

# DOWNLOAD PDF POWERFUL EMOTIONS RECOLLECTED IN TRANQUILITY

## Chapter 1 : William Wordsworth quote: Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes

*"Emotion Recollected in Tranquility" In the Preface to Lyrical Ballads Wordsworth explains his own take on his theory of emotions. One of his theories is that when writing a composition, which will recollect and recreate a powerful emotion, the writer must first be in a tranquil state of mind.*

Sunday, March 20, "Emotion recollected in tranquility" The above quote is from Wordsworth, from the preface to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads A fuller quote is that a poem, though a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," nevertheless "takes its origin from emotions recollected in tranquility. Though the two men shared very different sensibilities, Tynan had always esteemed Lewis, and, in the s, when Tynan produced a television program on the arts, he seems to have induced Lewis to appear on a program entitled "Eros in the Arts. Sex in Western Society, "which came to be seen as something of a manifesto for a permissive society" has not survived, but there is a transcript, a portion of which was reproduced in the TLS piece. Wayland asked Lewis whether literature could not have as one of its "intentions" "the arousing of thoughts of lust. Of course, he wrote the seminal work on medieval love poetry, The Allegory of Love. Thus, the lovely photograph at the top of a monument to Lewis, in Belfast. One of the predominant aims of poetry is to delight with its imitations, which appeal to the imagination, indeed to the passions. If we are reading a thrilling battle scene, e. The latter would be an aim of rhetoric, which is to "convince. The powerful emotion we may feel from a poem or another piece of literature is only the basic stage of our reaction; it should be followed by reflection on the causes of our feeling and of the situation the poet is describing. In the end, the effect should be one of "edifying delight" erbauliches Ergetzen. Wordsworth was encouraging poets to lay aside conventional poetic and rhetorical language and to search their hearts for the right expression. Bodmer also thought that poets should write "from the heart" and from experience, but he his conception of experience was one mediated by the writings of the best poets. Thus, if you wanted to learn about the emotions, indeed, if you wanted to find out how you "should" feel about things, your best guide would be writers like Ovid or Homer. Feelings had not yet been "naturalized" this early in the 18th century. That ordinary people had feelings and that these should become subjects of artistic representation were new concepts, and a vocabulary had to be invented to write about them. Part of the process was the "dialogue" between individuals and the natural world, as numerous poets took walks or imaginative ones in the countryside and explored their reaction to nature. Poetry on sublime subjects the starry skies above expressed awe; graveyard poetry allowed one to feel melancholy; and so on. Still, until Wordsworth and indeed long after , most of this "experiential" poetry was heavily mediated by other poetry. Tischbein, painter of the iconic portrait of Goethe, executed the above painting of that sentimental scene. When he is depressed and becoming suicidal, he reads Ossian, in which the scenes of gloom and doom foreshadow his own end.

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## Chapter 2 : Preface to Lyrical Ballads

*William Wordsworth* "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility." Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility.

