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| John Keats (1795–1821).  The Poetical Works of John Keats.  1884. |
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| **Ode to a Nightingale** |
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| |  | | --- | |  | | 1.  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, |  | | Singest of summer in full-throated ease. | *10* | |  |  | | 2.  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* | |  |  | | 3.  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* | |  |  | | 4.  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* | |  |  | | 5.  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* | |  |  | | 6.  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* | |  |  | | 7.  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* | |  |  | | 8.  Forlorn! the very word is like a bell |  | | To toil 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? |  | |