

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

PEOPLE ALMOST MENTIONED IN A WEEK: JOHN KEATS¹



JOHN KEATS

**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**

1. The teenage Fanny Brawne was about the same height as Keats, five feet even.






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Table of Altitudes

	Yoda	2 ' 0 "
	Lavinia Warren	2 ' 8 "
	Tom Thumb, Jr.	3 ' 4 "
	Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3 ' 8 "
	Hervé Villechaize ("Fantasy Island")	3 ' 11"
	Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4 ' 0 "
	Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (1)	4 ' 3 "
	Alexander Pope	4 ' 6 "
	Benjamin Lay	4 ' 7 "
	Dr. Ruth Westheimer	4 ' 7 "
	Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")	4 ' 8 "
	Edith Piaf	4 ' 8 "
	Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4 ' 8 "
	Linda Hunt	4 ' 9 "
	Queen Victoria as adult	4 ' 10 "
	Mother Teresa	4 ' 10 "
	Margaret Mitchell	4 ' 10 "
	length of newer military musket	4 ' 10"
	Charlotte Brontë	4 ' 10-11"
	Tammy Faye Bakker	4 ' 11"
	Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut	4 ' 11"
	jockey Willie Shoemaker	4 ' 11"
	Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec	4 ' 11"
	Joan of Arc	4 ' 11"
	Bonnie Parker of "Bonnie & Clyde"	4 ' 11"
	Harriet Beecher Stowe	4 ' 11"
	Laura Ingalls Wilder	4 ' 11"
	a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4 ' 11"
	Gloria Swanson	4 ' 11"1/2
	Clara Barton	5 ' 0 "
	Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5 ' 0 "
	Andrew Carnegie	5 ' 0 "
	Thomas de Quincey	5 ' 0 "
	Stephen A. Douglas	5 ' 0 "
	Danny DeVito	5 ' 0 "
	Immanuel Kant	5 ' 0 "



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William Wilberforce	5' 0 "
Dollie Parton	5' 0 "
Mae West	5' 0 "
Pia Zadora	5' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5' 0 "
Dred Scott	5' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5' 0 " (+)
John Keats	5' 3/4 "
Debbie Reynolds (Carrie Fisher's mother)	5' 1 "
Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher)	5' 1 "
Bette Midler	5' 1 "
Dudley Moore	5' 2 "
Paul Simon (of Simon & Garfunkel)	5' 2 "
Honore de Balzac	5' 2 "
Sally Field	5' 2 "
Jemmy Button	5' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5' 2 "
William Walker	5' 2 "
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5' 2 "
length of older military musket	5' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5' 2 1/2 "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5' 2 1/2 "
Francis of Assisi	5' 3 "
Voltaire	5' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5' 3 "
The Reverend Gilbert White	5' 3 "
Nikita Khrushchev	5' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3 "
Truman Capote	5' 3 "
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5' 3 "
Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5' 4 "





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Francisco Franco	5' 4 "
President James Madison	5' 4 "
Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5' 4 "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 "
Pablo Picasso	5' 4 "
Truman Capote	5' 4 "
Queen Elizabeth	5' 4 "
Ludwig van Beethoven	5' 4 "
Typical Homo Erectus	5' 4 "
typical Neanderthal adult male	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
comte de Buffon	5' 5 " (-)
Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5' 5 "
Charles Manson	5' 5 "
Audie Murphy	5' 5 "
Harry Houdini	5' 5 "
Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5' 5 "
Marilyn Monroe	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "
T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "
average runaway male American slave	5' 5-6 "
Charles Dickens	5' 6? "
President Benjamin Harrison	5' 6 "
President Martin Van Buren	5' 6 "
James Smithson	5' 6 "
Louisa May Alcott	5' 6 "
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Napoleon Bonaparte	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Emily Brontë	5' 6-7 "
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5' ? "
average height, seaman of 1812	5' 6.85 "
Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5' 7 "
minimum height, British soldier	5' 7 "
President John Adams	5' 7 "
President John Quincy Adams	5' 7 "
President William McKinley	5' 7 "
"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5' 7 "
Ulysses S. Grant	5' 7 "
Henry Thoreau	5' 7 "
the average male of Thoreau's period	5' 7 ¹ / ₂ "



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Edgar Allan Poe	5' 8"
President Ulysses S. Grant	5' 8"
President William H. Harrison	5' 8"
President James Polk	5' 8"
President Zachary Taylor	5' 8"
average height, soldier of 1812	5' 8.35"
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5' 8 ¹ / ₂ "
President Millard Fillmore	5' 9"
President Harry S. Truman	5' 9"
President Jimmy Carter	5' 9 ¹ / ₂ "
Herman Melville	5' 9 ³ / ₄ "
Calvin Coolidge	5' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5' 10"
Thomas Paine	5' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5' 10"
Reverend Henry C. Wright	5' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots	5' 11"
Sojourner Truth	5' 11"
President Grover Cleveland	5' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5' 11"
President Richard Milhous Nixon	5' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6'
Frederick Douglass	6' (-)
Anthony Burns	6' 0"
Waldo Emerson	6' 0"
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6' 0"
David Walker	6' 0"
Sarah F. Wakefield	6' 0"
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6' 0"
President James Buchanan	6' 0"
President Gerald R. Ford	6' 0"



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President James Garfield	6' 0"
President Warren Harding	6' 0"
President John F. Kennedy	6' 0"
President James Monroe	6' 0"
President William H. Taft	6' 0"
President John Tyler	6' 0"
John Brown	6' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6' 1"
President Ronald Reagan	6' 1"
Venture Smith	6' 1 ¹ / ₂ "
John Camel Heenan	6' 2"
Crispus Attucks	6' 2"
President Chester A. Arthur	6' 2"
President George Bush, Senior	6' 2"
President Franklin D. Roosevelt	6' 2"
President George Washington	6' 2"
Gabriel Prosser	6' 2"
Dangerfield Newby	6' 2"
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6' 2"
President Bill Clinton	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Thomas Jefferson	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6' 3"
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6' 3"
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6' 3 ¹ / ₄ "
President Abraham Lincoln	6' 4"
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6' 4"
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6' 4"
Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4" (?)
William Buckley	6' 4-7"
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5"
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7"
William "Dwarf Billy" Burley	6' 7"
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	6' 7"
Thomas Jefferson (the statue)	7' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840	8'
Anna Haining Swan	8' 1"





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A WEEK: We read that Aristæus "obtained of Jupiter and Neptune, that the pestilential heat of the dog-days, wherein was great mortality, should be mitigated with wind." This is one of those dateless benefits conferred on man, which have no record in our vulgar day, though we still find some similitude to them in our dreams, in which we have a more liberal and juster apprehension of things, unconstrained by habit, which is then in some measure put off, and divested of memory, which we call history. According to fable, when the island of Ægina was depopulated by sickness, at the instance of Æacus, Jupiter turned the ants into men, that is, as some think, he made men of the inhabitants who lived meanly like ants. This is perhaps the fullest history of those early days extant. The fable which is naturally and truly composed, so as to satisfy the imagination, ere it addresses the understanding, beautiful though strange as a wild-flower, is to the wise man an apothegm, and admits of his most generous interpretation. When we read that Bacchus made the Tyrrhenian mariners mad, so that they leapt into the sea, mistaking it for a meadow full of flowers, and so became dolphins, we are not concerned about the historical truth of this, but rather a higher poetical truth. We seem to hear the music of a thought, and care not if the understanding be not gratified. For their beauty, consider the fables of Narcissus, of Endymion, of Memnon son of Morning, the representative of all promising youths who have died a premature death, and whose memory is melodiously prolonged to the latest morning; the beautiful stories of Phaeton, and of the Sirens whose isle shone afar off white with the bones of unburied men; and the pregnant ones of Pan, Prometheus, and the Sphinx; and that long list of names which have already become part of the universal language of civilized men, and from proper are becoming common names or nouns, – the Sibyls, the Eumenides, the Parcae, the Graces, the Muses, Nemesis, &c. It is interesting to observe with what singular unanimity the farthest sundered nations and generations consent to give completeness and roundness to an ancient fable, of which they indistinctly appreciate the beauty or the truth. By a faint and dream-like effort, though it be only by the vote of a scientific body, the dullest posterity slowly add some trait to the mythus.

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

ENDYMION
JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1513

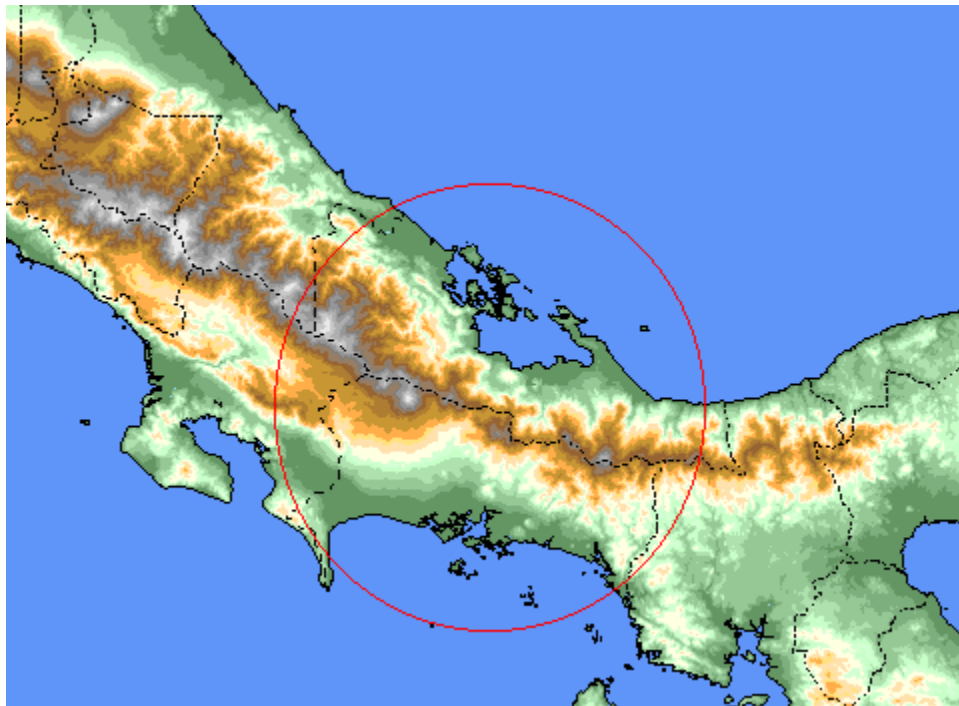
September 25, Sunday or 27, Tuesday (Old Style): Vasco Núñez de Balboa landed at Darién and, crossing the Isthmus of Panama, became the first European to look west from a shore out across the Pacific Ocean. It was a good day. He named it, tamed it, as "pacific":

Much have I traveled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darién.

— John Keats

HOMER

GEORGE CHAPMAN



AMANAPLANACANALPANAMA



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1795

October 31, Saturday: On this day, or, possibly, on the 29th, [John Keats](#) was born in Moorgate, London to Thomas Keats and Frances Jennings Keats.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT






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1811

 The USS *Constitution* went on a two-year cruise to Europe and would then go into the Washington Navy Yard for repairs. Aboard it, Doctor [George Parkman](#) was headed for France (while on the continent he would meet the *Marquis de Lafayette*, Count von Rumford, and the Baron [Georges Cuvier](#)). Meanwhile, [John White Webster](#) would be studying medicine at Guys Hospital in [London](#), where [John Keats](#) was a fellow student.²

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**

2. Keats would graduate as a certified apothecary. Frequent sore throats would lead his physician to prescribe mercury, which at the time had a very general use. The restaurant in Guy’s Hospital –until recently named in Keats’s honor– has been transformed into a McDonalds.

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1815

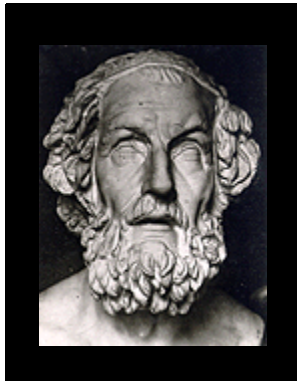
➡ “On first looking into Chapman’s Homer”:

Much have I traveled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
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Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
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— John Keats

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DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.