How to tell a good poem from a bad poem Posted by Ellen Eldridge on October 20, You know bad poetry Poetry often makes even poets cringe because everyone has seen and heard bad poetry so often that the form itself becomes taboo, and people are prejudiced against it. What ultimately makes a poem bad is the failure of the writer to convey that deep and moving experience to his reader that led him to write the poem. A novelist tells a story and can from time to time lose the reader in the small details; poetry is all detail. The poor poems pull the reader from the picture and leave him hearing a tale rather than being dragged into it. Poor poems bleed all over the reader rather than cut him, exposing his raw emotions about a similar incident. Poor poems relent when they should eviscerate. The problem with poetry The problem with poetry is that it comes from a point of pain that often the poet is still working through. Poetry can soothe the savage beast of experience and yield wisdom, but for wisdom to grow the poet must revise like a hermit crab that trades a smaller shell for its larger one. Clutching the inspiration and practicing the craft of poetry to precision is the process by which poets unleash masterpieces. The rest of us have our hopes raised, our hearts broken and our poems buried. When we do, we choose to either ignore our feeble attempts at conveying a concise moment in time or we choose to ignite our inspiration through rewriting. You know good poetry Simply put, good poems stick with you. Whether a horrid image that shakes your core values or a powerful play on words, good poetry leaves you with a feeling after your eyes leave the page. Your ears reverberate after the narration finishes. If you want the musical accompaniment [click here](#). Can you not feel the torment of choking back the smoke while your house gets engulfed in flames, but your TWO babies need to be rescued? I know, you and every mother, father, aunt and uncle reading this is swearing to yourself that you would carry them both out, summoning some strength that you would have in that moment alone, but I think back to this book I read in middle school. Anyway, the mother is fleeing oppression and literally walking across country with many others. She carried her babies as long as she could and eventually put them down. The image stung me so sharply and hurt so deeply even before I had babies of my own that I just had to stop reading. That is what good poetry does. Keep writing Many of my friends write and publish poetry. I encourage this and I read along, capturing the moments that cut rather than bleed. My advice for writing poetry well is to look at the moment that brought you pain and instead of afflicting your readers with it, while you work your way through to some sort of wisdom, help your readers grow. Wait for the wisdom, then write the poem from the heart, where you slash your reader with the same pain you experienced or inspire them with the same intensity with which you were inspired. Take them through the journey. Share your thoughts on recognizing good poems, and share your experience with writing about emotional journeys. If you plan to publish a book of poetry and want it professionally edited, or if you believe your work is worthy enough of feature in Target Audience Magazine, email me at Ellen [at] EllenEldridge.

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### Chapter 3 : What Does Wordsworth Mean by "Spontaneous Overflow of Powerful feelings" | Literary Article

*To begin with Wordsworth's words, "I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility." At first glance, these two statements seem contradictory but Wordsworth's theory of poetry involved the fusion of the two statements.*

Emotion, Imagination and Complexity The 19th century was heralded by a major shift in the conception and emphasis of literary art and, specifically, poetry. During the 18th century the catchphrase of literature and art was reason. Logic and rationality took precedence in any form of written expression. Ideas of validity and aesthetic beauty were centered around concepts such as the collective "we" and the eradication of passion in human behavior. In all of those ideas about literature were challenged by the publication of Lyrical Ballads, which featured the poetry of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Wordsworth and Coleridge both had strong, and sometimes conflicting, opinions about what constituted well-written poetry. Their ideas were centered around the origins of poetry in the poet and the role of poetry in the world, and these theoretical concepts led to the creation of poetry that is sufficiently complex to support a wide variety of critical readings in a modern context. Wordsworth wrote a preface to Lyrical Ballads in which he puts forth his ideas about poetry. His conception of poetry hinges on three major premises. Wordsworth asserts that poetry is the language of the common man: To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which without any other discipline than that of our daily life we are fitted to take delight, the poet principally directs his attention. Wordsworth eschews the use of lofty, poetic diction, which in his mind is not related to the language of real life. He sees poetry as acting like Nature, which touches all living things and inspires and delights them. Wordsworth calls for poetry to be written in the language of the "common man," and the subjects of the poems should also be accessible to all individuals regardless of class or position. Wordsworth also makes the points that "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: First, some experience triggers a transcendent moment, an instance of the sublime. The senses are overwhelmed by this experience; the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" leaves an individual incapable of articulating the true nature and beauty of the event. It is only when this emotion is "recollected in tranquility" that the poet can assemble words to do the instance justice. It is necessary for the poet to have a certain personal distance from the event or experience being described that he can compose a poem that conveys to the reader the same experience of sublimity. With this distance the poet can reconstruct the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" the experience caused within himself. He uses the language and subjects of the common man to convey his ideas. These lines show that Wordsworth places little stock in the benefit of education or institutionalized wisdom. He implies that any person with exposure to Nature can learn the secrets of the world, regardless of social or economic considerations. In "I wandered lonely as a cloud," Wordsworth uses the sonnet form to express his ideas about poetry being the spontaneous overflow of emotion recollected in tranquility: For oft when on my couch I lie In vacant or in pensive mood, They flash upon that inward eye Which is the bliss of solitude; And then my heart with pleasure fills, And dances with the daffodils. In the poem he meditates on the stars and the light bouncing off waves on the water. He is unable to truly comprehend the beauty and importance of the experience until he is resting afterward, and he is able to reconstruct the event in his mind. This remembrance brings him a wave of emotion, and it is out of this second flood of feeling that the poem is born. Indeed, Wordsworth is continually inspired and led into transcendent moments by his experiences in Nature. These experiences bring to his mind a wide variety of contemplations and considerations that can only be expressed, as he writes in "Expostulation and Reply," in "a wise passiveness" Coleridge did not agree that poetry is the language of the common man. He thought that lowering diction and content simply made it so that the poet had a smaller vocabulary of both words and concepts to draw from. Coleridge focused mainly on imagination as the key to poetry. He divided imagination into two main components: In Biographia Literaria, one of his significant theoretical works, he writes: The

