themselves suggest the soft, round, and heavy.” The word choice evoking the feeling of the sense and the blending of the senses create synesthesia and hyperaesthesia, which are both side-effects of opium use. The proliferation of these effects, existing in almost every line of the poem, could be aided by the consumption of opium. This is further reinforced by the statement “Drows'd with the fume of poppies” (17). References to poppies being the source of opium, makes it likely that not only was the poem “Drows'd with the fume of poppies” but the poet was as well (17).

In “Ode to a Nightingale,” the narrator argues with himself over what he should do as he teeters between death and an end of his existence and a call to create poetry and beauty. Opium is distinctly mentioned at the beginning of the poem: “Or emptied some dull opiate to the drain” (3). This opium leads to a dullness that helps the narrator to enter a dream-like state (Hodgson). He then complains that his “dull brain perplexes and retards” (“Ode to a Nightingale” 34). Opium does this to his brain and his ability to think while blurring his perception of reality. The speaker demonstrates the effect by describing the moon as “the Queen-Moon . . . on her throne, / Cluster’d around by all her starry Fays” (36-7). This metaphor of the moon and stars as a queen and Fays, or fairies, goes beyond the simple comparisons made in his earlier poems. Here, Keats blends reality with the otherworldly fay and lessens the distinction between the two. The opium visions between waking and sleeping could easily merge reality and make the night sky seem much more fantastical. Further blurring the lines of reality at the very end of the poem, the narrator suggests that all of this poem occurs in a dream-state. He questions, “Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?” (79-80). This almost perfectly replicates the dream-state that opium users like Dequincy and Goodluck experienced: a state somewhere between waking and sleeping in which visions appear to the user.

“Ode to a Nightingale” embraces the idea of consumption. Tagore maintains that “this continuous consumption on the part of the self leads not to health or prosperity, but to a peculiar kind of numbing or paralysis that signifies both its alienation from the outside world and its extraordinary ‘dis-ease’ in that world” (73). The ideas used in Keats’s earlier poetry show a more positive view (Tagore). This change in consumption

shows how Keats has moved from ingestion as elevating to ingestion as paralyzing. The drugs create a world of uncertainty and blurriness in the poem that makes the narrator question whether he is even awake.

“Ode to Psyche” continues this blurring of the real and unreal. The world of Psyche and Love that the speaker encounters here seems a continuation of the one in “I Stood Tip-Toe,” where he leaves off with the two lovers. However, the narrator is actually able to observe them and to become a part of their world in a waking vision:

Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see
The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes?
I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,
Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side
.....
Their lips touch'd not, but had not bid adieu,
As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber” (5-17)

It is as if Psyche and Love have just fallen asleep from their encounter in “I Stood Tip-Toe.” Yet, the narrator encounters them while unsure whether he is fully awake or asleep. He becomes a part of their world, stumbling through the forest and finding the lovers by chance. This waking vision is missing from the first poem where the speaker merely reminisces about the person recording the story while staying fully separate from the characters. In addition to this dream-state, James Bunn states that “The ode lauds the pleasures of the mind working in retirement, the desiring mind in the act of creating beautiful things, in anticipation of the repose which follows creation” (581). This sort of

work is very similar to the work done when someone uses opium. De Quincy wrote that he would go and listen to orchestral performances while taking opium and it would “[increase] the activity of the mind ... that particular mode of its activity by which we are able to construct out of the raw material of organic sound an elaborate intellectual pleasure” (390-1). He later said that it allowed him to recall

the whole of my past life—not as if recalled by an act of memory, but as if present and incarnated in the music; no longer painful to dwell upon, but the detail of its incidents removed, or blended in some hazy abstraction, and its passions exalted, spiritualized, and sublimed. (391)

De Quincy showed how opium created sensory pleasure, something that Keats was able to translate into a poem.

“Ode on Indolence,” while not in the second collection of poetry, shares a similar focus on relaxation and visions. The day is described:

...Ripe was the drowsy hour;
The blissful cloud of summer-indolence
Benumb’d my eyes; my pulse grew less and less;
Pain had no sting, and pleasure’s wreath no flower
O, why did ye not melt, and leave my sense
Unhaunted quite of all but—nothingness? (“Ode on Indolence” 15-20)

The speaker enters a state of no pain and reduced pulse, a state similar to someone’s having an opium vision. Indolence suggests a lazy relaxation of the mind and body. The narrator is not actively trying to create this poem. It is created in a languid state in which the speaker can create without worries. While he is relaxed, he bemoans the fact that his

mind is still haunted by other thoughts, just as opium tends to give users visions rather than put them into a state of nothingness. The speaker continues this vision at the end of the poem: “I yet have visions for the night, / and for the day faint visions there is store” (57-8). He blends the shadows, making these visions into reality, and he blurs the differences between reality and illusion.

Keats mentions the concept of negative capability in one of his letters to Tom and George, defining it as follows: “I mean Negative Capability, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason” (Colvin 48). According to Fessler, “Creative genius, according to Keats, requires people to experience the world as an uncertain place that naturally gives rise to a wide array of perspectives.” Keats’s view of negative capability is important because one way to assist in his achieving negative capability in his poetry is through using opium to relax his mind and allow him to be unconcerned about facts. Supporting this idea, “‘Ode on Indolence’ ... suggest[s] the necessity of dismissing worldly cares in deference to a higher creative ideal—personal self-development, integrity, and, in turn, creativity” (Zak 59).

“Ode on a Grecian Urn” follows the speaker as he studies an urn. The poem starts with the speaker contemplating the apparent immortality of art, in this case the figures on an urn. He enters a meditative state in which he attempts to comfort a static lover by saying,

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! (17-20)

The speaker is pained by the contrast between the figures' immortality and his own earthly condition "That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd, / A burning forehead, and a parching tongue" (19-20). This pain and contemplation culminates in what Schrero considers a dream state for the speaker in the fourth stanza (Schrero):

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. (41-50).

While the entire poem is written in a meditative state of contemplation, at this point the speaker fully moves to a dream-like state in which he creates a world where the images are still happening. No longer is he just staring at the urn; the events depicted on the urn truly exist at this point. In this created world, the urn is even capable of speaking. The poem eventually culminates in the return of the speaker to the real world through a forced awakening (Wigod). According to Schrero,

If we consider the proportion between the speaker's change of feeling and its causes, we must admit that few minds would be capable of imaging circumstances

more moving and convincing than those which Keats has invented to lead the presumed speaker of the *Ode* to his final insight. The insight is a mystical one, seized by the spirit and imagination rather than by the rational part of the mind. (85)

This forced return to reality is a common thread among the poems that are influenced by opium. There is a struggle between truth and beauty, as represented in the last two lines of “Ode on a Grecian Urn”: “Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know” (49-50). This struggle manifests itself as a result of drug addiction. Truth exists in the real world, whereas beauty can be found in the embrace of the drug. After taking opium, unless one continually takes the drug, the effects will wear off. This situation also occurs in “Ode to a Nightingale” where the speaker asks, “Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?” (79-80). The music has “Fled” and the speaker questions the reality of the dream in the past tense, indicating that the vision has ended at this point. In addition to these two odes, “Lamia” ends with a similar awakening as Lycius realizes that Lamia is actually a disguised serpent. His plight ends worse than the prior two as he dies from his awakening. However, all three show the speaker being forced to confront reality after spending time in a vision or under an illusion, as is the case for “Lamia.” This awakening is similar to that of an opium user emerging from a drug reverie and reentering the real world. After becoming elevated on the drug, users want to continue to feel that way and experience the visions, but to do so means taking more of the drug and facing addiction and the side-effects associated with it.