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1816

 May 5, Sunday: Carl August of Saxe-Weimar granted the 1st [German](#) constitution.

The initial published poem by [John Keats](#), “O Solitude,” appeared in [The Examiner](#).

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

1st day 5 of 5 M 1816 / Our morning Meeting was to me a very good one - Ashort lively testimony from father R - In the Afternoon Silent & rather lean - In the eveng called a little while to My Aunt Martha Mary & Hannah & a few minutes at Br J Rodmans. -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:


JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK


1817

 [John Keats](#)'s POEMS.



 February 5, Wednesday: [Percy Bysshe Shelley](#) met [John Keats](#) and John Hamilton Reynolds at supper with Leigh Hunt.

France introduced a new electoral law limiting franchise and increasing the power of the middle class.

 March 3, Monday: The eastern part of the Mississippi Territory was split off to form the Alabama Territory, with its capital at St. Stephens near Mobile, Alabama.

Congress appointed John Quincy Adams as commissioner to examine and report on the subject of Weights and measures in the United States, and also as to the desirableness of adopting the French system, or some similar one. During the years 1819 and 1820, Adams had the standards employed in the various custom-houses examined, and, in a table accompanying his report, presented in 1821, showed the discrepancies that existed in the different states. He reported unfavorably to the French system, and recommended a more exact conformity with the English system.

President [James Madison](#) vetoed a permanent fund for roads and [canals](#).


POEMS was [John Keats](#)'s initial publication.

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

2nd day 3 of 3 M 1817 / This Afternoon finished & put in the Office a letter which I begun several weeks ago to my frd Hannah Pope - & rec'd one from My dear Mother & Aunt Stanton dated 25 ult.-

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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 December 28, Sunday: [William Wordsworth](#) and [John Keats](#) met for the first time, at the home of [Benjamin Robert Haydon](#) in St. John's Wood near London.



Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*1st day 28 of 12 M / Since Moy [Monthly] Meeting I have had the
Ague in my face & teeth & tho' relieved by the opperation of a
dose of Jalap & Calomel last night - am unfit to attend meeting
today. -*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

NO-ONE'S LIFE IS EVER NOT DRIVEN PRIMARILY BY HAPPENSTANCE



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1818

→ Z's articles on the "Cockney School of Poetry" appeared in Blackwood Magazine, attacking Leigh Hunt, William Hazlitt, [John Keats](#), and eventually [Percy Bysshe Shelley](#).

A scathing review of [Keats](#)'s *ENDYMION* appeared in the Quarterly.



→ January 30, Friday: [John Keats](#) wrote to his friend [John Hamilton Reynolds](#), including with his letter a new sonnet:

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,
Before high-piled books, in character,
Hold like rich garner's the full ripen'd grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love;— then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.



Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*6th day 30 of 1 M / Yesterday Afternoon SUSANNA DAVENPORT
departed this life aged about 79 years. She has long been a fast*



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& long proven friend in our family

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



February 3, Tuesday: Very early on this day, the lower Ohio Valley experienced the harshest winter storm since white settlement had begun in 1788. Dr. Sam Hildreth of Marietta reported a blanket of snow fully 26 inches in depth, undrifted. Severe cold was to follow throughout eastern Ohio, with the Fahrenheit thermometer displaying 20 degrees below 0.

[John Keats](#) wondered, in regard to the work product of [William Wordsworth](#) (whom he had recently met), whether we should allow ourselves to be “bullied into a certain philosophy engendered in the whims of an egotist”?


It may be said that we ought to read our Contemporaries, that Wordsworth &c should have their due from us. but for the sake of a few fine imaginative or domestic passages, are we to be bullied into a certain Philosophy engendered in the whims of an Egotist— Every man has his speculations, but every man does not brood and peacock over them till he makes a false coinage and deceives himself – Many a man can travel to the very bourne of Heaven, and yet want confidence to put down his half seeing.... Poetry should be great & unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul, and does not startle it or amaze it with itself but with its subject. – How beautiful are the retired flowers! how would they lose their beauty were they to throng into the highway crying out, admire me I am a violet! dote upon me I am a primrose! Modern poets differ from the Elizabethans in this.

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

3rd day 3rd of 2nd M 1818 / Set out this morning in a Sleigh in company with Isaac Mitchell Richard Mitchell & their sister Anne & Sister Eliza Rodman for [Providence](#) Quarterly Meeting - We reached [Warren](#) by dinner time, & dined at Cobs Tavern while there it began to Snow, & we rode in an increasing Storm of Wind Rain & Snow - sister E & myself Stopped at O Browns where were soon joined by our dear Acquaintance from Lynn vizt Daniel Johnson Ezra Collins Isaac Bassett & wife & Mary Newhall & Saml Rodman from [New Bedford](#) & several others from this Q[uarternly] Meeting we passed a very pleasant evening after a pretty suffering ride & lodged

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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 April 10, Friday: The head and torso of the [Egyptian](#) statue known then as “younger Memnon” arrived at the British customs office and was declared free from import duties.

The “[Endymion: A Poetic Romance](#)” of the beautiful young 5-foot poet [John Keats](#) –written in April through November of the previous year apparently while in a rural retirement, possibly waiting out the visible stages of VD– found a publisher and provided the British reader with a newer, happier ending for the old story of Circe, Scylla, and [Glaucus](#).

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.



In this 4,000-line-plus novelty, Circe somehow only appeared to have converted Scylla into a horrible monster, and instead actually the lovely maid Scylla, instead of having lost her beauty, had merely drowned. Glaucus consented to Circe’s blandishments until he became aware of her treachery and her cruelty, and of her transactions with her beasts, and then in disgust attempted to escape. His punishment was that for one millennium, in decrepitude and pain, he would collect all bodies of drowned lovers. Returning to the seashore, the first body he discovered was that of his drowned sweetheart Scylla. At the end of this millennium, [Endymion](#) beloved of Selene the moon goddess (or Diana or Cynthia, as Keats has it) appeared to restore life to Scylla and all the other drowned lovers, and to restore to Glaucus his youth.

But who was this Endymion, the rescuer, of whom we have uncovered a reclining Parian marble in the ruins of Hadrian’s villa?³ He had allegedly been a noble shepherd on the Latmos range, inland from the coastal Greek colony of Miletos in Caria in Asia Minor, and at night while he slept his pulchritude or his Calvin Kleins or something had enticed Selene to come down and sneak a kissypoo or fifty kissypoos.⁴ (The Latmus $\Lambda\acute{o}\tau\mu\omicron\varsigma$ range of mountains, and Caria,⁵ the land around the Mæander River,⁶ are not on the map of Turkey anymore under such names, but Miletos $M\acute{\iota}\lambda\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$ is a name that is still present although everybody now lives

3. The villa of the Emperor Hadrian was at Tivoli on the River Tiber some 15 miles upstream from Rome.

4. Some of the Greek fables have Selene bearing a series of 50 children engendered by her sleeping Prince Charming, thus adding an extra-archaic authenticity to the cute phrase “kiss and swell.”

5. The site of one of the accredited “seven wonders” of the ancient world, the structure within which King Mausoleus was able to begin in pomp and ceremony to sleep his long sleep, in 353 BCE, quite as permanently secure from nocturnal emissions as from any nocturnal incursions of the moon goddess — the long vanished structure from which all the “mausoleums” of Sleepy Hollow derive their name.

6. From the oxbows of which, incidentally, the “meanders” of such lazy streams as the Sudbury River and the Concord River derive their name.



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at Palatia or Akköy. –For this had been famous as the hometown of the great western “first natural philosopher” [Thales](#) Θηαλεσ *circa* 624?-546? BCE.) This kissypooing, or something, was said to have reduced this goddess’s boy-toy to a charmed dormitive state in which he dreamed along pleasantly and indefinitely while his flocks, watched over by the gods, prospered:

We see in Endymion the young poet, his fancy and his heart seeking in vain for that which can satisfy them, finding his favourite hour in the quiet moonlight, and nursing there beneath the beams of the bright and silent witness the melancholy and the ardour which consume him. The story suggests aspiring and poetic love, a life spent more in dreams than in reality, and an early and welcome death.

Well, so ’tis said. But I’ll have to add, it sounds more like a ’60s druggie story to me.⁷ Thus we get the “Faithful

7. In his essay on “Behavior” published as part of CONDUCT OF LIFE in 1860, [Waldo Emerson](#) would evidently be making reference to another tradition about this [Endymion](#) figure, for his drowsy shepherd would be not pulchritudinous and supremely kissable but, mysteriously, “much deceived”:

Too weak to win, too fond to shun
The tyrants of his doom,
The much deceived Endymion
Slips behind a tomb.

–Which is of course in distinct opposition to the comment [Henry Thoreau](#) makes about dreaming in “Wednesday” of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#):

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

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*... in dreams we never deceive ourselves,
nor are deceived. ...*
Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*
“Wednesday”

Homer Kelly would have put it differently, but he might have come to a similar conclusion. Looking out at the shining

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Shepherdess” of Fletcher telling:

How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother’s light,
To kiss her sweetest.

Whether this is more the young 19th-Century poetical type or more the young 19th-Century dormitive-virtue type, “His temples bound with poppy,” evidently such a belonged effort of a poem was not well received, for in 1821  when [Percy Bysshe Shelley](#) issued his “*Adonais*, An Elegy on the Death of John Keats,” he would allude to the current myth of the delicacy of genius in this wise.⁸ “The genius of [[Keats](#)] was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful. ... The savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which appeared in the [Quarterly Review](#), produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid [consumption](#) ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgments from more candid critics of the true greatness of his powers were ineffectual to heal the wound wantonly inflicted.”⁹ In fact, this tale of Keats’s vulnerability to criticism would spread so far, perhaps through Lord Byron’s jibes as much as through the anecdotes of [James Henry Leigh Hunt](#), as to find a place in Part I of [Louisa May Alcott](#)’s *LITTLE WOMEN, OR, MEG, JO, BETH AND AMY* in 1868:



Her family and friends administered comfort and commendation liberally. Yet it was a hard time for sensitive, high-spirited Jo, who meant so well and had apparently done so ill. But it did her good, for those whose opinion had real value gave her the criticism which is an author’s best education, and when the first soreness was over, she could laugh at her poor little book, yet believe in it still, and feel herself the wiser and stronger for the buffeting she had received.

“Not being a genius, like Keats, it won’t kill me,” she said stoutly, “and I’ve got the joke on my side, after all, for the parts that were taken straight out of real life are denounced as impossible and absurd, and the scenes that I made up out of my own silly head are pronounced ‘charmingly natural, tender, and true.’ So I’ll comfort myself with that, and when I’m ready, I’ll up again and take another.”

In “[Sunday](#)” of [A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS](#), of course, [Henry Thoreau](#) would incidentally mention this figure as “representative of all promising youths who have died a premature death, and whose memory is melodiously prolonged to the latest morning,”

8. The poem was savaged not only in the [Quarterly Review](#) but also in [Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine](#) and in the [British Critic](#), and it was clear that his critics supposed that this young poet was a dooper since they were encouraging him to return to the apothecary shop from which he had derived inspiration:

... so back to the shop, Mr. John.

9. [Keats](#)’s hemorrhage would occur on February 3, 1820  and his death, in Italy, on February 23, 1821  The “rapid [consumption](#)” mentioned here by [Percy Bysshe Shelley](#) was the last stages of *phthisis*, the 19th-Century term for [TB](#), the disease John had caught from his brother Tom.