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primary imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite of the eternal act of creation of the infinite I AM. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, coexisting with the conscious will, yet still identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation. The primary imagination is a spontaneous creation of new ideas, and they are expressed perfectly. The secondary imagination is mitigated by the conscious act of imagination; therefore, it is hindered by not only imperfect creation, but also by imperfect expression. To further subdivide the act of imagination, Coleridge introduces his concept of fancy. Fancy is the lowest form of imagination because it "has no other counters to play with but fixities and definites" With fancy there is no creation involved; it is simply a reconfiguration of existing ideas. Rather than composing a completely original concept or description, the fanciful poet simply reorders concepts, putting them in a new and, possibly, fresh relationship to each other. Coleridge also writes that poetry "reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities" Through juxtaposition ideas, concepts, and descriptions are made clear. The more imaginative the juxtaposition is, the more exciting the poem becomes. As with Wordsworth, Coleridge also combines his theoretical ideas in his poetry. While he still holds a reverence for Nature inherent to romantic literature, his poems are not exclusively based around the natural. He makes use of primary imagination in his work, because it is the kind of imagination he values most, and avoids secondary imagination or fancy as much as possible. In Xanadu did Kubla Kahn A stately pleasure dome decree: Where Alph, the sacred river, ran Through caverns measureless to man Down to a sunless sea. The lines have come to Coleridge unbidden, and represents the creation of a previously nonexistent setting. He creates these instances throughout the poem. Coleridge also uses highly imaginative images to create juxtaposition in the poem. He writes, "A sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice! The "reconciliation of opposites" manifests itself in lines such as these. The adjective "sunny" implies warmth, while "ice" is cold. Together they hint at a darker side to the superficially idyllic pleasure dome. The leader of the Mongols is not colloquially thought of as a kind or benevolent man. Coleridge and Wordsworth valued artful poetry. Although they had some different theoretical opinions, both of them succeeded at making poetry that is complex and dense enough to withstand two centuries of analysis, and modern critical practice has not yet fully distilled the potential meaning to be found in their work. It is easy to see how their work places them firmly in the realm of the Romantics, but it is quite difficult to come up with a single form of modern criticism that can fully deal with these two poets. Mimetic forms of criticism, including contemporary Platonists and Aristotelians, could offer observations about how the poetry of Wordsworth seeks to imitate Nature and the effects of Nature on the individual. He works to reconstruct an experience for the reader. Unfortunately, purely mimetic criticism would miss much of the rhetorical devices and aesthetic qualities embedded in the work. Pragmatic forms of criticism, which focus on the rhetorical purpose of the author, could offer insight as to how the poetry of Coleridge and Wordsworth seek to instruct the reader, and could also elucidate the rhetorical structure of their works. Both of the poets seek to reinforce the individual, the glory and value of Nature, and induce revelations in their readers. Also, as with all of the Romantics, Coleridge and Wordsworth are constantly seeking the sublime. The work of Coleridge and Wordsworth is also rhetorically constructed to express their critical theories, which a pragmatic reading of the text would pick up. The expressive forms of criticism could offer valuable insights into the poems of Coleridge and Wordsworth by focusing on the texts as products of the poets. In *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge wrote that a poem must be a cohesive unit, with every part working together to build into a whole Both poets pay close attention to form and diction in their work, and create poems that are independent units of thought. Especially the work of Wordsworth seems to precipitate Marxist criticism, which could provide insight about the elements of class in his poems, and could also discuss the connection between form and content in the poetry. Postmodern critics would especially enjoy looking at the fierce individuality of Coleridge and Wordsworth, who each create their own micronarrative of the world while rejecting the metanarratives of their time. It is impossible to name one form of criticism that could sum them up entirely, because ultimately they are working with a large number of weighty concepts. This is why their poetry is still

