



Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) was an English poet, critic, and philosopher. In the 1790s, Coleridge befriended another young poet, William Wordsworth. Together they wanted to write a new kind of poetry that was informal, used ordinary speech and described everyday situations. This resulted in the production of *Lyrical Ballads*, first published in 1798. This collection of poems is seen as a major turning point in English literature marking the beginning of the English Romantic movement in literature.

Frost at Midnight

[...]

How oft at school, with most believing mind,
 Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
 To watch that fluttering stranger! And as oft
 With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
 Of my sweet birthplace, and the old church-tower
 Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
 From morn to evening all the hot fair-day,
 So sweetly that they stirred and haunted me
 With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
 Most like articulate sounds of things to come!
 So gazed I till the soothing things I dreamt
 Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams!
 And so I brooded all the following morn,
 Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
 Fixed with mock study on my swimming book;
 Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
 A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,
 For still I hoped to see the stranger's face,
 Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
 My playmate when we both were clothed alike!

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
 Whose gentle breathings heard in this deep calm
 Fill up the interspersed vacancies
 And momentary pauses of the thought;
 My babe so beautiful, it fills my heart
 With tender gladness thus to look at thee,
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
 And in far other scenes! For I was reared
 In the great city, pent mid cloisters dim,
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
 But thou, my babe, shalt wander like a breeze
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
 Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds
 Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
 And mountain crags; so shalt thou see and hear
 The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
 Of that eternal language which thy God
 Utters, who from eternity doth teach
 Himself in all, and all things in himself.
 Great universal teacher! he shall mould
 Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

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