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A WEEK: We read that Aristæus "obtained of Jupiter and Neptune, that the pestilential heat of the dog-days, wherein was great mortality, should be mitigated with wind." This is one of those dateless benefits conferred on man, which have no record in our vulgar day, though we still find some similitude to them in our dreams, in which we have a more liberal and juster apprehension of things, unconstrained by habit, which is then in some measure put off, and divested of memory, which we call history. According to fable, when the island of Ægina was depopulated by sickness, at the instance of Æacus, Jupiter turned the ants into men, that is, as some think, he made men of the inhabitants who lived meanly like ants. This is perhaps the fullest history of those early days extant. The fable which is naturally and truly composed, so as to satisfy the imagination, ere it addresses the understanding, beautiful though strange as a wild-flower, is to the wise man an apothegm, and admits of his most generous interpretation. When we read that Bacchus made the Tyrrhenian mariners mad, so that they leapt into the sea, mistaking it for a meadow full of flowers, and so became dolphins, we are not concerned about the historical truth of this, but rather a higher poetical truth. We seem to hear the music of a thought, and care not if the understanding be not gratified. For their beauty, consider the fables of Narcissus, of Endymion, of Memnon son of Morning, the representative of all promising youths who have died a premature death, and whose memory is melodiously prolonged to the latest morning; the beautiful stories of Phaeton, and of the Sirens whose isle shone afar off white with the bones of unburied men; and the pregnant ones of Pan, Prometheus, and the Sphinx; and that long list of names which have already become part of the universal language of civilized men, and from proper are becoming common names or nouns, – the Sibyls, the Eumenides, the Parcae, the Graces, the Muses, Nemesis, &c. It is interesting to observe with what singular unanimity the farthest sundered nations and generations consent to give completeness and roundness to an ancient fable, of which they indistinctly appreciate the beauty or the truth. By a faint and dream-like effort, though it be only by the vote of a scientific body, the dullest posterity slowly add some trait to the mythus.

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and we don't quite know here whether Thoreau is referring to [Endymion](#)'s long sleep, or to [Keats](#)'s early demise due to [tuberculosis](#), or maybe to both Endymion's long dream and Keats's early death. At any rate, this first mention by Thoreau is utterly conventional. One might expect Thoreau to have seized upon such a figure from ancient mythology, later in his literary production, to counterpoise as the antithesis to all his [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) tropes about morning work, waking, alertness, etc.¹⁰ –That will not, however, be a use to which Thoreau will ever put this figure, and instead we will see him developing the figure, in his journal for 1851,  first in the direction of day sleep to make up for the weariness that “comes of obeying his Genius” while burning the midnight oil, and then in the direction of the poser about whether Zhuang Zi was a human being who had dreamed of being a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming that he had become a human being.¹¹



September 12, Friday, 1851: ... After I have spent the greater part of a night abroad in the moonlight I am obliged to sleep enough more the next night to make up for it—Endymionis somnum dormire—to sleep an Endymion sleep as the ancients expressed it. And there is something gained still by thus turning the day into night. Edymion is said to have obtained of Jupiter the privilege of sleeping as much as he would. Let no man be afraid of sleep—if his weariness comes of obeying his Genius. He who has spent the night with the gods sleeps more innocently by day than the sluggard who has spent the day with the satyrss sleeps by night. He who has travelled to fairy-land in the night—sleeps by day more innocently than he who is fatigued by the merely trivial labors of the day sleeps by night. That kind of life which sleeping we dream that we live awake—in our walks by night, we, waking, dream that we live, while our daily life appears as a dream.

— and then in his journal for 1852  [Henry Thoreau](#) will develop this figure in the direction of his work on “Moonlight,” much of it still unpublished.¹²



July 15, Thursday, 1852: ... Morton quotes Wafer as saying of some albinos among the Indians of Darien that “They are quite white, but their whiteness is like that of a horse, quite different from the fair or pale European, as they have not the least tincture of a blush or sanguine complexion. They seldom go abroad in the day time, the sun being disagreeable to them, and causing their eyes, which are weak & poring, to water, especially if it shines towards them; yet they see very well by moon light, from which we call them moon-eyed’. In Drakes Col. of voyages”. Neither in our thoughts in these moonlight walks methinks is there “the least tincture of a blush or sanguine complexion” –but we are perchance intellectually & morally albinos –children of Endymion whose parents have walked much by moonlight. Walking much by moonlight –conversing with the moon –makes us then Albinos. Methinks we should rather represent Endymion in colorless marble –or in the whiteness of marble –than painted of the ruddy color of ordinary youth....

This reference to [Endymion](#) as a blanched statue would of course be a reference to “The Sleeping Endymion,” the ancient Parian¹³ marble presently in the Swedish National Museum in Stockholm.

10. Reminding us of [Thoreau](#)'s narcolepsy, inherited from the Jones side of his family tree, “I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?” from Chapter 2 of [WALDEN](#) and “Only one in a hundred millions is awake to a poetic or divine life.” –A Buddha-movement toward the usage proposed by the young Simone Weil, “Sin is sleep.”
 11. Here is a pre-1855 verse fragment of Walt Whitman's, for a similar comparison with Zhuang Zi's butterfly dream:

I cannot be awake, for nothing looks to me as it did before,
 Or else I am awake for the first time, and all before has been a mean sleep.

I would recommend Burton Watson's “*Qiwulun* or A Treatise on Equalizing (with) All Things,” which you can find in his [THE BASIC WRITINGS OF CHUANG T'ZU](#), New York: Columbia University Press, 1965, page 45.
 12. It is interesting, is it not, that each time [Thoreau](#) mentions this [Endymion](#) figure, over an extended period of time, he makes no reference to his previous manner of use but instead uses it in a quite different way from before?
 13. The island of Páros, or Paroikía, in the Aegean Sea, is composed largely of this white stone.



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ENDYMION: A POETIC ROMANCE.

**“The Stretched Metre Of An Antique Song.”
Inscribed To The Memory Of Thomas Chatterton.**

PREFACE.

Knowing within myself the manner in which this Poem has been produced, it is not without a feeling of regret that I make it public.

What manner I mean, will be quite clear to the reader, who must soon perceive great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt, rather than a deed accomplished. The two first books, and indeed the two last, I feel sensible are not of such completion as to warrant their passing the press; nor should they if I thought a year's castigation would do them any good; — it will not: the foundations are too sandy. It is just that this youngster should die away: a sad thought for me, if I had not some hope that while it is dwindling I may be plotting, and fitting myself for verses fit to live.

This may be speaking too presumptuously, and may deserve a punishment: but no feeling man will be forward to inflict it: he will leave me alone, with the conviction that there is not a fiercer hell than the failure in a great object. This is not written with the least atom of purpose to forestall criticisms of course, but from the desire I have to conciliate men who are competent to look, and who do look with a zealous eye, to the honour of English literature.

The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted: thence proceeds mawkishness, and all the thousand bitters which those men I speak of must necessarily taste in going over the following pages.

I hope I have not in too late a day touched the beautiful mythology of Greece, and dulled its brightness: for I wish to try once more, before I bid it farewell.

Teignmouth,
April 10, 1818.

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ENDYMION

BOOK I



A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
 Its loveliness increases; it will never
 Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
 Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
 A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
 Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
 Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways 10
 Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
 Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
 From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
 Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
 For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
 With the green world they live in; and clear rills
 That for themselves a cooling covert make
 'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,
 Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
 And such too is the grandeur of the dooms 20
 We have imagined for the mighty dead;
 All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
 An endless fountain of immortal drink,
 Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
 For one short hour; no, even as the trees
 That whisper round a temple become soon
 Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
 The passion poesy, glories infinite,
 Haunt us till they become a cheering light 30
 Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
 That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'er-cast,
 They alway must be with us, or we die.



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Therefore, 'tis with full happiness that I
Will trace the story of Endymion.
The very music of the name has gone
Into my being, and each pleasant scene
Is growing fresh before me as the green
Of our own vallies: so I will begin
Now while I cannot hear the city's din; 40
Now while the early budders are just new,
And run in mazes of the youngest hue
About old forests; while the willow trails
Its delicate amber; and the dairy pails
Bring home increase of milk. And, as the year
Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly steer
My little boat, for many quiet hours,
With streams that deepen freshly into bowers.
Many and many a verse I hope to write, 50
Before the daisies, vermeil rimm'd and white,
Hide in deep herbage; and ere yet the bees
Hum about globes of clover and sweet peas,
I must be near the middle of my story.
O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,
See it half finished: but let Autumn bold,
With universal tinge of sober gold,
Be all about me when I make an end.
And now at once, adventuresome, I send
My herald thought into a wilderness:
There let its trumpet blow, and quickly dress 60
My uncertain path with green, that I may speed
Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.



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Upon the sides of Latmos was outspread
A mighty forest; for the moist earth fed
So plenteously all weed-hidden roots
Into o'er-hanging boughs, and precious fruits.
And it had gloomy shades, sequestered deep,
Where no man went; and if from shepherd's keep
A lamb strayed far a-down those inmost glens,
Never again saw he the happy pens 70
Whither his brethren, bleating with content,
Over the hills at every nightfall went.
Among the shepherds, 'twas believed ever,
That not one fleecy lamb which thus did sever
From the white flock, but pass'd unworried
By angry wolf, or pard with prying head,
Until it came to some unfooted plains
Where fed the herds of Pan: ay great his gains
Who thus one lamb did lose. Paths there were many,
Winding through palmy fern, and rushes fenny, 80
And ivy banks; all leading pleasantly
To a wide lawn, whence one could only see
Stems thronging all around between the swell
Of turf and slanting branches: who could tell
The freshness of the space of heaven above,
Edg'd round with dark tree tops? through which a dove
Would often beat its wings, and often too
A little cloud would move across the blue.

Full in the middle of this pleasantness
There stood a marble altar, with a tress 90
Of flowers budded newly; and the dew
Had taken fairy phantasies to strew
Daisies upon the sacred sward last eve,
And so the dawned light in pomp receive.
For 'twas the morn: Apollo's upward fire
Made every eastern cloud a silvery pyre
Of brightness so unsullied, that therein
A melancholy spirit well might win
Oblivion, and melt out his essence fine 100
Into the winds: rain-scented eglantine
Gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun;
The lark was lost in him; cold springs had run
To warm their chilliest bubbles in the grass;
Man's voice was on the mountains; and the mass
Of nature's lives and wonders puls'd tenfold,
To feel this sun-rise and its glories old.

Now while the silent workings of the dawn
Were busiest, into that self-same lawn
All suddenly, with joyful cries, there sped 110
A troop of little children garlanded;
Who gathering round the altar, seemed to pry
Earnestly round as wishing to espy
Some folk of holiday: nor had they waited
For many moments, ere their ears were sated
With a faint breath of music, which ev'n then
Fill'd out its voice, and died away again.
Within a little space again it gave
Its airy swellings, with a gentle wave,
To light-hung leaves, in smoothest echoes breaking
Through copse-clad vallies, — ere their death, oer-taking 120
The surgy murmurs of the lonely sea.



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And now, as deep into the wood as we
Might mark a lynx's eye, there glimmered light
Fair faces and a rush of garments white,
Plainer and plainer shewing, till at last
Into the widest alley they all past,
Making directly for the woodland altar.
O kindly muse! let not my weak tongue falter
In telling of this goodly company,
Of their old piety, and of their glee: 130
But let a portion of ethereal dew
Fall on my head, and presently unmew
My soul; that I may dare, in wayfaring,
To stammer where old Chaucer used to sing.



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Leading the way, young damsels danced along,
Bearing the burden of a shepherd song;
Each having a white wicker over brimm'd
With April's tender younglings: next, well trimm'd,
A crowd of shepherds with as sunburnt looks
As may be read of in Arcadian books; 140
Such as sat listening round Apollo's pipe,
When the great deity, for earth too ripe,
Let his divinity o'er-flowing die
In music, through the vales of Thessaly:
Some idly trailed their sheep-hooks on the ground,
And some kept up a shrilly mellow sound
With ebon-tipped flutes: close after these,
Now coming from beneath the forest trees,
A venerable priest full soberly,
Begirt with ministring looks: alway his eye 150
Stedfast upon the matted turf he kept,
And after him his sacred vestments swept.
From his right hand there swung a vase, milk-white,
Of mingled wine, out-sparkling generous light;
And in his left he held a basket full
Of all sweet herbs that searching eye could cull:
Wild thyme, and valley-lilies whiter still
Than Leda's love, and cresses from the rill.
His aged head, crowned with beechen wreath,
Seem'd like a poll of ivy in the teeth 160
Of winter hoar. Then came another crowd
Of shepherds, lifting in due time aloud
Their share of the ditty. After them appear'd,
Up-followed by a multitude that rear'd
Their voices to the clouds, a fair wrought car,
Easily rolling so as scarce to mar
The freedom of three steeds of dapple brown:
Who stood therein did seem of great renown
Among the throng. His youth was fully blown,
Shewing like Ganymede to manhood grown; 170
And, for those simple times, his garments were
A chieftain king's: beneath his breast, half bare,
Was hung a silver bugle, and between
His nery knees there lay a boar-spear keen.
A smile was on his countenance; he seem'd,
To common lookers on, like one who dream'd
Of idleness in groves Elysian:
But there were some who feelingly could scan
A lurking trouble in his nether lip,
And see that oftentimes the reins would slip 180
Through his forgotten hands: then would they sigh,
And think of yellow leaves, of owlets cry,
Of logs piled solemnly. — Ah, well-a-day,
Why should our young Endymion pine away!