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read and analyzed. Since Aristotle claimed in his Poetics that the complexity of a work is directly proportional to the greatness of the work, we have sought out literature that withstands multiple intense readings. Because we can look at the poems of Coleridge and Wordsworth in a large variety of ways, we are constantly finding new meaning, which gives the poetry a re-readability not found in lesser work. Re-readability is the hallmark of good literature and of the sublime. Coleridge and Wordsworth knew this, and they wrote toward that goal.

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## Chapter 4 : William Wordsworth - Wikipedia

*I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does.*

His sister, the poet and diarist Dorothy Wordsworth, to whom he was close all his life, was born the following year, and the two were baptised together. They had three other siblings: Richard, the eldest, who became a lawyer; John, born after Dorothy, who went to sea and died in when the ship of which he was captain, the Earl of Abergavenny, was wrecked off the south coast of England; and Christopher, the youngest, who entered the Church and rose to be Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. He was frequently away from home on business, so the young William and his siblings had little involvement with him and remained distant from him until his death in . His hostile interactions with them distressed him to the point of contemplating suicide. Wordsworth was taught both the Bible and the Spectator, but little else. It was at the school in Penrith that he met the Hutchinsons, including Mary, who later became his wife. She and William did not meet again for another nine years. Wordsworth made his debut as a writer in when he published a sonnet in The European Magazine. He received his BA degree in . In he went on a walking tour of Europe, during which he toured the Alps extensively, and visited nearby areas of France, Switzerland, and Italy. He fell in love with a French woman, Annette Vallon, who in gave birth to their daughter Caroline. The Reign of Terror left Wordsworth thoroughly disillusioned with the French Revolution and the outbreak of armed hostilities between Britain and France prevented him from seeing Annette and his daughter for some years. The purpose of the visit was to prepare Annette for the fact of his forthcoming marriage to Mary Hutchinson. Mary was anxious that Wordsworth should do more for Caroline. In he received a legacy of pounds from Raisley Calvert and became able to pursue a career as a poet. It was also in that he met Samuel Taylor Coleridge in Somerset. The two poets quickly developed a close friendship. Together Wordsworth and Coleridge with insights from Dorothy produced Lyrical Ballads, an important work in the English Romantic movement. The second edition, published in , had only Wordsworth listed as the author, and included a preface to the poems. Wordsworth also gives his famous definition of poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: A fourth and final edition of Lyrical Ballads was published in . He attempted to get the play staged in November, but it was rejected by Thomas Harris, the manager of the Covent Garden Theatre, who proclaimed it "impossible that the play should succeed in the representation". The rebuff was not received lightly by Wordsworth and the play was not published until , after substantial revision. While Coleridge was intellectually stimulated by the journey, its main effect on Wordsworth was to produce homesickness. He wrote a number of other famous poems in Goslar, including "The Lucy poems". In the Autumn of , Wordsworth and his sister returned to England and visited the Hutchinson family at Sockburn. When Coleridge arrived back in England he travelled to the North with their publisher Joseph Cottle to meet Wordsworth and undertake a proposed tour of the Lake District. This was the immediate cause of the siblings settling at Dove Cottage in Grasmere in the Lake District, this time with another poet, Robert Southey nearby. Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey came to be known as the "Lake Poets". On 4 October, following his visit with Dorothy to France to arrange matters with Annette, Wordsworth married his childhood friend Mary Hutchinson. The following year Mary gave birth to the first of five children, three of whom predeceased her and William: John Wordsworth 18 June 1792 Mary Ann Dolan d. Dora Wordsworth 16 August 1793 9 July Married Edward Quillinan in Thomas Wordsworth 15 June 1794 1 December Catherine Wordsworth 6 September 1794 4 June William "Willy" Wordsworth 12 May 1795 Married Fanny Graham and had four children: Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. April Learn how and when to remove this template message Wordsworth had for years been making plans to write a long philosophical poem in three parts, which he intended to call The Recluse. In 1799 he started an autobiographical poem, which he