“Ode on Melancholy” builds off of this idea of a forced return to reality from the realm of visions and the sadness that accompanies such a return. The speaker exhorts his reader to avoid being tempted by death, saying, “No, no, go not to Lethe” (1). The suicidal temptation to gain the peace and relief that Death could provide must be counteracted. In the second stanza, the reader is urged to “glut thy sorrow” rather than to give in to it (15):

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes. (11-20).

This stanza could easily be a metaphor for opium use. The user is suddenly forced back into reality by the end of an opium high and feels a sense of profound melancholy. Rather than experiencing the beauty of the world that exists with the aid of the drug, he is left with plain reality. The final stanza of this poem returns to the blending of the mythological elements with reality:

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips

Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shalt taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung. (21-30)

Melancholy becomes a real person, someone similar to one of the Greek goddesses. Others may not perceive this dark entity, but the addict knows that soul-destroying Melancholy dwells “in the very temple of Delight” and ultimately claims sovereignty (25).

AFTERWORD

Living during a time of unrest and prolific opium use, John Keats also suffered the loss of many loved ones and continually dealt with financial difficulties. In addition, he personally dealt with sickness and pain during the last few years of his life. These facts make it likely that he consumed opium for relief from the troubles and pain he experienced. While this seems to be a safe conjecture that is substantiated by letters written by Severn at the end of Keats's life, the exact extent and impact of Keats's drug usage are less certain.

The timing of Keats's beginning to take opium is consistent with when his health began to decline and he started caring for Tom, who was sick with consumption. Keats would have had easy access to the drug; also, Keats's earlier training as an apothecary would have given him knowledge of the drug's benefits. After Tom's death, Keats's condition never improved. In fact, it generally got worse. This would make it likely that Keats began to take laudanum for pain, continued to take it for that reason, likely became addicted to the drug, and never stopped taking it. What this suggests is that Keats would have been taking opium from the latter part of 1818 until the end of his life, the period when he wrote his second collection of poetry, which includes his six major odes.

There is a definite change that occurs between Keats's early poetry and his last collection. This could have been the result of many factors. After all, Keats developed

friendships with other major literary figures of the time, meeting Leigh Hunt and Percy Shelley among others, who could have guided him in his efforts. In addition, by this time he had simply had more experience with the writing of poetry. However, a close-reading of the two collections of poetry shows that the ways in which his poetry changed, and arguably improved—including the intensification of sensory images and the blending of reality and fantasy—lend themselves to being the effects of opium. Granted, it cannot be definitively proven that Keats was taking opium as early as the end of 1818 or that he continued to take it throughout the rest of his life. But given the difficulties that he dealt with in his personal life and his experience as an apothecary, one can surely argue for a correlation between the changes in his writing and the effects of opium consumption.

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APPENDIX A:
I STOOD TIP-TOE UPON A LITTLE HILL

I STOOD tip-toe upon a little hill,
The air was cooling, and so very still,
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,
Their scantily leaved, and finely tapering stems, 5
Had not yet lost those starry diadems
Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.
The clouds were pure and white as flocks new shorn,
And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly they slept
On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept 10
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves:
For not the faintest motion could be seen
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.
There was wide wand'ring for the greediest eye, 15
To peer about upon variety;
Far round the horizon's crystal air to skim,
And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim;
To picture out the quaint, and curious bending
Of a fresh woodland alley, never ending; 20
Or by the bowery clefts, and leafy shelves,
Guess where the jaunty streams refresh themselves.
I gazed awhile, and felt as light, and free
As though the fanning wings of Mercury
Had played upon my heels: I was light-hearted, 25
And many pleasures to my vision started;
So I straightway began to pluck a posey
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft and rosy.

A bush of May flowers with the bees about them;
Ah, sure no tasteful nook would be without them; 30
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,
And let long grass grow round the roots to keep them
Moist, cool and green; and shade the violets,
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.

A filbert hedge with wildbriar overtwined, 35

And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind
 Upon their summer thrones; there too should be
 The frequent chequer of a youngling tree,
 That with a score of light green breth[r]en shoots
 From the quaint mossiness of aged roots: 40
 Round which is heard a spring-head of clear waters
 Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters
 The spreading blue bells: it may haply mourn
 That such fair clusters should be rudely torn
 From their fresh beds, and scattered thoughtlessly 45
 By infant hands, left on the path to die.

Open afresh your round of starry folds,
 Ye ardent marigolds!
 Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,
 For great Apollo bids 50
 That in these days your praises should be sung
 On many harps, which he has lately strung;
 And when again your dewiness he kisses,
 Tell him, I have you in my world of blisses:
 So haply when I rove in some far vale, 55
 His mighty voice may come upon the gale.

Here are sweet peas, on tip-toe for a flight:
 With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,
 And taper fingers catching at all things,
 To bind them all about with tiny rings. 60

Linger awhile upon some bending planks
 That lean against a streamlet's rushy banks,
 And watch intently Nature's gentle doings:
 They will be found softer than ring-dove's cooings.
 How silent comes the water round that bend; 65
 Not the minutest whisper does it send
 To the o'erhanging sallows: blades of grass
 Slowly across the chequer'd shadows pass.
 Why, you might read two sonnets, ere they reach
 To where the hurrying freshnesses aye preach 70
 A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds;
 Where swarms of minnows show their little heads,
 Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the streams,
 To taste the luxury of sunny beams
 Temper'd with coolness. How they ever wrestle 75
 With their own sweet delight, and ever nestle
 Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand.
 If you but scantily hold out the hand,

That very instant not one will remain;
 But turn your eye, and they are there again. 80
 The ripples seem right glad to reach those cresses,
 And cool themselves among the em'rald tresses;
 The while they cool themselves, they freshness give,
 And moisture, that the bowery green may live:
 So keeping up an interchange of favours, 85
 Like good men in the truth of their behaviours[.]
 Sometimes goldfinches one by one will drop
 From low hung branches; little space they stop;
 But sip, and twitter, and their feathers sleek;
 Then off at once, as in a wanton freak: 90
 Or perhaps, to show their black, and golden wings
 Pausing upon their yellow flutterings.
 Were I in such a place, I sure should pray
 That nought less sweet, might call my thoughts away,
 Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown 95
 Fanning away the dandelion's down;
 Than the light music of her nimble toes
 Patting against the sorrel as she goes.
 How she would start, and blush, thus to be caught
 Playing in all her innocence of thought. 100
 O let me lead her gently o'er the brook,
 Watch her half-smiling lips, and downward look;
 O let me for one moment touch her wrist;
 Let me one moment to her breathing list;
 And as she leaves me may she often turn 105
 Her fair eyes looking through her locks auburne.
 What next? A tuft of evening primroses,
 O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes;
 O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,
 But that 'tis ever startled by the leap 110
 Of buds into ripe flowers; or by the flitting
 Of diverse moths, that aye their rest are quitting;
 Or by the moon lifting her silver rim
 Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim
 Coming into the blue with all her light. 115
 O Maker of sweet poets, dear delight
 Of this fair world, and all its gentle livers;
 Spangler of clouds, halo of crystal rivers,
 Mingler with leaves, and dew and tumbling streams,
 Closer of lovely eyes to lovely dreams, 120
 Lover of loneliness, and wandering,
 Of upcast eye, and tender pondering!
 Thee must I praise above all other glories
 That smile us on to tell delightful stories.