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Soon the assembly, in a circle rang'd,
Stood silent round the shrine: each look was chang'd
To sudden veneration: women meek
Beckon'd their sons to silence; while each cheek
Of virgin bloom paled gently for slight fear.
Endymion too, without a forest peer, 190
Stood, wan, and pale, and with an awed face,
Among his brothers of the mountain chase.
In midst of all, the venerable priest
Eyed them with joy from greatest to the least,
And, after lifting up his aged hands,
Thus spake he: "Men of Latmos! shepherd bands!
Whose care it is to guard a thousand flocks:
Whether descended from beneath the rocks
That overtop your mountains; whether come 200
From vallies where the pipe is never dumb;
Or from your swelling downs, where sweet air stirs
Blue hare-bells lightly, and where prickly furze
Buds lavish gold; or ye, whose precious charge
Nibble their fill at ocean's very marge,
Whose mellow reeds are touch'd with sounds forlorn
By the dim echoes of old Triton's horn:
Mothers and wives! who day by day prepare
The scrip, with needments, for the mountain air;
And all ye gentle girls who foster up 210
Udderless lambs, and in a little cup
Will put choice honey for a favoured youth:
Yea, every one attend! for in good truth
Our vows are wanting to our great god Pan.
Are not our lowing heifers sleeker than
Night-swollen mushrooms? Are not our wide plains
Speckled with countless fleeces? Have not rains
Green'd over April's lap? No howling sad
Sickens our fearful ewes; and we have had
Great bounty from Endymion our lord.
The earth is glad: the merry lark has pour'd 220
His early song against yon breezy sky,
That spreads so clear o'er our solemnity."

Thus ending, on the shrine he heap'd a spire
Of teeming sweets, enkindling sacred fire;
Anon he stain'd the thick and spongy sod
With wine, in honour of the shepherd-god.
Now while the earth was drinking it, and while
Bay leaves were crackling in the fragrant pile,
And gummy frankincense was sparkling bright
'Neath smothering parsley, and a hazy light 230
Spread greyly eastward, thus a chorus sang:



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“O THOU, whose mighty palace roof doth hang
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness;
Who lov’st to see the hamadryads dress
Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken;
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken
The dreary melody of bedded reeds —
In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds 240
The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth;
Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth
Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx — do thou now,
By thy love’s milky brow!
By all the trembling mazes that she ran,
Hear us, great Pan!

“O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, turtles
Passion their voices cooingly ’mong myrtles,
What time thou wanderest at eventide 250
Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side
Of thine enmossed realms: O thou, to whom
Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom
Their ripen’d fruitage; yellow girted bees
Their golden honeycombs; our village leas
Their fairest-blossom’d beans and poppied corn;
The chuckling linnets its five young unborn,
To sing for thee; low creeping strawberries
Their summer coolness; pent up butterflies
Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh budding year
All its completions — be quickly near, 260
By every wind that nods the mountain pine,
O forester divine!

“Thou, to whom every fawn and satyr flies
For willing service; whether to surprise
The squatted hare while in half sleeping fit;
Or upward ragged precipices flit
To save poor lambkins from the eagle’s maw;
Or by mysterious enticement draw
Bewildered shepherds to their path again; 270
Or to tread breathless round the frothy main,
And gather up all fancifullest shells
For thee to tumble into Naiads’ cells,
And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping;
Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,
The while they pelt each other on the crown
With silvery oak apples, and fir cones brown —
By all the echoes that about thee ring,
Hear us, O satyr king!



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Even while they brought the burden to a close,
A shout from the whole multitude arose,
That lingered in the air like dying rolls
Of abrupt thunder, when Ionian shoals 310
Of dolphins bob their noses through the brine.
Meantime, on shady levels, mossy fine,
Young companies nimbly began dancing
To the swift treble pipe, and humming string.
Aye, those fair living forms swam heavenly
To tunes forgotten — out of memory:
Fair creatures! whose young children's children bred
Thermopylæ its heroes — not yet dead,
But in old marbles ever beautiful. 320
High genitors, unconscious did they cull
Time's sweet first-fruits — they danc'd to weariness,
And then in quiet circles did they press
The hillock turf, and caught the latter end
Of some strange history, potent to send
A young mind from its bodily tenement.
Or they might watch the quoit-pitchers, intent
On either side; pitying the sad death
Of Hyacinthus, when the cruel breath
Of Zephyr slew him, — Zephyr penitent, 330
Who now, ere Phoebus mounts the firmament,
Fondles the flower amid the sobbing rain.
The archers too, upon a wider plain,
Beside the feathery whizzing of the shaft,
And the dull twanging bowstring, and the raft
Branch down sweeping from a tall ash top,
Call'd up a thousand thoughts to envelope
Those who would watch. Perhaps, the trembling knee
And frantic gape of lonely Niobe,
Poor, lonely Niobe! when her lovely young
Were dead and gone, and her caressing tongue 340
Lay a lost thing upon her paly lip,
And very, very deadliness did nip
Her motherly cheeks. Arous'd from this sad mood
By one, who at a distance loud halloo'd,
Uplifting his strong bow into the air,
Many might after brighter visions stare:
After the Argonauts, in blind amaze
Tossing about on Neptune's restless ways,
Until, from the horizon's vaulted side, 350
There shot a golden splendour far and wide,
Spangling those million poutings of the brine
With quivering ore: 'twas even an awful shine
From the exaltation of Apollo's bow;
A heavenly beacon in their dreary woe.
Who thus were ripe for high contemplating,
Might turn their steps towards the sober ring
Where sat Endymion and the aged priest
'Mong shepherds gone in eld, whose looks increas'd
The silvery setting of their mortal star. 360
There they discours'd upon the fragile bar
That keeps us from our homes ethereal;
And what our duties there: to nightly call
Vesper, the beauty-crest of summer weather;
To summon all the downiest clouds together
For the sun's purple couch; to emulate
In ministring the potent rule of fate
With speed of fire-tailed exhalations;
To tint her pallid cheek with bloom, who cons
Sweet poesy by moonlight: besides these, 370
A world of other unguess'd offices.
Anon they wander'd, by divine converse,



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Into Elysium; vying to rehearse
Each one his own anticipated bliss.
One felt heart-certain that he could not miss
His quick gone love, among fair blossom'd boughs,
Where every zephyr-sigh pouts and endows
Her lips with music for the welcoming.
Another wish'd, mid that eternal spring,
To meet his rosy child, with feathery sails,
Sweeping, eye-earnestly, through almond vales: 380
Who, suddenly, should stoop through the smooth wind,
And with the balmiest leaves his temples bind;
And, ever after, through those regions be
His messenger, his little Mercury.
Some were athirst in soul to see again
Their fellow huntsmen o'er the wide champaign
In times long past; to sit with them, and talk
Of all the chances in their earthly walk;
Comparing, joyfully, their plenteous stores 390
Of happiness, to when upon the moors,
Benighted, close they huddled from the cold,
And shar'd their famish'd scrips. Thus all out-told
Their fond imaginations, — saving him
Whose eyelids curtain'd up their jewels dim,
Endymion: yet hourly had he striven
To hide the cankering venom, that had riven
His fainting recollections. Now indeed
His senses had swoon'd off: he did not heed
The sudden silence, or the whispers low, 400
Or the old eyes dissolving at his woe,
Or anxious calls, or close of trembling palms,
Or maiden's sigh, that grief itself embalms:
But in the self-same fixed trance he kept,
Like one who on the earth had never slept.
Aye, even as dead-still as a marble man,
Frozen in that old tale Arabian.



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JOHN KEATS

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Who whispers him so pantingly and close?
Peona, his sweet sister: of all those,
His friends, the dearest. Hushing signs she made,
And breath'd a sister's sorrow to persuade 410
A yielding up, a cradling on her care.
Her eloquence did breathe away the curse:
She led him, like some midnight spirit nurse
Of happy changes in emphatic dreams,
Along a path between two little streams, —
Guarding his forehead, with her round elbow,
From low-grown branches, and his footsteps slow
From stumbling over stumps and hillocks small;
Until they came to where these streamlets fall,
With mingled bubblings and a gentle rush, 420
Into a river, clear, brimful, and flush
With crystal mocking of the trees and sky.
A little shallop, floating there hard by,
Pointed its beak over the fringed bank;
And soon it lightly dipt, and rose, and sank,
And dipt again, with the young couple's weight, —
Peona guiding, through the water straight,
Towards a bowery island opposite;
Which gaining presently, she steered light
Into a shady, fresh, and ripply cove, 430
Where nested was an arbour, overwove
By many a summer's silent fingering;
To whose cool bosom she was used to bring
Her playmates, with their needle broidery,
And minstrel memories of times gone by.

So she was gently glad to see him laid
Under her favourite bower's quiet shade,
On her own couch, new made of flower leaves,
Dried carefully on the cooler side of sheaves
When last the sun his autumn tresses shook, 440
And the tann'd harvesters rich armfuls took.
Soon was he quieted to slumbrous rest:
But, ere it crept upon him, he had prest
Peona's busy hand against his lips,
And still, a sleeping, held her finger-tips
In tender pressure. And as a willow keeps
A patient watch over the stream that creeps
Windingly by it, so the quiet maid
Held her in peace: so that a whispering blade
Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling 450
Down in the blue-bells, or a wren light rustling
Among seer leaves and twigs, might all be heard.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

O magic sleep! O comfortable bird,
That broodest o'er the troubled sea of the mind
Till it is hush'd and smooth! O unconfin'd
Restraint! imprisoned liberty! great key
To golden palaces, strange minstrelsy,
Fountains grotesque, new trees, bespangled caves,
Echoing grottos, full of tumbling waves
And moonlight; aye, to all the mazy world 460
Of silvery enchantment! — who, upfurl'd
Beneath thy drowsy wing a triple hour,
But renovates and lives? — Thus, in the bower,
Endymion was calm'd to life again.
Opening his eyelids with a healthier brain,
He said: "I feel this thine endearing love
All through my bosom: thou art as a dove
Trembling its closed eyes and sleeked wings
About me; and the pearliest dew not brings 470
Such morning incense from the fields of May,
As do those brighter drops that twinkling stray
From those kind eyes, — the very home and haunt
Of sisterly affection. Can I want
Aught else, aught nearer heaven, than such tears?
Yet dry them up, in bidding hence all fears
That, any longer, I will pass my days
Alone and sad. No, I will once more raise
My voice upon the mountain-heights; once more
Make my horn parley from their foreheads hoar:
Again my trooping hounds their tongues shall loll 480
Around the breathed boar: again I'll poll
The fair-grown yew tree, for a chosen bow:
And, when the pleasant sun is getting low,
Again I'll linger in a sloping mead
To hear the speckled thrushes, and see feed
Our idle sheep. So be thou cheered sweet,
And, if thy lute is here, softly intreat
My soul to keep in its resolved course."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Hereat Peona, in their silver source,
Shut her pure sorrow drops with glad exclaim, 490
And took a lute, from which there pulsing came
A lively prelude, fashioning the way
In which her voice should wander. 'Twas a lay
More subtle cadenced, more forest wild
Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child;
And nothing since has floated in the air
So mournful strange. Surely some influence rare
Went, spiritual, through the damsel's hand;
For still, with Delphic emphasis, she spann'd
The quick invisible strings, even though she saw 500
Endymion's spirit melt away and thaw
Before the deep intoxication.
But soon she came, with sudden burst, upon
Her self-possession — swung the lute aside,
And earnestly said: "Brother, 'tis vain to hide
That thou dost know of things mysterious,
Immortal, starry; such alone could thus
Weigh down thy nature. Hast thou sinn'd in aught
Offensive to the heavenly powers? Caught
A Paphian dove upon a message sent? 510
Thy deathful bow against some deer-herd bent,
Sacred to Dian? Haply, thou hast seen
Her naked limbs among the alders green;
And that, alas! is death. No, I can trace
Something more high perplexing in thy face!"

