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21M.303 Writing in Tonal Forms I
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21M303: Peter Child

Sample Romantic poems for possible use as texts

Lord Byron

TO D. —

In thee, I fondly hop'd to clasp,
A friend whom death alone could sever,
But envy with malignant grasp,
Has torn thee from my breast for ever.

True, she has forc'd thee from my *breast*,
But in my *heart* thou keep'st thy seat;
There, there, thine image still must rest,
Until that heart shall cease to beat.

And when the grave restores her dead,
When life again to dust is given,
On *thy dear* breast I'll lay my head,
Without *thee!* *where* would be *my Heaven?*

Percy Bysshe Shelley

On A Faded Violet.

The odour from the flower is gone
Which like thy kisses breathed on me;
The colour from the flower is flown
Which glowed of thee and only thee!

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,
It lies on my abandoned breast,

And mocks the heart which yet is warm,
With cold and silent rest.

I weep,--my tears revive it not!
I sigh,--it breathes no more on me;
Its mute and uncomplaining lot
Is such as mine should be.

William Blake

The Little Boy Lost

'Father, father, where are you going?
O do not walk so fast!
Speak, father, speak to your little boy,
Or else I shall be lost.'

The night was dark, no father was there,_
The child was wet with dew;_
The mire was deep, and the child did weep,_
And away the vapour flew.

The Sick Rose

O rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night,
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy,
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

Heinrich Heine (trans. Hal Draper)

Nightly I see you in dreams - you speak,
With kindlyness sincerest,
I throw myself, weeping aloud and weak
At your sweet feet, my dearest.

You look at me with wistful woe,
And shake your golden curls;
And stealing from your eyes there flow
The teardrops like to pearls.

You breathe in my ear a secret word,
A garland of cypress for token.
I wake; it is gone; the dream is blurred,
And forgotten the word that was spoken.

Christina Rossetti

Fata Morgana

A blue-eyed phantom far before
Is laughing, leaping toward the sun;
Like lead I chase it evermore,
I pant and run.

It breaks the sunlight bound on bound;
Goes singing as it leaps along
To sheep-bells with a dreamy sound
A dreamy song.

I laugh, it is so brisk and gay;
It is so far before, I weep:
I hope I shall lie down some day,
Lie down and sleep.

Mirage

The hope I dreamed of was a dream,
Was but a dream; and now I wake
Exceeding comfortless, and worn, and old,
For a dream's sake.

I hang my harp upon a tree,
A weeping willow in a lake;
I hang my silenced harp there, wrung and snapt
For a dream's sake.

Lie still, lie still, my breaking heart;
My silent heart, lie still and break:
Life, and the world, and mine own self, are changed
For a dream's sake.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Haroun Al Raschid

One day, Haroun Al Raschid read
A book wherein the poet said:--
"Where are the kings, and where the rest
Of those who once the world possessed?

"They're gone with all their pomp and show,
They're gone the way that thou shalt go.
"O thou who choosest for thy share
The world, and what the world calls fair,

"Take all that it can give or lend,
But know that death is at the end!"
Haroun Al Raschid bowed his head:
Tears fell upon the page he read.

Emily Dickinson

How soft a Caterpillar steps—
I find one on my Hand
From such a velvet world it comes
Such pluses at command

Its soundless travels just arrest
My slow — terrestrial eye
Intent upon its own career
What use has it for me —