For what has made the sage or poet write 125
 But the fair paradise of Nature's light?
 In the calm grandeur of a sober line,
 We see the waving of the mountain pine;
 And when a tale is beautifully staid,
 We feel the safety of a hawthorn glade: 130
 When it is moving on luxurious wings,
 The soul is lost in pleasant smotherings:
 Fair dewy roses brush against our faces,
 And flowering laurels spring from diamond vases;
 O'erhead we see the jasmine and sweet briar, 135
 And bloomy grapes laughing from green attire;
 While at our feet, the voice of crystal bubbles
 Charms us at once away from all our troubles:
 So that we feel uplifted from the world,
 Walking upon the white clouds wreath'd and curl'd. 140
 So felt he, who first told, how Psyche went
 On the smooth wind to realms of wonderment;
 What Psyche felt, and Love, when their full lips
 First touch'd; what amorous and fondling nips
 They gave each other's cheeks; with all their sighs, 145
 And how they kist each other's tremulous eyes:
 The silver lamp,—the ravishment,—the wonder—
 The darkness,—loneliness,—the fearful thunder;
 Their woes gone by, and both to heaven upflown,
 To bow for gratitude before Jove's throne. 150

So did he feel, who pull'd the boughs aside,
 That we might look into a forest wide,
 To catch a glimpse of Fawns, and Dryades
 Coming with softest rustle through the trees;
 And garlands woven of flowers wild, and sweet, 155
 Upheld on ivory wrists, or sporting feet:
 Telling us how fair, trembling Syrinx fled
 Arcadian Pan, with such a fearful dread.
 Poor Nymph,—poor Pan,—how did he weep to find,
 Nought but a lovely sighing of the wind 160
 Along the reedy stream; a half heard strain,
 Full of sweet desolation—balmy pain.

What first inspired a bard of old to sing
 Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring?
 In some delicious ramble, he had found 165
 A little space, with boughs all woven round;
 And in the midst of all, a clearer pool
 Than e'er reflected in its pleasant cool,

The blue sky here, and there, serenely peeping
 Through tendril wreaths fantastically creeping. 170
 And on the bank a lonely flower he spied,
 A meek and forlorn flower, with naught of pride,
 Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clearness,
 To woo its own sad image into nearness:
 Deaf to light Zephyrus it would not move; 175
 But still would seem to droop, to pine, to love.
 So while the Poet stood in this sweet spot,
 Some fainter gleamings o'er his fancy shot;
 Nor was it long ere he had told the tale
 Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's bale. 180

Where had he been, from whose warm head out-flew
 That sweetest of all songs, that ever new,
 That aye refreshing, pure deliciousness,
 Coming ever to bless
 The wanderer by moonlight? to him bringing 185
 Shapes from the invisible world, unearthly singing
 From out the middle air, from flowery nests,
 And from the pillowy silkiness that rests
 Full in the speculation of the stars.
 Ah! surely he had burst our mortal bars; 190
 Into some wond'rous region he had gone,
 To search for thee, divine Endymion!

He was a Poet, sure a lover too,
 Who stood on Latmus' top, what time there blew
 Soft breezes from the myrtle vale below; 195
 And brought in faintness solemn, sweet, and slow
 A hymn from Dian's temple; while upswelling,
 The incense went to her own starry dwelling.
 But though her face was clear as infant's eyes,
 Though she stood smiling o'er the sacrifice, 200
 The Poet wept at her so piteous fate,
 Wept that such beauty should be desolate:
 So in fine wrath some golden sounds he won,
 And gave meek Cynthia her Endymion.

Queen of the wide air; thou most lovely queen 205
 Of all the brightness that mine eyes have seen!
 As thou exceedest all things in thy shine,
 So every tale, does this sweet tale of thine.
 O for three words of honey, that I might
 Tell but one wonder of thy bridal night! 210

Where distant ships do seem to show their keels,
 Phoebus awhile delayed his mighty wheels,
 And turned to smile upon thy bashful eyes,
 Ere he his unseen pomp would solemnize.

The evening weather was so bright, and clear, 215
 That men of health were of unusual cheer;
 Stepping like Homer at the trumpet's call,
 Or young Apollo on the pedestal:
 And lovely women were as fair and warm,
 As Venus looking sideways in alarm. 220
 The breezes were ethereal, and pure,
 And crept through half closed lattices to cure
 The languid sick; it cool'd their fever'd sleep,
 And soothed them into slumbers full and deep.

Soon they awoke clear eyed: nor burnt with thirsting 225
 Nor with hot fingers, nor with temples bursting:
 And springing up, they met the wond'ring sight
 Of their dear friends, nigh foolish with delight;
 Who feel their arms, and breasts, and kiss and stare,
 And on their placid foreheads part the hair. 230
 Young men, and maidens at each other gaz'd
 With hands held back, and motionless, amaz'd
 To see the brightness in each others' eyes;
 And so they stood, fill'd with a sweet surprise,
 Until their tongues were loos'd in poesy. 235
 Therefore no lover did of anguish die:
 But the soft numbers, in that moment spoken,
 Made silken ties, that never may be broken.

Cynthia! I cannot tell the greater blisses,
 That follow'd thine, and thy dear shepherd's kisses: 240
 Was there a Poet born?—but now no more,
 My wand'ring spirit must no further soar.—

APPENDIX B:
CALIDORE: A FRAGMENT

YOUNG Calidore is paddling o'er the lake;
His healthful spirit eager and awake
To feel the beauty of a silent eve,
Which seem'd full loath this happy world to leave; 5
The light dwelt o'er the scene so lingeringly.
He bares his forehead to the cool blue sky,
And smiles at the far clearness all around,
Until his heart is well nigh over wound,
And turns for calmness to the pleasant green 10
Of easy slopes, and shadowy trees that lean
So elegantly o'er the waters' brim
And show their blossoms trim.
Scarce can his clear and nimble eye-sight follow
The freaks, and dartings of the black-wing'd swallow, 15
Delighting much, to see it half at rest,
Dip so refreshingly its wings, and breast
'Gainst the smooth surface, and to mark anon,
The widening circles into nothing gone.

And now the sharp keel of his little boat 20
Comes up with ripple, and with easy float,
And glides into a bed of water lillies:
Broad leav'd are they and their white canopies
Are upward turn'd to catch the heavens' dew.
Near to a little island's point they grew; 25
Whence Calidore might have the goodliest view
Of this sweet spot of earth. The bowery shore
Went off in gentle windings to the hoar
And light blue mountains: but no breathing man
With a warm heart, and eye prepared to scan 30
Nature's clear beauty, could pass lightly by
Objects that look'd out so invitingly
On either side. These, gentle Calidore
Greeted, as he had known them long before.

The sidelong view of swelling leafiness, 35
Which the glad setting sun, in gold doth dress;
Whence ever, and anon the jay outsprings,

And scales upon the beauty of its wings.

The lonely turret, shatter'd, and outworn,
Stands venerably proud; too proud to mourn
Its long lost grandeur: fir trees grow around, 40
Aye dropping their hard fruit upon the ground.