Endymion look'd at her, and press'd her hand,
And said, "Art thou so pale, who wast so bland
And merry in our meadows? How is this?
Tell me thine ailment: tell me all amiss! —
Ah! thou hast been unhappy at the change 520
Wrought suddenly in me. What indeed more strange?
Or more complete to overwhelm surmise?
Ambition is no sluggard: 'tis no prize,
That toiling years would put within my grasp,
That I have sigh'd for: with so deadly gasp
No man e'er panted for a mortal love.
So all have set my heavier grief above
These things which happen. Rightly have they done:
I, who still saw the horizontal sun
Heave his broad shoulder o'er the edge of the world, 530
Out-facing Lucifer, and then had hurl'd
My spear aloft, as signal for the chase —
I, who, for very sport of heart, would race
With my own steed from Araby; pluck down
A vulture from his towery perching; frown
A lion into growling, loth retire —
To lose, at once, all my toil breeding fire,
And sink thus low! but I will ease my breast
Of secret grief, here in this bowery nest.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“This river does not see the naked sky, 540
Till it begins to progress silverly
Around the western border of the wood,
Whence, from a certain spot, its winding flood
Seems at the distance like a crescent moon:
And in that nook, the very pride of June,
Had I been used to pass my weary eyes;
The rather for the sun unwilling leaves
So dear a picture of his sovereign power,
And I could witness his most kingly hour,
When he doth lighten up the golden reins, 550
And paces leisurely down amber plains
His snorting four. Now when his chariot last
Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,
There blossom’d suddenly a magic bed
Of sacred ditamy, and poppies red:
At which I wondered greatly, knowing well
That but one night had wrought this flowery spell;
And, sitting down close by, began to muse
What it might mean. Perhaps, thought I, Morpheus,
In passing here, his owlet pinions shook; 560
Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook
Her ebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth,
Had dipt his rod in it: such garland wealth
Came not by common growth. Thus on I thought,
Until my head was dizzy and distraught.
Moreover, through the dancing poppies stole
A breeze, most softly lulling to my soul;
And shaping visions all about my sight
Of colours, wings, and bursts of spangly light;
The which became more strange, and strange, and dim, 570
And then were gulph’d in a tumultuous swim:
And then I fell asleep. Ah, can I tell
The enchantment that afterwards befel?
Yet it was but a dream: yet such a dream
That never tongue, although it overteem
With mellow utterance, like a cavern spring,
Could figure out and to conception bring
All I beheld and felt. Methought I lay
Watching the zenith, where the milky way
Among the stars in virgin splendour pours; 580
And travelling my eye, until the doors
Of heaven appear’d to open for my flight,
I became loth and fearful to alight
From such high soaring by a downward glance:
So kept me stedfast in that airy trance,
Spreading imaginary pinions wide.
When, presently, the stars began to glide,
And faint away, before my eager view:
At which I sigh’d that I could not pursue,
And dropt my vision to the horizon’s verge; 590
And lo! from opening clouds, I saw emerge
The loveliest moon, that ever silver’d o’er
A shell for Neptune’s goblet: she did soar
So passionately bright, my dazzled soul
Commingling with her argent spheres did roll
Through clear and cloudy, even when she went
At last into a dark and vapoury tent —
Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed train
Of planets all were in the blue again.
To commune with those orbs, once more I rais’d 600
My sight right upward: but it was quite dazed
By a bright something, sailing down apace,
Making me quickly veil my eyes and face:
Again I look’d, and, O ye deities,



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Who from Olympus watch our destinies!
Whence that completed form of all completeness?
Whence came that high perfection of all sweetness?
Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where, O Where
Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair?
Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western sun; 610
Not — thy soft hand, fair sister! let me shun
Such folly before thee — yet she had,
Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad;
And they were simply gordian'd up and braided,
Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,
Her pearl round ears, white neck, and orb'd brow;
The which were blended in, I know not how,
With such a paradise of lips and eyes,
Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs,
That, when I think thereon, my spirit clings 620
And plays about its fancy, till the stings
Of human neighbourhood envenom all.
Unto what awful power shall I call?
To what high fane? — Ah! see her hovering feet,
More blue-vein'd, more soft, more whitely sweet
Than those of sea-born Venus, when she rose
From out her cradle shell. The wind out-blows
Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion;
'Tis blue, and over-spangled with a million 630
Of little eyes, as though thou wert to shed,
Over the darkest, lushest blue-bell bed,
Handfuls of daisies." — "Endymion, how strange!
Dream within dream!" — "She took an airy range,
And then, towards me, like a very maid,
Came blushing, waning, willing, and afraid,
And press'd me by the hand: Ah! 'twas too much;
Methought I fainted at the charmed touch,
Yet held my recollection, even as one
Who dives three fathoms where the waters run 640
Gurgling in beds of coral: for anon,
I felt upmounted in that region
Where falling stars dart their artillery forth,
And eagles struggle with the buffeting north
That balances the heavy meteor-stone; —
Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone,
But lapp'd and lull'd along the dangerous sky.
Soon, as it seem'd, we left our journeying high,
And straightway into frightful eddies swoop'd;
Such as ay muster where grey time has scoop'd
Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's side: 650
There hollow sounds arous'd me, and I sigh'd
To faint once more by looking on my bliss —
I was distracted; madly did I kiss
The wooing arms which held me, and did give
My eyes at once to death: but 'twas to live,
To take in draughts of life from the gold fount
Of kind and passionate looks; to count, and count
The moments, by some greedy help that seem'd
A second self, that each might be redeem'd 660
And plunder'd of its load of blessedness.
Ah, desperate mortal! I ev'n dar'd to press
Her very cheek against my crown'd lip,
And, at that moment, felt my body dip
Into a warmer air: a moment more,
Our feet were soft in flowers. There was store
Of newest joys upon that alp. Sometimes
A scent of violets, and blossoming limes,
Loiter'd around us; then of honey cells,
Made delicate from all white-flower bells;



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

And once, above the edges of our nest, 670
An arch face peep'd, — an Oread as I guess'd.

“Why did I dream that sleep o'er-power'd me
In midst of all this heaven? Why not see,
Far off, the shadows of his pinions dark,
And stare them from me? But no, like a spark
That needs must die, although its little beam
Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream
Fell into nothing — into stupid sleep.
And so it was, until a gentle creep,

A careful moving caught my waking ears, 680
And up I started: Ah! my sighs, my tears,
My clenched hands; — for lo! the poppies hung
Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel sung
A heavy ditty, and the sullen day
Had chidden herald Hesperus away,
With leaden looks: the solitary breeze
Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did tease
With wayward melancholy; and r thought,
Mark me, Peona! that sometimes it brought
Faint fare-thee-wells, and sigh-shrilled adieus! — 690
Away I wander'd — all the pleasant hues
Of heaven and earth had faded: deepest shades
Were deepest dungeons; heaths and sunny glades
Were full of pestilent light; our taintless rills
Seem'd sooty, and o'er-spread with upturn'd gills
Of dying fish; the vermeil rose had blown
In frightful scarlet, and its thorns out-grown
Like spiked aloe. If an innocent bird
Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and stirr'd
In little journeys, I beheld in it 700
A disguis'd demon, missioned to knit
My soul with under darkness; to entice
My stumblings down some monstrous precipice:
Therefore I eager followed, and did curse
The disappointment. Time, that aged nurse,
Rock'd me to patience. Now, thank gentle heaven!
These things, with all their comfortings, are given
To my down-sunken hours, and with thee,
Sweet sister, help to stem the ebbing sea
Of weary life.” 710



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Thus ended he, and both
Sat silent: for the maid was very loth
To answer; feeling well that breathed words
Would all be lost, unheard, and vain as swords
Against the enchased crocodile, or leaps
Of grasshoppers against the sun. She weeps,
And wonders; struggles to devise some blame;
To put on such a look as would say, Shame
On this poor weakness! but, for all her strife,
She could as soon have crush'd away the life 720
From a sick dove. At length, to break the pause,
She said with trembling chance: "Is this the cause?
This all? Yet it is strange, and sad, alas!
That one who through this middle earth should pass
Most like a sojourning demi-god, and leave
His name upon the harp-string, should achieve
No higher bard than simple maidenhood,
Singing alone, and fearfully, — how the blood
Left his young cheek; and how he used to stray 730
He knew not where; and how he would say, nay,
If any said 'twas love: and yet 'twas love;
What could it be but love? How a ring-dove
Let fall a sprig of yew tree in his path;
And how he died: and then, that love doth scathe,
The gentle heart, as northern blasts do roses;
And then the ballad of his sad life closes
With sighs, and an alas! — Endymion!
Be rather in the trumpet's mouth, — anon
Among the winds at large — that all may hearken! 740
Although, before the crystal heavens darken,
I watch and dote upon the silver lakes
Pictur'd in western cloudiness, that takes
The semblance of gold rocks and bright gold sands,
Islands, and creeks, and amber-fretted strands
With horses prancing o'er them, palaces
And towers of amethyst, — would I so tease
My pleasant days, because I could not mount
Into those regions? The Morphean fount
Of that fine element that visions, dreams, 750
And fitful whims of sleep are made of, streams
Into its airy channels with so subtle,
So thin a breathing, not the spider's shuttle,
Circl'd a million times within the space
Of a swallow's nest-door, could delay a trace,
A tinting of its quality: how light
Must dreams themselves be; seeing they're more slight
Than the mere nothing that engenders them!
Then wherefore sully the entrusted gem
Of high and noble life with thoughts so sick? 760
Why pierce high-fronted honour to the quick
For nothing but a dream?" Hereat the youth
Look'd up: a conflicting of shame and ruth
Was in his plaid brow: yet his eyelids
Widened a little, as when Zephyr bids
A little breeze to creep between the fans
Of careless butterflies: amid his pains
He seem'd to taste a drop of manna-dew,
Full palatable; and a colour grew
Upon his cheek, while thus he lifeful spake.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Peona! ever have I long’d to slake 770
My thirst for the world’s praises: nothing base,
No merely slumberous phantasm, could unlace
The stubborn canvas for my voyage prepar’d —
Though now ‘tis tatter’d; leaving my bark bar’d
And sullenly drifting: yet my higher hope
Is of too wide, too rainbow-large a scope,
To fret at myriads of earthly wrecks.
Wherein lies happiness? In that which beck
Our ready minds to fellowship divine,
A fellowship with essence; till we shine, 780
Full alchemiz’d, and free of space. Behold
The clear religion of heaven! Fold
A rose leaf round thy finger’s taperness,
And soothe thy lips: hist, when the airy stress
Of music’s kiss impregnates the free winds,
And with a sympathetic touch unbinds
Eolian magic from their lucid wombs:
Then old songs waken from enclouded tombs;
Old ditties sigh above their father’s grave;
Ghosts of melodious prophecyings rave 790
Round every spot where trod Apollo’s foot;
Bronze clarions awake, and faintly bruit,
Where long ago a giant battle was;
And, from the turf, a lullaby doth pass
In every place where infant Orpheus slept.
Feel we these things? — that moment have we stept
Into a sort of oneness, and our state
Is like a floating spirit’s. But there are
Richer entanglements, enthralsments far
More self-destroying, leading, by degrees, 800
To the chief intensity: the crown of these
Is made of love and friendship, and sits high
Upon the forehead of humanity.
All its more ponderous and bulky worth
Is friendship, whence there ever issues forth
A steady splendour; but at the tip-top,
There hangs by unseen film, an orb’d drop
Of light, and that is love: its influence,
Thrown in our eyes, genders a novel sense,
At which we start and fret; till in the end, 810
Melting into its radiance, we blend,
Mingle, and so become a part of it, —
Nor with aught else can our souls interknit
So wingedly: when we combine therewith,
Life’s self is nourish’d by its proper pith,
And we are nurtured like a pelican brood.
Aye, so delicious is the unsating food,
That men, who might have tower’d in the van
Of all the congregated world, to fan
And winnow from the coming step of time 820
All chaff of custom, wipe away all slime
Left by men-slugs and human serpentry,
Have been content to let occasion die,
Whilst they did sleep in love’s elysium.
And, truly, I would rather be struck dumb,
Than speak against this ardent listlessness:
For I have ever thought that it might bless
The world with benefits unknowingly;
As does the nightingale, upperched high,
And cloister’d among cool and bunched leaves — 830
She sings but to her love, nor e’er conceives
How tiptoe Night holds back her dark-grey hood.
Just so may love, although ‘tis understood
The mere commingling of passionate breath,



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Produce more than our searching witnesseth:
What I know not: but who, of men, can tell
That flowers would bloom, or that green fruit would swell
To melting pulp, that fish would have bright mail,
The earth its dower of river, wood, and vale,
The meadows runnels, runnels pebble-stones, 840
The seed its harvest, or the lute its tones,
Tones ravishment, or ravishment its sweet,
If human souls did never kiss and greet?