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referred to as the "poem to Coleridge" and which he planned would serve as an appendix to a larger work called *The Recluse*. In he began expanding this autobiographical work, having decided to make it a prologue rather than an appendix. He completed this work, now generally referred to as the first version of *The Prelude*, in 1805, but refused to publish such a personal work until he had completed the whole of *The Recluse*. The death of his brother John, also in 1805, affected him strongly and may have influenced his decisions about these works. In particular, while he was in revolutionary Paris in 1792, the year-old Wordsworth made the acquaintance of the mysterious traveler John "Walking" Stewart [21] who was nearing the end of his thirty years of wandering, on foot, from Madras, India, through Persia and Arabia, across Africa and Europe, and up through the fledgling United States. *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. Up to this point Wordsworth was known only for *Lyrical Ballads*, and he hoped that this new collection would cement his reputation. Its reception was lukewarm, however. Rydal Mount home to Wordsworth In 1811, he and his family, including Dorothy, moved to Rydal Mount, Ambleside between Grasmere and Rydal Water, where he spent the rest of his life. He did, however, write a poetic Prospectus to "The Recluse" in which he laid out the structure and intention of the whole work. Following the death of his friend the painter William Green in 1810, Wordsworth also mended his relations with Coleridge. Coleridge and Charles Lamb both died in 1834, their loss being a difficult blow to Wordsworth. The following year saw the passing of James Hogg. Despite the death of many contemporaries, the popularity of his poetry ensured a steady stream of young friends and admirers to replace those he lost. He remarked in 1815 that he was willing to shed his blood for the established Church of England, reflected in the *Ecclesiastical Sketches* of 1819. This religious conservatism also colours *The Excursion*, a long poem that became extremely popular during the nineteenth century; it features three central characters, the Wanderer; the Solitary, who has experienced the hopes and miseries of the French Revolution; and the Pastor, who dominates the last third of the poem. In 1813, the Scottish poet and playwright Joanna Baillie reflected on her long acquaintance with Wordsworth. He initially refused the honour, saying that he was too old, but accepted when the Prime Minister, Robert Peel, assured him that "you shall have nothing required of you". Wordsworth thus became the only poet laureate to write no official verses. The sudden death of his daughter Dora in 1841 at the age of only 42 was difficult for the aging poet to take and in his depression, he completely gave up writing new material. His widow Mary published his lengthy autobiographical "poem to Coleridge" as *The Prelude* several months after his death. Though it failed to arouse much interest at that time, it has since come to be widely recognised as his masterpiece. In popular culture [edit] Wordsworth has appeared as a character in works of fiction, including: William Kingsolver's *Mister Christian*.

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### Chapter 5 : Tranquility Quotes - BrainyQuote

*Wordsworth also makes the points that "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility" (). These two points form the basis for Wordsworth's explanation of the process of writing poetry.*

It was published, as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain, how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart. I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that I have pleased a greater number, than I ventured to hope I should please. I should not, however, have requested this assistance, had I not believed that the Poems of my Friend would in a great measure have the same tendency as my own, and that, though there would be found a difference, there would be found no discordance in the colours of our style; as our opinions on the subject of poetry do almost entirely coincide. For to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence, of which I believe it susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined, without pointing out, in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible, that there would be some impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those, upon which general approbation is at present bestowed. It is supposed, that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprizes the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which by the act of writing in verse an Author, in the present day, makes to his Reader; but I am certain, it will appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: I hope therefore the Reader will not censure me, if I attempt to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also, as far as the limits of a preface will permit to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: The principal object, then, which I proposed to myself in these Poems was to chuse incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men; and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: Low and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: I have said that each of these poems has a purpose. I have also informed my