The little chapel with the cross above
Upholding wreaths of ivy; the white dove,
That on the windows spreads his feathers light,
And seems from purple clouds to wing its flight. 45

Green tufted islands casting their soft shades
Across the lake; sequester'd leafy glades,
That through the dimness of their twilight show
Large dock leaves, spiral foxgloves, or the glow 50
Of the wild cat's eyes, or the silvery stems
Of delicate birch trees, or long grass which hems
A little brook. The youth had long been viewing
These pleasant things, and heaven was bedewing
The mountain flowers, when his glad senses caught
A trumpet's silver voice. Ah! it was fraught 55
With many joys for him: the warder's ken
Had found white coursers prancing in the glen:
Friends very dear to him he soon will see;
So pushes off his boat most eagerly,
And soon upon the lake he skims along, 60
Deaf to the nightingale's first under-song;
Nor minds he the white swans that dream so sweetly:
His spirit flies before him so completely.

And now he turns a jutting point of land,
Whence may be seen the castle gloomy, and grand: 65
Nor will a bee buzz round two swelling peaches,
Before the point of his light shallop reaches
Those marble steps that through the water dip:
Now over them he goes with hasty trip,
And scarcely stays to ope the folding doors: 70
Anon he leaps along the oaken floors
Of halls and corridors.

Delicious sounds! those little bright-eyed things
That float about the air on azure wings,
Had been less heartfelt by him than the clang 75
Of clattering hoofs; into the court he sprang,
Just as two noble steeds, and palfreys twain,

Were slanting out their necks with loosened rein;
 While from beneath the threat'ning portcullis
 They brought their happy burthens. What a kiss, 80
 What gentle squeeze he gave each lady's hand!
 How tremblingly their delicate ancles spann'd!
 Into how sweet a trance his soul was gone,
 While whisperings of affection
 Made him delay to let their tender feet 85
 Come to the earth; with an incline so sweet
 From their low palfreys o'er his neck they bent:
 And whether there were tears of languishment,
 Or that the evening dew had pearl'd their tresses,
 He feels a moisture on his cheek, and blesses 90
 With lips that tremble, and with glistening eye
 All the soft luxury
 That nestled in his arms. A dimpled hand,
 Fair as some wonder out of fairy land,
 Hung from his shoulder like the drooping flowers 95
 Of whitest Cassia, fresh from summer showers:
 And this he fondled with his happy cheek
 As if for joy he would no further seek;
 When the kind voice of good Sir Clerimond
 Came to his ear, like something from beyond 100
 His present being: so he gently drew
 His warm arms, thrilling now with pulses new,
 From their sweet thrall, and forward gently bending,
 Thank'd heaven that his joy was never ending;
 While 'gainst his forehead he devoutly press'd 105
 A hand heaven made to succour the distress'd;
 A hand that from the world's bleak promontory
 Had lifted Calidore for deeds of glory.
 Amid the pages, and the torches' glare,
 There stood a knight, patting the flowing hair 110
 Of his proud horse's mane: he was withal
 A man of elegance, and stature tall:
 So that the waving of his plumes would be
 High as the berries of a wild ash tree,
 Or as the winged cap of Mercury. 115
 His armour was so dexterously wrought
 In shape, that sure no living man had thought
 It hard, and heavy steel: but that indeed
 It was some glorious form, some splendid weed,
 In which a spirit new come from the skies 120
 Might live, and show itself to human eyes.
 'Tis the far-fam'd, the brave Sir Gondibert,
 Said the good man to Calidore alert;

While the young warrior with a step of grace
Came up,—a courtly smile upon his face, 125
And mailed hand held out, ready to greet
The large-eyed wonder, and ambitious heat
Of the aspiring boy; who as he led
Those smiling ladies, often turned his head
To admire the visor arched so gracefully 130
Over a knightly brow; while they went by
The lamps that from the high-roof'd hall were pendent,
And gave the steel a shining quite transcendent.

Soon in a pleasant chamber they are seated;
The sweet-lipp'd ladies have already greeted 135
All the green leaves that round the window clamber,
To show their purple stars, and bells of amber.
Sir Gondibert has doff'd his shining steel,
Gladdening in the free, and airy feel
Of a light mantle; and while Clerimond 140
Is looking round about him with a fond,
And placid eye, young Calidore is burning
To hear of knightly deeds, and gallant spurning
Of all unworthiness; and how the strong of arm
Kept off dismay, and terror, and alarm 145
From lovely woman: while brimful of this,
He gave each damsel's hand so warm a kiss,
And had such manly ardour in his eye,
That each at other look'd half staringly;
And then their features started into smiles 150
Sweet as blue heavens o'er enchanted isles.

Softly the breezes from the forest came,
Softly they blew aside the taper's flame;
Clear was the song from Philomel's far bower;
Grateful the incense from the lime-tree flower; 155
Mysterious, wild, the far-heard trumpet's tone;
Lovely the moon in ether, all alone:
Sweet too the converse of these happy mortals,
As that of busy spirits when the portals
Are closing in the west; or that soft humming 160
We hear around when Hesperus is coming.
Sweet be their sleep. * * * * *

APPENDIX C:
SPECIMEN OF AN INDUCTION TO A POEM

LO! I must tell a tale of chivalry;
For large white plumes are dancing in mine eye.
Not like the formal crest of latter days:
But bending in a thousand graceful ways; 5
So graceful, that it seems no mortal hand,
Or e'en the touch of Archimago's wand,
Could charm them into such an attitude.
We must think rather, that in playful mood,
Some mountain breeze had turned its chief delight, 10
To show this wonder of its gentle might.
Lo! I must tell a tale of chivalry;
For while I muse, the lance points slantingly
Athwart the morning air: some lady sweet,
Who cannot feel for cold her tender feet,
From the worn top of some old battlement 15
Hails it with tears, her stout defender sent:
And from her own pure self no joy dissembling,
Wraps round her ample robe with happy trembling.
Sometimes, when the good Knight his rest would take,
It is reflected, clearly, in a lake, 20
With the young ashen boughs, 'gainst which it rests,
And th' half seen mossiness of linnets' nests.

Ah! shall I ever tell its cruelty,
When the fire flashes from a warrior's eye,
And his tremendous hand is grasping it, 25
And his dark brow for very wrath is knit?
Or when his spirit, with more calm intent,
Leaps to the honors of a tournament,
And makes the gazers round about the ring
Stare at the grandeur of the ballancing? 30
No, no! this is far off:—then how shall I
Revive the dying tones of minstrelsy,
Which linger yet about lone gothic arches,
In dark green ivy, and among wild larches?
How sing the splendour of the revelries, 35
When but[t]s of wine are drunk off to the lees?
And that bright lance, against the fretted wall,

Beneath the shade of stately banneral,
Is slung with shining cuirass, sword, and shield?
Where ye may see a spur in bloody field. 40
Light-footed damsels move with gentle paces
Round the wide hall, and show their happy faces;
Or stand in courtly talk by fives and sevens:
Like those fair stars that twinkle in the heavens.
Yet must I tell a tale of chivalry: 45
Or wherefore comes that knight so proudly by?
Wherefore more proudly does the gentle knight,
Rein in the swelling of his ample might?

Spenser! thy brows are arched, open, kind,
And come like a clear sun-rise to my mind; 50
And always does my heart with pleasure dance,
When I think on thy noble countenance:
Where never yet was ought more earthly seen
Than the pure freshness of thy laurels green.
Therefore, great bard, I not so fearfully 55
Call on thy gentle spirit to hover nigh
My daring steps: or if thy tender care,
Thus startled unaware,
Be jealous that the foot of other wight
Should madly follow that bright path of light 60
Trac'd by thy lov'd Libertas; he will speak,
And tell thee that my prayer is very meek;
That I will follow with due reverence,
And start with awe at mine own strange pretence.
Him thou wilt hear; so I will rest in hope 65
To see wide plains, fair trees and lawny slope:
The morn, the eve, the light, the shade, the flowers;
Clear streams, smooth lakes, and overlooking towers.