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Now, if this earthly love has power to make
Men’s being mortal, immortal; to shake
Ambition from their memories, and brim
Their measure of content; what merest whim,
Seems all this poor endeavour after fame,
To one, who keeps within his stedfast aim
A love immortal, an immortal too. 850
Look not so wilder’d; for these things are true,
And never can be born of atomies
That buzz about our slumbers, like brain-flies,
Leaving us fancy-sick. No, no, I’m sure,
My restless spirit never could endure
To brood so long upon one luxury,
Unless it did, though fearfully, espy
A hope beyond the shadow of a dream.
My sayings will the less obscured seem, 860
When I have told thee how my waking sight
Has made me scruple whether that same night
Was pass’d in dreaming. Hearken, sweet Peona!
Beyond the matron-temple of Latona,
Which we should see but for these darkening boughs,
Lies a deep hollow, from whose ragged brows
Bushes and trees do lean all round athwart,
And meet so nearly, that with wings outrought,
And spreaded tail, a vulture could not glide
Past them, but he must brush on every side.
Some moulder’d steps lead into this cool cell, 870
Far as the slabbed margin of a well,
Whose patient level peeps its crystal eye
Right upward, through the bushes, to the sky.
Oft have I brought thee flowers, on their stalks set
Like vestal primroses, but dark velvet
Edges them round, and they have golden pits:
‘Twas there I got them, from the gaps and slits
In a mossy stone, that sometimes was my seat,
When all above was faint with mid-day heat.
And there in strife no burning thoughts to heed, 880
I’d bubble up the water through a reed;
So reaching back to boy-hood: make me ships
Of moulted feathers, touchwood, alder chips,
With leaves stuck in them; and the Neptune be
Of their petty ocean. Oftener, heavily,
When love-lorn hours had left me less a child,
I sat contemplating the figures wild
Of o’er-head clouds melting the mirror through.
Upon a day, while thus I watch’d, by flew 890
A cloudy Cupid, with his bow and quiver;
So plainly character’d, no breeze would shiver
The happy chance: so happy, I was fain
To follow it upon the open plain,
And, therefore, was just going; when, behold!
A wonder, fair as any I have told —
The same bright face I tasted in my sleep,
Smiling in the clear well. My heart did leap
Through the cool depth. — It moved as if to flee —
I started up, when lo! refreshfully,
There came upon my face, in plenteous showers, 900
Dew-drops, and dewy buds, and leaves, and flowers,
Wrapping all objects from my smothered sight,
Bathing my spirit in a new delight.
Aye, such a breathless honey-feel of bliss
Alone preserved me from the drear abyss
Of death, for the fair form had gone again.
Pleasure is oft a visitant; but pain
Clings cruelly to us, like the gnawing sloth



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

On the deer's tender haunches: late, and loth,
'Tis scar'd away by slow returning pleasure. 910
How sickening, how dark the dreadful leisure
Of weary days, made deeper exquisite,
By a fore-knowledge of unslumbrous night!
Like sorrow came upon me, heavier still,
Than when I wander'd from the poppy hill:
And a whole age of lingering moments crept
Sluggishly by, ere more contentment swept
Away at once the deadly yellow spleen.
Yes, thrice have I this fair enchantment seen;
Once more been tortured with renewed life. 920
When last the wintry gusts gave over strife
With the conquering sun of spring, and left the skies
Warm and serene, but yet with moistened eyes
In pity of the shatter'd infant buds, —
That time thou didst adorn, with amber studs,
My hunting cap, because I laugh'd and smil'd,
Chatted with thee, and many days exil'd
All torment from my breast; — 'twas even then,
Straying about, yet, coop'd up in the den
Of helpless discontent, — hurling my lance 930
From place to place, and following at chance,
At last, by hap, through some young trees it struck,
And, plashing among bedded pebbles, stuck
In the middle of a brook, — whose silver ramble
Down twenty little falls, through reeds and bramble,
Tracing along, it brought me to a cave,
Whence it ran brightly forth, and white did lave
The nether sides of mossy stones and rock, —
'Mong which it gurgled blythe adieus, to mock 940
Its own sweet grief at parting. Overhead,
Hung a lush screen of drooping weeds, and spread
Thick, as to curtain up some wood-nymph's home.
"Ah! impious mortal, whither do I roam?"
Said I, low voic'd: "Ah whither! 'Tis the grot
Of Proserpine, when Hell, obscure and hot,
Doth her resign, and where her tender hands
She dabbles, on the cool and sluicy sands:
Or 'tis the cell of Echo, where she sits,
And babbles thorough silence, till her wits 950
Are gone in tender madness, and anon,
Faints into sleep, with many a dying tone
Of sadness. O that she would take my vows,
And breathe them sighingly among the boughs,
To sue her gentle ears for whose fair head,
Daily, I pluck sweet flowerets from their bed,
And weave them dyingly — send honey-whispers
Round every leaf, that all those gentle lispers
May sigh my love unto her pitying!
O charitable echo! hear, and sing 960
This ditty to her! — tell her" — so I stay'd
My foolish tongue, and listening, half afraid,
Stood stupefied with my own empty folly,
And blushing for the freaks of melancholy.
Salt tears were coming, when I heard my name
Most fondly lipp'd, and then these accents came:
'Endymion! the cave is secreter
Than the isle of Delos. Echo hence shall stir
No sighs but sigh-warm kisses, or light noise
Of thy combing hand, the while it travelling cloys
And trembles through my labyrinthine hair." 970
At that oppress'd I hurried in. — Ah! where
Are those swift moments? Whither are they fled?
I'll smile no more, Peona; nor will wed



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Sorrow the way to death, but patiently
Bear up against it: so farewell, sad sigh;
And come instead demurest meditation,
To occupy me wholly, and to fashion
My pilgrimage for the world's dusky brink.
No more will I count over, link by link,
My chain of grief: no longer strive to find 980
A half-forgetfulness in mountain wind
Blustering about my ears: aye, thou shalt see,
Dearest of sisters, what my life shall be;
What a calm round of hours shall make my days.
There is a paly flame of hope that plays
Where'er I look: but yet, I'll say 'tis naught —
And here I bid it die. Have not I caught,
Already, a more healthy countenance?
By this the sun is setting; we may chance
Meet some of our near-dwellers with my car." 990

This said, he rose, faint-smiling like a star
Through autumn mists, and took Peona's hand:
They stept into the boat, and launch'd from land.



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

ENDYMION

BOOK II

O SOVEREIGN power of love! O grief! O balm!
All records, saving thine, come cool, and calm,
And shadowy, through the mist of passed years:
For others, good or bad, hatred and tears
Have become indolent; but touching thine,
One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth pine,
One kiss brings honey-dew from buried days.
The woes of Troy, towers smothering o'er their blaze,
Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears, keen blades,
Struggling, and blood, and shrieks — all dimly fades 10
Into some backward corner of the brain;
Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain
The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.
Hence, pageant history! hence, gilded cheat!
Swart planet in the universe of deeds!
Wide sea, that one continuous murmur breeds
Along the pebbled shore of memory!
Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be
Upon thy vaporous bosom, magnified 20
To goodly vessels; many a sail of pride,
And golden keel'd, is left unlaunch'd and dry.
But wherefore this? What care, though owl did fly
About the great Athenian admiral's mast?
What care, though striding Alexander past
The Indus with his Macedonian numbers?
Though old Ulysses tortured from his slumbers
The gluttoned Cyclops, what care? — Juliet leaning
Amid her window-flowers, — sighing, — weaning
Tenderly her fancy from its maiden snow,
Doth more avail than these: the silver flow 30
Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,
Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,
Are things to brood on with more ardency
Than the death-day of empires. Fearfully
Must such conviction come upon his head,
Who, thus far, discontent, has dared to tread,
Without one muse's smile, or kind behest,
The path of love and poesy. But rest,
In chaffing restlessness, is yet more drear 40
Than to be crush'd, in striving to uprear
Love's standard on the battlements of song.
So once more days and nights aid me along,
Like legion'd soldiers.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Brain-sick shepherd-prince,
What promise hast thou faithful guarded since
The day of sacrifice? Or, have new sorrows
Come with the constant dawn upon thy morrows?
Alas! 'tis his old grief. For many days,
Has he been wandering in uncertain ways:
Through wilderness, and woods of mossed oaks; 50
Counting his woe-worn minutes, by the strokes
Of the lone woodcutter; and listening still,
Hour after hour, to each lush-leaf'd rill.
Now he is sitting by a shady spring,
And elbow-deep with feverous fingering
Stems the upbursting cold: a wild rose tree
Pavilions him in bloom, and he doth see
A bud which snares his fancy: lo! but now
He plucks it, dips its stalk in the water: how!
It swells, it buds, it flowers beneath his sight; 60
And, in the middle, there is softly pight
A golden butterfly; upon whose wings
There must be surely character'd strange things,
For with wide eye he wonders, and smiles oft.

Lightly this little herald flew aloft,
Follow'd by glad Endymion's clasped hands:
Onward it flies. From languor's sullen bands
His limbs are loos'd, and eager, on he hies
Dazzled to trace it in the sunny skies. 70
It seem'd he flew, the way so easy was;
And like a new-born spirit did he pass
Through the green evening quiet in the sun,
O'er many a heath, through many a woodland dun,
Through buried paths, where sleepy twilight dreams
The summer time away. One track unseams
A wooded cleft, and, far away, the blue
Of ocean fades upon him; then, anew,
He sinks adown a solitary glen,
Where there was never sound of mortal men,
Saving, perhaps, some snow-light cadences 80
Melting to silence, when upon the breeze
Some holy bark let forth an anthem sweet,
To cheer itself to Delphi. Still his feet
Went swift beneath the merry-winged guide,
Until it reached a splashing fountain's side
That, near a cavern's mouth, for ever pour'd
Unto the temperate air: then high it soar'd,
And, downward, suddenly began to dip,
As if, athirst with so much toil, 'twould sip
The crystal spout-head: so it did, with touch 90
Most delicate, as though afraid to smutch
Even with mealy gold the waters clear.
But, at that very touch, to disappear
So fairy-quick, was strange! Bewildered,
Endymion sought around, and shook each bed
Of covert flowers in vain; and then he flung
Himself along the grass. What gentle tongue,
What whisperer disturb'd his gloomy rest?
It was a nymph uprisen to the breast
In the fountain's pebbly margin, and she stood 100
'Mong lilies, like the youngest of the brood.
To him her dripping hand she softly kist,
And anxiously began to plait and twist
Her ringlets round her fingers, saying: "Youth!
Too long, alas, hast thou starv'd on the ruth,
The bitterness of love: too long indeed,
Seeing thou art so gentle. Could I weed