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Reader what this purpose will be found principally to be: The subject is indeed important! To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. In vain to me the smiling mornings shine, And reddening Phoebus lifts his golden fire: The birds in vain their amorous descant join, These ears alas! I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear And weep the more because I weep in vain. Richard West" by Thomas Gray, It will easily be perceived that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics: By the foregoing quotation I have shewn that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to Poetry; and I have previously asserted that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. I will go further. I do not doubt that it may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, I ask what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? He is a man speaking to men: But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Poetry is the image of man and nature. It is far otherwise. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: What then does the Poet? Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after. To this I answer: And with what are they connected? The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of the passions of men. It might be proved that it is impossible. It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? But I might point out various causes why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who is sensible of the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of Poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure. Now, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not in that state succeed each other in accustomed order. But, if the words by which this excitement is produced are in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true, and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language in a certain degree of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old Ballads is very artless; yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion, and, I hope, if the following Poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. If I had undertaken a systematic defence of the theory upon which these poems are written, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; I mean the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it take their origin: It is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not have been a useless employment to have applied this principle to the consideration of metre, and to have shewn that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to have pointed out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary. I have said that Poetry is the spontaneous

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overflow of powerful feelings: In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind and in whatever degree, from various causes is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will upon the whole be in a state of enjoyment. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely, all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling, which will always be found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. I might perhaps include all which it is necessary to say upon this subject by affirming, what few persons will deny, that, of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once. We see that Pope by the power of verse alone, has contrived to render the plainest common sense interesting, and even frequently to invest it with the appearance of passion. I wished to draw attention to the truth that the power of the human imagination is sufficient to produce such changes even in our physical nature as might almost appear miraculous. The truth is an important one; the fact for it is a fact is a valuable illustration of it. And I have the satisfaction of knowing that it has been communicated to many hundreds of people who would never have heard of it, had it not been narrated as a Ballad, and in a more impressive metre than is usual in Ballads. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, sometimes from diseased impulses I may have written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases, from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt, that, in some instances, feelings even of the ludicrous may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an Author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: To this it may be added, that the Reader ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and perhaps in a much greater degree: Long as I have detained my Reader, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to Poetry in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies of which Dr. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the matter expressed in Dr. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses to which Dr. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses: Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an Ape is not a Newton when it is self-evident that he is not a man? I have one request to make of my Reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, "I myself do not object to this style of composition or this or that expression, but to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous. I have therefore to request, that the Reader would abide independently by his own feelings, and that if he finds himself affected he would not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure. If an Author by any single composition has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful

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to consider this as affording a presumption, that, on other occasions where we have been displeased, he nevertheless may not have written ill or absurdly; and, further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce in a high degree to the improvement of our own taste: This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself, I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself; but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that in many cases it necessarily will be so. I know that nothing would have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view as to have shewn of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavoured to recommend: The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect, that, if I propose to furnish him with new friends, it is only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honorable bigotry for the objects which have long continued to please them: There is a host of arguments in these feelings; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow, that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But, would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, I might have removed many obstacles, and assisted my Reader in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible that poetry may give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of my subject I have not altogether neglected; but it has been less my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, than to offer reasons for presuming, that, if the object which I have proposed to myself were adequately attained, a species of poetry would be produced, which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations. From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I have proposed to myself: I here use the word "Poetry" though against my own judgment as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. The earliest Poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events; they wrote naturally, and as men: In succeeding times, Poets, and men ambitious of the fame of Poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect, without having the same animating passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of those figures of speech, and made use of them, sometimes with propriety, but much more frequently applied them to feelings and ideas with which they had no natural connection whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in any situation.

### Chapter 6 : Poetry General | Small Presses

*Please analyse Wordsworth's definition of poetry from his Preface to the "Lyrical Ballads." "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in.*

### Chapter 7 : INKTOBER #Tranquil â€“ Pat's Crafts

*"Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility." - William Wordsworth Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility.*

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### Chapter 8 : Wordsworth and Coleridge: Emotion, Imagination and Complexity

*What author defined poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings from emotions recollected in tranquility"?*

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