APPENDIX D:
LAMIA

Part I

UPON a time, before the faery broods
Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous woods,
Before King Oberon's bright diadem,
Sceptre, and mantle, clasp'd with dewy gem,
Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns 5
From rushes green, and brakes, and cowslip'd lawns,
The ever-smitten Hermes empty left
His golden throne, bent warm on amorous theft:
From high Olympus had he stolen light,
On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the sight 10
Of his great summoner, and made retreat
Into a forest on the shores of Crete.
For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt
A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt;
At whose white feet the languid Tritons poured 15
Pearls, while on land they wither'd and adored.
Fast by the springs where she to bathe was wont,
And in those meads where sometime she might haunt,
Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,
Though Fancy's casket were unlock'd to choose. 20
Ah, what a world of love was at her feet!
So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat
Burnt from his winged heels to either ear,
That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,
Blush'd into roses 'mid his golden hair, 25
Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.
From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he flew,
Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,
And wound with many a river to its head,
To find where this sweet nymph prepar'd her secret bed: 30
In vain; the sweet nymph might nowhere be found,
And so he rested, on the lonely ground,
Pensive, and full of painful jealousies
Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.
There as he stood, he heard a mournful voice, 35
Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys

All pain but pity: thus the lone voice spake:
 “When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake!
 “When move in a sweet body fit for life,
 “And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife 40
 “Of hearts and lips! Ah, miserable me!”
 The God, dove-footed, glided silently
 Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his speed,
 The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,
 Until he found a palpitating snake, 45
 Bright, and cirque-couchant in a dusky brake.

She was a gordian shape of dazzling hue,
 Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue;
 Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,
 Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barr’d; 50
 And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,
 Dissolv’d, or brighter shone, or interwreathed
 Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries—
 So rainbow-sided, touch’d with miseries,
 She seem’d, at once, some penanced lady elf, 55
 Some demon’s mistress, or the demon’s self.
 Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire
 Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne’s tiar:
 Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet!
 She had a woman’s mouth with all its pearls complete: 60
 And for her eyes: what could such eyes do there
 But weep, and weep, that they were born so fair?
 As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.
 Her throat was serpent, but the words she spake
 Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love’s sake, 65
 And thus; while Hermes on his pinions lay,
 Like a stoop’d falcon ere he takes his prey.

“Fair Hermes, crown’d with feathers, fluttering light,
 “I had a splendid dream of thee last night:
 “I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold, 70
 “Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,
 “The only sad one; for thou didst not hear
 “The soft, lute-finger’d Muses chaunting clear,
 “Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,
 “Deaf to his throbbing throat’s long, long melodious moan. 75
 “I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,
 “Break amorous through the clouds, as morning breaks,
 “And, swiftly as a bright Phoebean dart,
 “Strike for the Cretan isle; and here thou art!
 “Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the maid?” 80

Whereat the star of Lethe not delay'd
 His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired:
 "Thou smooth-lipp'd serpent, surely high inspired!
 "Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,
 "Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise, 85
 "Telling me only where my nymph is fled,—
 "Where she doth breathe!" "Bright planet, thou hast said,"
 Return'd the snake, "but seal with oaths, fair God!"
 "I swear," said Hermes, "by my serpent rod,
 "And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown!" 90
 Light flew his earnest words, among the blossoms blown.
 Then thus again the brilliance feminine:
 "Too frail of heart! for this lost nymph of thine,
 "Free as the air, invisibly, she strays
 "About these thornless wilds; her pleasant days 95
 "She tastes unseen; unseen her nimble feet
 "Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet;
 "From weary tendrils, and bow'd branches green,
 "She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen:
 "And by my power is her beauty veil'd 100
 "To keep it unaffronted, unassail'd
 "By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,
 "Of Satyrs, Fauns, and blear'd Silenus' sighs.
 "Pale grew her immortality, for woe
 "Of all these lovers, and she grieved so 105
 "I took compassion on her, bade her steep
 "Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep
 "Her loveliness invisible, yet free
 "To wander as she loves, in liberty.
 "Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone, 110
 "If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my boon!"
 Then, once again, the charmed God began
 An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran
 Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.
 Ravish'd, she lifted her Circean head, 115
 Blush'd a live damask, and swift-lipping said,
 "I was a woman, let me have once more
 "A woman's shape, and charming as before.
 "I love a youth of Corinth—O the bliss!
 "Give me my woman's form, and place me where he is. 120
 "Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,
 "And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even now."
 The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,
 She breath'd upon his eyes, and swift was seen
 Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on the green. 125
 It was no dream; or say a dream it was,

Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly pass
 Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.
 One warm, flush'd moment, hovering, it might seem
 Dash'd by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he burn'd; 130
 Then, lighting on the printless verdure, turn'd
 To the swoon'd serpent, and with languid arm,
 Delicate, put to proof the lythe Caducean charm.
 So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent,
 Full of adoring tears and blandishment, 135
 And towards her stept: she, like a moon in wane,
 Faded before him, cower'd, nor could restrain
 Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower
 That faints into itself at evening hour:
 But the God fostering her chilled hand, 140
 She felt the warmth, her eyelids open'd bland,
 And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,
 Bloom'd, and gave up her honey to the lees.
 Into the green-recessed woods they flew;
 Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do. 145

Left to herself, the serpent now began
 To change; her elfin blood in madness ran,
 Her mouth foam'd, and the grass, therewith besprent,
 Wither'd at dew so sweet and virulent;
 Her eyes in torture fix'd, and anguish drear, 150
 Hot, glaz'd, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,
 Flash'd phosphor and sharp sparks, without one cooling tear.
 The colours all inflam'd throughout her train,
 She writh'd about, convuls'd with scarlet pain:
 A deep volcanian yellow took the place 155
 Of all her milder-mooned body's grace;
 And, as the lava ravishes the mead,
 Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede;
 Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and bars,
 Eclips'd her crescents, and lick'd up her stars: 160
 So that, in moments few, she was undrest
 Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,
 And rubious-argent: of all these bereft,
 Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.
 Still shone her crown; that vanish'd, also she 165
 Melted and disappear'd as suddenly;
 And in the air, her new voice luting soft,
 Cried, "Lycius! gentle Lycius!"—Borne aloft
 With the bright mists about the mountains hoar
 These words dissolv'd: Crete's forests heard no more. 170

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,
 A full-born beauty new and exquisite?
 She fled into that valley they pass o'er
 Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas' shore;
 And rested at the foot of those wild hills, 175
 The rugged founts of the Peraean rills,
 And of that other ridge whose barren back
 Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,
 South-westward to Cleone. There she stood
 About a young bird's flutter from a wood, 180
 Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,
 By a clear pool, wherein she passioned
 To see herself escap'd from so sore ills,
 While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius!—for she was a maid 185
 More beautiful than ever twisted braid,
 Or sigh'd, or blush'd, or on spring-flowered lea
 Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy:
 A virgin purest lipp'd, yet in the lore
 Of love deep learned to the red heart's core: 190
 Not one hour old, yet of sciential brain
 To unperplex bliss from its neighbour pain;
 Define their pettish limits, and estrange
 Their points of contact, and swift counterchange;
 Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dispart 195
 Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art;
 As though in Cupid's college she had spent
 Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,
 And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