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Thy soul of care, by heavens, I would offer
All the bright riches of my crystal coffer
To Amphitrite; all my clear-eyed fish, 110
Golden, or rainbow-sided, or purplish,
Vermilion-tail'd, or finn'd with silvery gauze;
Yea, or my veined pebble-floor, that draws
A virgin light to the deep; my grotto-sands
Tawny and gold, ooz'd slowly from far lands
By my diligent springs; my level lilies, shells,
My charming rod, my potent river spells;
Yes, every thing, even to the pearly cup
Meander gave me, — for I bubbled up
To fainting creatures in a desert wild. 120
But woe is me, I am but as a child
To gladden thee; and all I dare to say,
Is, that I pity thee; that on this day
I've been thy guide; that thou must wander far
In other regions, past the scanty bar
To mortal steps, before thou cans't be ta'en
From every wasting sigh, from every pain,
Into the gentle bosom of thy love.
Why it is thus, one knows in heaven above:
But, a poor Naiad, I guess not. Farewel! 130
I have a ditty for my hollow cell."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Hereat, she vanished from Endymion's gaze,
Who brooded o'er the water in amaze:
The dashing fount pour'd on, and where its pool
Lay, half asleep, in grass and rushes cool,
Quick waterflies and gnats were sporting still,
And fish were dimpling, as if good nor ill
Had fallen out that hour. The wanderer,
Holding his forehead, to keep off the burr
Of smothering fancies, patiently sat down; 140
And, while beneath the evening's sleepy frown
Glow-worms began to trim their starry lamps,
Thus breath'd he to himself: "Whoso encamps
To take a fancied city of delight,
O what a wretch is he! and when 'tis his,
After long toil and travelling, to miss
The kernel of his hopes, how more than vile:
Yet, for him there's refreshment even in toil;
Another city doth he set about,
Free from the smallest pebble-bead of doubt 150
That he will seize on trickling honey-combs:
Alas, he finds them dry; and then he foams,
And onward to another city speeds.
But this is human life: the war, the deeds,
The disappointment, the anxiety,
Imagination's struggles, far and nigh,
All human; bearing in themselves this good,
That they are silt the air, the subtle food,
To make us feel existence, and to shew
How quiet death is. Where soil is men grow, 160
Whether to weeds or flowers; but for me,
There is no depth to strike in: I can see
Nought earthly worth my compassing; so stand
Upon a misty, jutting head of land —
Alone? No, no; and by the Orphean lute,
When mad Eurydice is listening to 't;
I'd rather stand upon this misty peak,
With not a thing to sigh for, or to seek,
But the soft shadow of my thrice-seen love,
Than be — I care not what. O meekest dove 170
Of heaven! O Cynthia, ten-times bright and fair!
From thy blue throne, now filling all the air,
Glance but one little beam of temper'd light
Into my bosom, that the dreadful might
And tyranny of love be somewhat scar'd!
Yet do not so, sweet queen; one torment spar'd,
Would give a pang to jealous misery,
Worse than the torment's self: but rather tie
Large wings upon my shoulders, and point out
My love's far dwelling. Though the playful rout 180
Of Cupids shun thee, too divine art thou,
Too keen in beauty, for thy silver prow
Not to have dipp'd in love's most gentle stream.
O be propitious, nor severely deem
My madness impious; for, by all the stars
That tend thy bidding, I do think the bars
That kept my spirit in are burst — that I
Am sailing with thee through the dizzy sky!
How beautiful thou art! The world how deep!
How tremulous-dazzlingly the wheels sweep 190
Around their axle! Then these gleaming reins,
How lithe! When this thy chariot attains
Is airy goal, haply some bower veils
Those twilight eyes? Those eyes! — my spirit fails —
Dear goddess, help! or the wide-gaping air
Will gulph me — help!" — At this with madden'd stare,



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

And lifted hands, and trembling lips he stood;
Like old Deucalion mountain'd o'er the flood,
Or blind Orion hungry for the morn.
And, but from the deep cavern there was borne 200
A voice, he had been froze to senseless stone;
Nor sigh of his, nor plaint, nor passion'd moan
Had more been heard. Thus swell'd it forth: "Descend,
Young mountaineer! descend where alleys bend
Into the sparry hollows of the world!
Oft hast thou seen bolts of the thunder hurl'd
As from thy threshold, day by day hast been
A little lower than the chilly sheen
Of icy pinnacles, and dipp'dst thine arms 210
Into the deadening ether that still charms
Their marble being: now, as deep profound
As those are high, descend! He ne'er is crown'd
With immortality, who fears to follow
Where airy voices lead: so through the hollow,
The silent mysteries of earth, descend!"

He heard but the last words, nor could contend
One moment in reflection: for he fled
Into the fearful deep, to hide his head
From the clear moon, the trees, and coming madness.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

'Twas far too strange, and wonderful for sadness; 220
Sharpening, by degrees, his appetite
To dive into the deepest. Dark, nor light,
The region; nor bright, nor sombre wholly,
But mingled up; a gleaming melancholy;
A dusky empire and its diadems;
One faint eternal eventide of gems.
Aye, millions sparkled on a vein of gold,
Along whose track the prince quick footsteps told,
With all its lines abrupt and angular:
Out-shooting sometimes, like a meteor-star, 230
Through a vast antre; then the metal woof,
Like Vulcan's rainbow, with some monstrous roof
Curves hugely: now, far in the deep abyss,
It seems an angry lightning, and doth hiss
Fancy into belief: anon it leads
Through winding passages, where sameness breeds
Vexing conceptions of some sudden change;
Whether to silver grotts, or giant range
Of sapphire columns, or fantastic bridge
Athwart a flood of crystal. On a ridge 240
Now fareth he, that o'er the vast beneath
Towers like an ocean-cliff, and whence he seeth
A hundred waterfalls, whose voices come
But as the murmuring surge. Chilly and numb
His bosom grew, when first he, far away,
Descried an orb'd diamond, set to fray
Old darkness from his throne: 'twas like the sun
Uprisen o'er chaos: and with such a stun
Came the amazement, that, absorb'd in it,
He saw not fiercer wonders — past the wit 250
Of any spirit to tell, but one of those
Who, when this planet's sphering time doth close,
Will be its high remembrancers: who they?
The mighty ones who have made eternal day
For Greece and England. While astonishment
With deep-drawn sighs was quieting, he went
Into a marble gallery, passing through
A mimic temple, so complete and true
In sacred custom, that he well nigh fear'd
To search it inwards, whence far off appear'd, 260
Through a long pillar'd vista, a fair shrine,
And, just beyond, on light tiptoe divine,
A quiver'd Dian. Stepping awfully,
The youth approach'd; oft turning his veil'd eye
Down sidelong aisles, and into niches old.
And when, more near against the marble cold
He had touch'd his forehead, he began to thread
All courts and passages, where silence dead
Rous'd by his whispering footsteps murmured faint:
And long he travers'd to and fro, to acquaint 270
Himself with every mystery, and awe;
Till, weary, he sat down before the maw
Of a wide outlet, fathomless and dim
To wild uncertainty and shadows grim.
There, when new wonders ceas'd to float before,
And thoughts of self came on, how crude and sore
The journey homeward to habitual self!
A mad-pursuing of the fog-born elf,
Whose flitting lantern, through rude nettle-briar,
Cheats us into a swamp, into a fire, 280
Into the bosom of a hated thing.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

What misery most drowningly doth sing
In lone Endymion's ear, now he has caught
The goal of consciousness? Ah, 'tis the thought,
The deadly feel of solitude: for lo!
He cannot see the heavens, nor the flow
Of rivers, nor hill-flowers running wild
In pink and purple chequer, nor, up-pil'd,
The cloudy rack slow journeying in the west,
Like herded elephants; nor felt, nor prest 290
Cool grass, nor tasted the fresh slumberous air;
But far from such companionship to wear
An unknown time, surcharg'd with grief, away,
Was now his lot. And must he patient stay,
Tracing fantastic figures with his spear?
"No!" exclaimed he, "why should I tarry here?"
No! loudly echoed times innumerable.
At which he straightway started, and 'gan tell
His paces back into the temple's chief; 300
Warming and glowing strong in the belief
Of help from Dian: so that when again
He caught her airy form, thus did he plain,
Moving more near the while. "O Haunter chaste
Of river sides, and woods, and heathy waste,
Where with thy silver bow and arrows keen
Art thou now forested? O woodland Queen,
What smoothest air thy smoother forehead woos?
Where dost thou listen to the wide halloos
Of thy departed nymphs? Through what dark tree
Glimmers thy crescent? Wheresoe'er it be, 310
'Tis in the breath of heaven: thou dost taste
Freedom as none can taste it, nor dost waste
Thy loveliness in dismal elements;
But, finding in our green earth sweet contents,
There livest blissfully. Ah, if to thee
It feels Elysian, how rich to me,
An exil'd mortal, sounds its pleasant name!
Within my breast there lives a choking flame —
O let me cool it among the zephyr-boughs!
A homeward fever parches up my tongue — 320
O let me slake it at the running springs!
Upon my ear a noisy nothing rings —
O let me once more hear the linnet's note!
Before mine eyes thick films and shadows float —
O let me 'noint them with the heaven's light!
Dost thou now lave thy feet and ankles white?
O think how sweet to me the freshening sluice!
Dost thou now please thy thirst with berry-juice?
O think how this dry palate would rejoice!
If in soft slumber thou dost hear my voice, 330
Oh think how I should love a bed of flowers! —
Young goddess! let me see my native bowers!
Deliver me from this rapacious deep!"



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Thus ending loudly, as he would o'erleap
His destiny, alert he stood: but when
Obstinate silence came heavily again,
Feeling about for its old couch of space
And airy cradle, lowly bow'd his face
Desponding, o'er the marble floor's cold thrill.
But 'twas not long; for, sweeter than the rill 340
To its old channel, or a swollen tide
To margin shallows, were the leaves he spied,
And flowers, and wreaths, and ready myrtle crowns
Up heaping through the slab: refreshment drowns
Itself, and strives its own delights to hide —
Nor in one spot alone; the floral pride
In a long whispering birth enchanted grew
Before his footsteps; as when heav'd anew
Old ocean rolls a lengthened wave to the shore,
Down whose green back the short-liv'd foam, all hoar, 350
Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence.

Increasing still in heart, and pleasant sense,
Upon his fairy journey on he hastes;
So anxious for the end, he scarcely wastes
One moment with his hand among the sweets:
Onward he goes — he stops — his bosom beats
As plainly in his ear, as the faint charm
Of which the throbs were born. This still alarm,
This sleepy music, forc'd him walk tiptoe:
For it came more softly than the east could blow 360
Arion's magic to the Atlantic isles;
Or than the west, made jealous by the smiles
Of thron'd Apollo, could breathe back the lyre
To seas Ionian and Tyrian.

O did he ever live, that lonely man,
Who lov'd — and music slew not? 'Tis the pest
Of love, that fairest joys give most unrest;
That things of delicate and tenderest worth
Are swallow'd all, and made a seared dearth,
By one consuming flame: it doth immerse 370
And suffocate true blessings in a curse.
Half-happy, by comparison of bliss,
Is miserable. 'Twas even so with this
Dew-dropping melody, in the Carian's ear;
First heaven, then hell, and then forgotten clear,
Vanish'd in elemental passion.