Why this fair creature chose so fairily 200
 By the wayside to linger, we shall see;
 But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse
 And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,
 Of all she list, strange or magnificent:
 How, ever, where she will'd, her spirit went; 205
 Whether to faint Elysium, or where
 Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids fair
 Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly stair;
 Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,
 Stretch'd out, at ease, beneath a glutinous pine; 210
 Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine
 Mulciber's columns gleam in far piazzian line.
 And sometimes into cities she would send
 Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend;

And once, while among mortals dreaming thus, 215
 She saw the young Corinthian Lycius
 Charioting foremost in the envious race,
 Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,
 And fell into a swooning love of him.
 Now on the moth-time of that evening dim 220
 He would return that way, as well she knew,
 To Corinth from the shore; for freshly blew
 The eastern soft wind, and his galley now
 Grated the quaystones with her brazen prow
 In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle 225
 Fresh anchor'd; whither he had been awhile
 To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there
 Waits with high marble doors for blood and incense rare.
 Jove heard his vows, and better'd his desire;
 For by some freakful chance he made retire 230
 From his companions, and set forth to walk,
 Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk:
 Over the solitary hills he fared,
 Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star appeared
 His phantasy was lost, where reason fades, 235
 In the calm'd twilight of Platonic shades.
 Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near—
 Close to her passing, in indifference drear,
 His silent sandals swept the mossy green;
 So neighbour'd to him, and yet so unseen 240
 She stood: he pass'd, shut up in mysteries,
 His mind wrapp'd like his mantle, while her eyes
 Follow'd his steps, and her neck regal white
 Turn'd—syllabbling thus, "Ah, Lycius bright,
 "And will you leave me on the hills alone? 245
 "Lycius, look back! and be some pity shown."
 He did; not with cold wonder fearingly,
 But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice;
 For so delicious were the words she sung,
 It seem'd he had lov'd them a whole summer long: 250
 And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,
 Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,
 And still the cup was full,—while he afraid
 Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid
 Due adoration, thus began to adore; 255
 Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain so sure:
 "Leave thee alone! Look back! Ah, Goddess, see
 "Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee!
 "For pity do not this sad heart belie—
 "Even as thou vanishest so I shall die. 260

“Stay! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay!
 “To thy far wishes will thy streams obey:
 “Stay! though the greenest woods be thy domain,
 “Alone they can drink up the morning rain:
 “Though a descended Pleiad, will not one 265
 “Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune
 “Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine?
 “So sweetly to these ravish’d ears of mine
 “Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst fade
 “Thy memory will waste me to a shade:— 270
 “For pity do not melt!”—“If I should stay,”
 Said Lamia, “here, upon this floor of clay,
 “And pain my steps upon these flowers too rough,
 “What canst thou say or do of charm enough
 “To dull the nice remembrance of my home? 275
 “Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam
 “Over these hills and vales, where no joy is,—
 “Empty of immortality and bliss!
 “Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know
 “That finer spirits cannot breathe below 280
 “In human climes, and live: Alas! poor youth,
 “What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe
 “My essence? What serener palaces,
 “Where I may all my many senses please,
 “And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts appease? 285
 “It cannot be—Adieu!” So said, she rose
 Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to lose
 The amorous promise of her lone complain,
 Swoon’d, murmuring of love, and pale with pain.
 The cruel lady, without any show 290
 Of sorrow for her tender favourite’s woe,
 But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,
 With brighter eyes and slow amenity,
 Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh
 The life she had so tangled in her mesh: 295
 And as he from one trance was wakening
 Into another, she began to sing,
 Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every thing,
 A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,
 While, like held breath, the stars drew in their panting fires 300
 And then she whisper’d in such trembling tone,
 As those who, safe together met alone
 For the first time through many anguish’d days,
 Use other speech than looks; bidding him raise
 His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt, 305
 For that she was a woman, and without

Any more subtle fluid in her veins
 Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same pains
 Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.
 And next she wonder'd how his eyes could miss 310
 Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,
 She dwelt but half retir'd, and there had led
 Days happy as the gold coin could invent
 Without the aid of love; yet in content
 Till she saw him, as once she pass'd him by, 315
 Where 'gainst a column he leant thoughtfully
 At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heap'd
 Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reap'd
 Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before
 The Adonian feast; whereof she saw no more, 320
 But wept alone those days, for why should she adore?
 Lycius from death awoke into amaze,
 To see her still, and singing so sweet lays;
 Then from amaze into delight he fell
 To hear her whisper woman's lore so well; 325
 And every word she spake entic'd him on
 To unperplex'd delight and pleasure known.
 Let the mad poets say whate'er they please
 Of the sweets of Fairies, Peris, Goddesses,
 There is not such a treat among them all, 330
 Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,
 As a real woman, lineal indeed
 From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed.
 Thus gentle Lamia judg'd, and judg'd aright,
 That Lycius could not love in half a fright, 335
 So threw the goddess off, and won his heart
 More pleasantly by playing woman's part,
 With no more awe than what her beauty gave,
 That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.
 Lycius to all made eloquent reply, 340
 Marrying to every word a twinborn sigh;
 And last, pointing to Corinth, ask'd her sweet,
 If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.
 The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness
 Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease 345
 To a few paces; not at all surmised
 By blinded Lycius, so in her comprized.
 They pass'd the city gates, he knew not how
 So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

 As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all, 350
 Throughout her palaces imperial,

And all her populous streets and temples lewd,
 Mutter'd, like tempest in the distance brew'd,
 To the wide-spreaded night above her towers. 355
 Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,
 Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,
 Companion'd or alone; while many a light
 Flared, here and there, from wealthy festivals,
 And threw their moving shadows on the walls,
 Or found them cluster'd in the corniced shade 360
 Of some arch'd temple door, or dusky colonnade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,
 Her fingers he press'd hard, as one came near
 With curl'd gray beard, sharp eyes, and smooth bald crown,
 Slow-stepp'd, and robed in philosophic gown: 365
 Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,
 Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,
 While hurried Lamia trembled: "Ah," said he,
 "Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully?
 "Why does your tender palm dissolve in dew?"— 370
 "I'm wearied," said fair Lamia: "tell me who
 "Is that old man? I cannot bring to mind
 "His features:—Lycius! wherefore did you blind
 "Yourself from his quick eyes?" Lycius replied,
 "'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide 375
 "And good instructor; but to-night he seems
 "The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams.

While yet he spake they had arrived before
 A pillar'd porch, with lofty portal door,
 Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor glow 380
 Reflected in the slabbed steps below,
 Mild as a star in water; for so new,
 And so unsullied was the marble hue,
 So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,
 Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine 385
 Could e'er have touch'd there. Sounds Aeolian
 Breath'd from the hinges, as the ample span
 Of the wide doors disclos'd a place unknown
 Some time to any, but those two alone,
 And a few Persian mutes, who that same year 390
 Were seen about the markets: none knew where
 They could inhabit; the most curious
 Were foil'd, who watch'd to trace them to their house:
 And but the flitter-winged verse must tell,
 For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel, 395

'Twould humour many a heart to leave them thus,
Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

Part 2

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,
Is—Love, forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust;
Love in a palace is perhaps at last
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast:—
That is a doubtful tale from faery land, 5
Hard for the non-elect to understand.
Had Lycius liv'd to hand his story down,
He might have given the moral a fresh frown,
Or clench'd it quite: but too short was their bliss
To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft voice hiss. 10
Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,
Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,
Hover'd and buzz'd his wings, with fearful roar,
Above the lintel of their chamber door,
And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor. 15

For all this came a ruin: side by side
They were enthroned, in the even tide,
Upon a couch, near to a curtaining
Whose airy texture, from a golden string,
Floated into the room, and let appear 20
Unveil'd the summer heaven, blue and clear,
Betwixt two marble shafts:—there they reposed,
Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids closed,
Saving a tythe which love still open kept,
That they might see each other while they almost slept; 25
When from the slope side of a suburb hill,
Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill
Of trumpets—Lycius started—the sounds fled,
But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.
For the first time, since first he harbour'd in 30
That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,
His spirit pass'd beyond its golden bourn
Into the noisy world almost forsworn.
The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,
Saw this with pain, so arguing a want 35
Of something more, more than her empery
Of joys; and she began to moan and sigh
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well
That but a moment's thought is passion's passing bell.
“Why do you sigh, fair creature?” whisper'd he: 40

“Why do you think?” return’d she tenderly:
 “You have deserted me;—where am I now?
 “Not in your heart while care weighs on your brow:
 “No, no, you have dismiss’d me; and I go
 “From your breast houseless: ay, it must be so.” 45
 He answer’d, bending to her open eyes,
 Where he was mirror’d small in paradise,
 “My silver planet, both of eve and morn!
 “Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,
 “While I am striving how to fill my heart 50
 “With deeper crimson, and a double smart?
 “How to entangle, trammel up and snare
 “Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there
 “Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose?
 “Ay, a sweet kiss—you see your mighty woes. 55
 “My thoughts! shall I unveil them? Listen then!
 “What mortal hath a prize, that other men
 “May be confounded and abash’d withal,
 “But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestic,
 “And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice 60
 “Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth’s voice.
 “Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,
 “While through the thronged streets your bridal car
 “Wheels round its dazzling spokes.”—The lady’s cheek
 Trembled; she nothing said, but, pale and meek, 65
 Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain
 Of sorrows at his words; at last with pain
 Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,
 To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,
 Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim 70
 Her wild and timid nature to his aim:
 Besides, for all his love, in self despite,
 Against his better self, he took delight
 Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.
 His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue 75
 Fierce and sanguineous as ’twas possible
 In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.
 Fine was the mitigated fury, like
 Apollo’s presence when in act to strike
 The serpent—Ha, the serpent! certes, she 80
 Was none. She burnt, she lov’d the tyranny,
 And, all subdued, consented to the hour
 When to the bridal he should lead his paramour.
 Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,
 “Sure some sweet name thou hast, though, by my truth, 85
 “I have not ask’d it, ever thinking thee

“Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,
 “As still I do. Hast any mortal name,
 “Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?
 “Or friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth, 90
 “To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth?”
 “I have no friends,” said Lamia, “no, not one;
 “My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:
 “My parents’ bones are in their dusty urns
 “Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns, 95
 “Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save me,
 “And I neglect the holy rite for thee.
 “Even as you list invite your many guests;
 “But if, as now it seems, your vision rests
 “With any pleasure on me, do not bid 100
 “Old Apollonius—from him keep me hid.”
 Lycius, perplex’d at words so blind and blank,
 Made close inquiry; from whose touch she shrank,
 Feigning a sleep; and he to the dull shade
 Of deep sleep in a moment was betray’d. 105

It was the custom then to bring away
 The bride from home at blushing shut of day,
 Veil’d, in a chariot, heralded along
 By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage song,
 With other pageants: but this fair unknown 110
 Had not a friend. So being left alone,
 (Lycius was gone to summon all his kin)
 And knowing surely she could never win
 His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,
 She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress 115
 The misery in fit magnificence.
 She did so, but ’tis doubtful how and whence
 Came, and who were her subtle servitors.
 About the halls, and to and from the doors,
 There was a noise of wings, till in short space 120
 The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-arched grace.
 A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone
 Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan
 Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might fade.
 Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade 125
 Of palm and plantain, met from either side,
 High in the midst, in honour of the bride:
 Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,
 From either side their stems branch’d one to one
 All down the aisled place; and beneath all 130
 There ran a stream of lamps straight on from wall to wall.

So canopied, lay an untasted feast
 Teeming with odours. Lamia, regal drest,
 Silently paced about, and as she went,
 In pale contented sort of discontent, 135
 Mission'd her viewless servants to enrich
 The fretted splendour of each nook and niche.
 Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at first,
 Came jasper pannels; then, anon, there burst
 Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees, 140
 And with the larger wove in small intricacies.
 Approving all, she faded at self-will,
 And shut the chamber up, close, hush'd and still,
 Complete and ready for the revels rude,
 When dreadful guests would come to spoil her solitude. 145

The day appear'd, and all the gossip rout.
 O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout
 The silent-blessing fate, warm cloister'd hours,
 And show to common eyes these secret bowers?
 The herd approach'd; each guest, with busy brain, 150
 Arriving at the portal, gaz'd amain,
 And enter'd marveling: for they knew the street,
 Remember'd it from childhood all complete
 Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen
 That royal porch, that high-built fair demesne; 155
 So in they hurried all, maz'd, curious and keen:
 Save one, who look'd thereon with eye severe,
 And with calm-planted steps walk'd in austere;
 'Twas Apollonius: something too he laugh'd,
 As though some knotty problem, that had daft 160
 His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,
 And solve and melt:—'twas just as he foresaw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule
 His young disciple. "'Tis no common rule,
 "Lycius," said he, "for uninvited guest 165
 "To force himself upon you, and infest
 "With an unbidden presence the bright throng
 "Of younger friends; yet must I do this wrong,
 "And you forgive me." Lycius blush'd, and led
 The old man through the inner doors broad-spread; 170
 With reconciling words and courteous mien
 Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,
 Fill'd with pervading brilliance and perfume:

Before each lucid pannel fuming stood 175
 A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,
 Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,
 Whose slender feet wide-swerv'd upon the soft
 Wool-woofed carpets: fifty wreaths of smoke
 From fifty censers their light voyage took 180
 To the high roof, still mimick'd as they rose
 Along the mirror'd walls by twin-clouds odorous.
 Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats insphered,
 High as the level of a man's breast rear'd
 On libbard's paws, upheld the heavy gold 185
 Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told
 Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine
 Came from the gloomy tun with merry shine.
 Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,
 Each shrining in the midst the image of a God. 190

When in an antichamber every guest
 Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure press'd,
 By minist'ring slaves, upon his hands and feet,
 And fragrant oils with ceremony meet
 Pour'd on his hair, they all mov'd to the feast 195
 In white robes, and themselves in order placed
 Around the silken couches, wondering
 Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of wealth could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,
 While fluent Greek a vowel'd undersong 200
 Kept up among the guests discoursing low
 At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow;
 But when the happy vintage touch'd their brains,
 Louder they talk, and louder come the strains
 Of powerful instruments:—the gorgeous dyes, 205
 The space, the splendour of the draperies,
 The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,
 Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,
 Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,
 And every soul from human trammels freed, 210
 No more so strange; for merry wine, sweet wine,
 Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too divine.
 Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height;
 Flush'd were their cheeks, and bright eyes double bright:
 Garlands of every green, and every scent 215
 From vales deflower'd, or forest-trees branch rent,
 In baskets of bright osier'd gold were brought
 High as the handles heap'd, to suit the thought

Of every guest; that each, as he did please,
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillow'd at his ease. 220

What wreath for Lamia? What for Lycius?
What for the sage, old Apollonius?
Upon her aching forehead be there hung
The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue;
And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him 225
The thyrsus, that his watching eyes may swim
Into forgetfulness; and, for the sage,
Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage
War on his temples. Do not all charms fly
At the mere touch of cold philosophy? 230
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:
We know her woof, her texture; she is given
In the dull catalogue of common things.
Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line, 235
Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine—
Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made
The tender-person'd Lamia melt into a shade.

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,
Scarce saw in all the room another face, 240
Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took
Full brimm'd, and opposite sent forth a look
'Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance
From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,
And pledge him. The bald-head philosopher 245
Had fix'd his eye, without a twinkle or stir
Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,
Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her sweet pride.
Lycius then press'd her hand, with devout touch,
As pale it lay upon the rosy couch: 250
'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins;
Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains
Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.
"Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost thou start?
"Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia answer'd not. 255
He gaz'd into her eyes, and not a jot
Own'd they the lovelorn piteous appeal:
More, more he gaz'd: his human senses reel:
Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs;
There was no recognition in those orbs. 260
"Lamia!" he cried—and no soft-toned reply.
The many heard, and the loud revelry

Grew hush; the stately music no more breathes;
 The myrtle sicken'd in a thousand wreaths.
 By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure ceased; 265
 A deadly silence step by step increased,
 Until it seem'd a horrid presence there,
 And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.
 "Lamia!" he shriek'd; and nothing but the shriek
 With its sad echo did the silence break. 270
 "Begone, foul dream!" he cried, gazing again
 In the bride's face, where now no azure vein
 Wander'd on fair-spaced temples; no soft bloom
 Misted the cheek; no passion to illumine
 The deep-recessed vision:—all was blight; 275
 Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly white.
 "Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless man!
 "Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous ban
 "Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images
 "Here represent their shadowy presences, 280
 "May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn
 "Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,
 "In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright
 "Of conscience, for their long offended might,
 "For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries, 285
 "Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.
 "Corinthians! look upon that gray-beard wretch!
 "Mark how, possess'd, his lashless eyelids stretch
 "Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!
 "My sweet bride withers at their potency." 290
 "Fool!" said the sophist, in an under-tone
 Gruff with contempt; which a death-nighing moan
 From Lycius answer'd, as heart-struck and lost,
 He sank supine beside the aching ghost.
 "Fool! Fool!" repeated he, while his eyes still 295
 Relented not, nor mov'd; "from every ill
 "Of life have I preserv'd thee to this day,
 "And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey?
 Then Lamia breath'd death breath; the sophist's eye,
 Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly, 300
 Keen, cruel, perceant, stinging: she, as well
 As her weak hand could any meaning tell,
 Motion'd him to be silent; vainly so,
 He look'd and look'd again a level—No!
 "A Serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said, 305
 Than with a frightful scream she vanished:
 And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,
 As were his limbs of life, from that same night.

On the high couch he lay!—his friends came round—
Supported him—no pulse, or breath they found,
And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body wound.

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APPENDIX E:
TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees, 5
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease, 10
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind; 15
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook; 20
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day, 25
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn; 30
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

APPENDIX F:
ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singing of summer in full-throated ease. 10

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provencal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim: 20

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, 25
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. 30

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night, 35

And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways. 40

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; 45
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path 65
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades 75
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

80

APPENDIX G:
ODE TO PSYCHE

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung
 By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,
 And pardon that thy secrets should be sung
 Even into thine own soft-conched ear:
 Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see 5
 The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes?
 I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,
 And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,
 Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side
 In deepest grass, beneath the whisp'ring roof 10
 Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran
 A brooklet, scarce espied:
 'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed,
 Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,
 They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass; 15
 Their arms embraced, and their pinions too;
 Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade adieu,
 As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,
 And ready still past kisses to outnumber
 At tender eye-dawn of aureorean love: 20
 The winged boy I knew;
 But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?
 His Psyche true!

O latest born and loveliest vision far
 Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy! 25
 Fairer than Phoebe's sapphire-region'd star,
 Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky;
 Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,
 Nor altar heap'd with flowers;
 Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan 30
 Upon the midnight hours;
 No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet
 From chain-swung censer teeming;
 No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
 Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming. 35

O brightest! though too late for antique vows,

Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,
 When holy were the haunted forest boughs,
 Holy the air, the water, and the fire;
 Yet even in these days so far retir'd 40
 From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,
 Fluttering among the faint Olympians,
 I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.
 So let me be thy choir, and make a moan
 Upon the midnight hours; 45
 Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet
 From swung censer teeming;
 Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat
 Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane 50
 In some untrodden region of my mind,
 Where branched thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,
 Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:
 Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd trees
 Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep; 55
 And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
 The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep;
 And in the midst of this wide quietness
 A rosy sanctuary will I dress
 With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain, 60
 With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
 With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
 Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same:
 And there shall be for thee all soft delight
 That shadowy thought can win, 65
 A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
 To let the warm Love in!

APPENDIX H:
ODE ON INDOLENCE

One morn before me were three figures seen,
 With bowèd necks, and joinèd hands, side-faced;
And one behind the other stepp'd serene,
 In placid sandals, and in white robes graced;
 They pass'd, like figures on a marble urn, 5
 When shifted round to see the other side;
They came again; as when the urn once more
 Is shifted round, the first seen shades return;
 And they were strange to me, as may betide
With vases, to one deep in Phidian lore. 10

How is it, Shadows! that I knew ye not?
 How came ye muffled in so hush a mask?
Was it a silent deep-disguisèd plot
 To steal away, and leave without a task
 My idle days? Ripe was the drowsy hour; 15
 The blissful cloud of summer-indolence
Benumb'd my eyes; my pulse grew less and less;
 Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath no flower:
 O, why did ye not melt, and leave my sense
Unhaunted quite of all but—nothingness? 20

A third time pass'd they by, and, passing, turn'd
 Each one the face a moment whiles to me;
Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd
 And ached for wings, because I knew the three;
 The first was a fair Maid, and Love her name; 25
 The second was Ambition, pale of cheek,
And ever watchful with fatiguèd eye;
 The last, whom I love more, the more of blame
 Is heap'd upon her, maiden most unmeek,—
I knew to be my demon Poesy. 30

They faded, and, forsooth! I wanted wings:
 O folly! What is Love? and where is it?
And for that poor Ambition! it springs
 From a man's little heart's short fever-fit;
 For Poesy!—no,—she has not a joy,— 35

At least for me,—so sweet as drowsy noons,
And evenings steep'd in honey'd indolence;
O, for an age so shelter'd from annoy,
That I may never know how change the moons,
Or hear the voice of busy common-sense! 40

And once more came they by:—alas! wherefore?
My sleep had been embroider'd with dim dreams;
My soul had been a lawn besprinkled o'er
With flowers, and stirring shades, and baffled beams:
The morn was clouded, but no shower fell, 45
Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears of May;
The open casement press'd a new-leaved vine,
Let in the budding warmth and throstle's lay;
O Shadows! 'twas a time to bid farewell!
Upon your skirts had fallen no tears of mine. 50

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot raise
My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass;
For I would not be dieted with praise,
A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce!
Fade softly from my eyes, and be once more 55
In masque-like figures on the dreamy urn;
Farewell! I yet have visions for the night,
And for the day faint visions there is store;
Vanish, ye Phantoms! from my idle spright,
Into the clouds, and never more return! 60

APPENDIX I:
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-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape 5
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? 10

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 15
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! 20

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! 25
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. 30

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, 35

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. 40

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! 45

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. 50

APPENDIX J:
ODE ON MELANCHOLY

NO, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolfs-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries, 5
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul. 10

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose, 15
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes. 20

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight 25
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung. 30