And down some swart abysm he had gone,
Had not a heavenly guide benignant led
To where thick myrtle branches, 'gainst his head
Brushing, awakened: then the sounds again 380
Went noiseless as a passing noontide rain
Over a bower, where little space he stood;
For as the sunset peeps into a wood
So saw he panting light, and towards it went
Through winding alleys; and lo, wonderment!
Upon soft verdure saw, one here, one there,
Cupids a slumbering on their pinions fair.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

At these enchantments, and yet many more,
The breathless Latmian wonder'd o'er and o'er; 430
Until, impatient in embarrassment,
He forthright pass'd, and lightly treading went
To that same feather'd lyrist, who straightway,
Smiling, thus whisper'd: "Though from upper day
Thou art a wanderer, and thy presence here
Might seem unholy, be of happy cheer!
For 'tis the nicest touch of human honour,
When some ethereal and high-favouring donor
Presents immortal bowers to mortal sense;
As now 'tis done to thee, Endymion. Hence 440
Was I in no wise startled. So recline
Upon these living flowers. Here is wine,
Alive with sparkles — never, I aver,
Since Ariadne was a vintager,
So cool a purple: taste these juicy pears,
Sent me by sad Vertumnus, when his fears
Were high about Pomona: here is cream,
Deepening to richness from a snowy gleam;
Sweeter than that nurse Amalthea skimm'd 450
For the boy Jupiter: and here, undimm'd
By any touch, a bunch of blooming plums
Ready to melt between an infant's gums:
And here is manna pick'd from Syrian trees,
In starlight, by the three Hesperides.
Feast on, and meanwhile I will let thee know
Of all these things around us." He did so,
Still brooding o'er the cadence of his lyre;
And thus: "I need not any hearing tire
By telling how the sea-born goddess pin'd 460
For a mortal youth, and how she strove to bind
Him all in all unto her doting self.
Who would not be so prison'd? but, fond elf,
He was content to let her amorous plea
Faint through his careless arms; content to see
An unseiz'd heaven dying at his feet;
Content, O fool! to make a cold retreat,
When on the pleasant grass such love, lovelorn,
Lay sorrowing; when every tear was born
Of diverse passion; when her lips and eyes 470
Were clos'd in sullen moisture, and quick sighs
Came vex'd and pettish through her nostrils small.
Hush! no exclaim — yet, justly mightst thou call
Curses upon his head. — I was half glad,
But my poor mistress went distract and mad,
When the boar tusk'd him: so away she flew
To Jove's high throne, and by her plainings drew
Immortal tear-drops down the thunderer's beard;
Whereon, it was decreed he should be rear'd
Each summer time to life. Lo! this is he, 480
That same Adonis, safe in the privacy
Of this still region all his winter-sleep.
Aye, sleep; for when our love-sick queen did weep
Over his waned corse, the tremulous shower
Heal'd up the wound, and, with a balmy power,
Medicined death to a lengthened drowsiness:
The which she fills with visions, and doth dress
In all this quiet luxury; and hath set
Us young immortals, without any let,
To watch his slumber through. 'Tis well nigh pass'd,
Even to a moment's filling up, and fast 490
She scuds with summer breezes, to pant through
The first long kiss, warm firstling, to renew
Embower'd sports in Cytherea's isle.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Look! how those winged listeners all this while
Stand anxious: see! behold!" — This clamant word
Broke through the careful silence; for they heard
A rustling noise of leaves, and out there flutter'd
Pigeons and doves: Adonis something mutter'd,
The while one hand, that erst upon his thigh
Lay dormant, mov'd convuls'd and gradually 500
Up to his forehead. Then there was a hum
Of sudden voices, echoing, "Come! come!
Arise! awake! Clear summer has forth walk'd
Unto the clover-sward, and she has talk'd
Full soothingly to every nested finch:
Rise, Cupids! or we'll give the blue-bell pinch
To your dimpled arms. Once more sweet life begin!"
At this, from every side they hurried in,
Rubbing their sleepy eyes with lazy wrists,
And doubling overhead their little fists 510
In backward yawns. But all were soon alive:
For as delicious wine doth, sparkling, dive
In nectar'd clouds and curls through water fair,
So from the arbour roof down swell'd an air
Odorous and enlivening; making all
To laugh, and play, and sing, and loudly call
For their sweet queen: when lo! the wreathed green
Disparted, and far upward could be seen
Blue heaven, and a silver car, air-borne,
Whose silent wheels, fresh wet from clouds of morn, 520
Spun off a drizzling dew, — which falling chill
On soft Adonis' shoulders, made him still
Nestle and turn uneasily about.
Soon were the white doves plain, with necks stretch'd out,
And silken traces lighten'd in descent;
And soon, returning from love's banishment,
Queen Venus leaning downward open arm'd:
Her shadow fell upon his breast, and charm'd
A tumult to his heart, and a new life
Into his eyes. Ah, miserable strife, 530
But for her comforting! unhappy sight,
But meeting her blue orbs! Who, who can write
Of these first minutes? The unchariest muse
To embracements warm as theirs makes coy excuse.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

O it has ruffled every spirit there,
Saving love's self, who stands superb to share
The general gladness: awfully he stands;
A sovereign quell is in his waving hands;
No sight can bear the lightning of his bow;
His quiver is mysterious, none can know 540
What themselves think of it; from forth his eyes
There darts strange light of varied hues and dyes:
A scowl is sometimes on his brow, but who
Look full upon it feel anon the blue
Of his fair eyes run liquid through their souls.
Endymion feels it, and no more controls
The burning prayer within him; so, bent low,
He had begun a plaining of his woe.
But Venus, bending forward, said: "My child,
Favour this gentle youth; his days are wild 550
With love — he — but alas! too well I see
Thou know'st the deepness of his misery.
Ah, smile not so, my son: I tell thee true,
That when through heavy hours I used to rue
The endless sleep of this new-born Adon',
This stranger ay I pitied. For upon
A dreary morning once I fled away
Into the breezy clouds, to weep and pray
For this my love: for vexing Mars had teas'd
Me even to tears: thence, when a little eas'd, 560
Down-looking, vacant, through a hazy wood,
I saw this youth as he despairing stood:
Those same dark curls blown vagrant in the wind:
Those same full fringed lids a constant blind
Over his sullen eyes: I saw him throw
Himself on wither'd leaves, even as though
Death had come sudden; for no jot he mov'd,
Yet mutter'd wildly. I could hear he lov'd
Some fair immortal, and that his embrace
Had zoned her through the night. There is no trace 570
Of this in heaven: I have mark'd each cheek,
And find it is the vainest thing to seek;
And that of all things 'tis kept secretest.
Endymion! one day thou wilt be blest:
So still obey the guiding hand that fends
Thee safely through these wonders for sweet ends.
'Tis a concealment needful in extreme;
And if I guess'd not so, the sunny beam
Thou shouldst mount up to with me. Now adieu!
Here must we leave thee." — At these words up flew 580
The impatient doves, up rose the floating car,
Up went the hum celestial. High afar
The Latmian saw them minish into nought;
And, when all were clear vanish'd, still he caught
A vivid lightning from that dreadful bow.
When all was darkened, with Etean throe
The earth clos'd — gave a solitary moan —
And left him once again in twilight lone.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

He did not rave, he did not stare aghast,
For all those visions were o'ergone, and past, 590
And he in loneliness: he felt assur'd
Of happy times, when all he had endur'd
Would seem a feather to the mighty prize.
So, with unusual gladness, on he hies
Through caves, and palaces of mottled ore,
Gold dome, and crystal wall, and turquoise floor,
Black polish'd porticos of awful shade,
And, at the last, a diamond balustrade,
Leading afar past wild magnificence,
Spiral through ruggedest loopholes, and thence 600
Stretching across a void, then guiding o'er
Enormous chasms, where, all foam and roar,
Streams subterranean tease their granite beds;
Then heighten'd just above the silvery heads
Of a thousand fountains, so that he could dash
The waters with his spear; but at the splash,
Done heedlessly, those spouting columns rose
Sudden a poplar's height, and 'gan to enclose
His diamond path with fretwork, streaming round
Alive, and dazzling cool, and with a sound, 610
Haply, like dolphin tumults, when sweet shells
Welcome the float of Thetis. Long he dwells
On this delight; for, every minute's space,
The streams with changed magic interlace:
Sometimes like delicatest lattices,
Cover'd with crystal vines; then weeping trees,
Moving about as in a gentle wind,
Which, in a wink, to watery gauze refin'd,
Pour'd into shapes of curtain'd canopies,
Spangled, and rich with liquid broideries 620
Of flowers, peacocks, swans, and naiads fair.
Swifter than lightning went these wonders rare;
And then the water, into stubborn streams
Collecting, mimick'd the wrought oaken beams,
Pillars, and frieze, and high fantastic roof,
Of those dusk places in times far aloof
Cathedrals call'd. He bade a loth farewell
To these founts Protean, passing gulph, and dell,
And torrent, and ten thousand jutting shapes,
Half seen through deepest gloom, and griesly gapes, 630
Blackening on every side, and overhead
A vaulted dome like Heaven's, far bespread
With starlight gems: aye, all so huge and strange,
The solitary felt a hurried change
Working within him into something dreary, —
Vex'd like a morning eagle, lost, and weary,
And purblind amid foggy, midnight wolds.
But he revives at once: for who beholds
New sudden things, nor casts his mental slough?
Forth from a rugged arch, in the dusk below, 640
Came mother Cybele! alone — alone —
In sombre chariot; dark foldings thrown
About her majesty, and front death-pale,
With turrets crown'd. Four maned lions hale
The sluggish wheels; solemn their toothed maws,
Their surly eyes brow-hidden, heavy paws
Uplifted drowsily, and nervy tails
Covering their tawny brushes. Silent sails
This shadowy queen athwart, and faints away
In another gloomy arch. 650



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Wherefore delay,
Young traveller, in such a mournful place?
Art thou wayworn, or canst not further trace
The diamond path? And does it indeed end
Abrupt in middle air? Yet earthward bend
Thy forehead, and to Jupiter cloud-borne
Call ardently! He was indeed wayworn;
Abrupt, in middle air, his way was lost;
To cloud-borne Jove he bowed, and there crost 660
Towards him a large eagle, 'twixt whose wings,
Without one impious word, himself he flings,
Committed to the darkness and the gloom:
Down, down, uncertain to what pleasant doom,
Swift as a fathoming plummet down he fell
Through unknown things; till exhaled asphodel,
And rose, with spicy fannings interbreath'd,
Came swelling forth where little caves were wreath'd
So thick with leaves and mosses, that they seem'd
Large honey-combs of green, and freshly teem'd 670
With airs delicious. In the greenest nook
The eagle landed him, and farewell took.

It was a jasmine bower, all bestrown
With golden moss. His every sense had grown
Ethereal for pleasure; 'bove his head
Flew a delight half-graspable; his tread
Was Hesperian; to his capable ears
Silence was music from the holy spheres;
A dewy luxury was in his eyes;
The little flowers felt his pleasant sighs
And stirr'd them faintly. Verdant cave and cell 680
He wander'd through, oft wondering at such swell
Of sudden exaltation: but, "Alas!
Said he, "will all this gush of feeling pass
Away in solitude? And must they wane,
Like melodies upon a sandy plain,
Without an echo? Then shall I be left
So sad, so melancholy, so bereft!
Yet still I feel immortal! O my love,
My breath of life, where art thou? High above,
Dancing before the morning gates of heaven? 690
Or keeping watch among those starry seven,
Old Atlas' children? Art a maid of the waters,
One of shell-winding Triton's bright-hair'd daughters?
Or art, impossible! a nymph of Dian's,
Weaving a coronal of tender scions
For very idleness? Where'er thou art,
Methinks it now is at my will to start
Into thine arms; to scare Aurora's train,
And snatch thee from the morning; o'er the main 700
To scud like a wild bird, and take thee off
From thy sea-foamy cradle; or to doff
Thy shepherd vest, and woo thee mid fresh leaves.
No, no, too eagerly my soul deceives
Its powerless self: I know this cannot be.
O let me then by some sweet dreaming flee
To her entrancements: hither sleep awhile!
Hither most gentle sleep! and soothing foil
For some few hours the coming solitude."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Thus spake he, and that moment felt endued
With power to dream deliciously; so wound 710
Through a dim passage, searching till he found
The smoothest mossy bed and deepest, where
He threw himself, and just into the air
Stretching his indolent arms, he took, O bliss!
A naked waist: "Fair Cupid, whence is this?"
A well-known voice sigh'd, "Sweetest, here am I!"
At which soft ravishment, with doating cry
They trembled to each other. — Helicon!
O fountain'd hill! Old Homer's Helicon!
That thou wouldst spout a little streamlet o'er 720
These sorry pages; then the verse would soar
And sing above this gentle pair, like lark
Over his nested young: but all is dark
Around thine aged top, and thy clear fount
Exhales in mists to heaven. Aye, the count
Of mighty Poets is made up; the scroll
Is folded by the Muses; the bright roll
Is in Apollo's hand: our dazed eyes
Have seen a new tinge in the western skies:
The world has done its duty. Yet, oh yet, 730
Although the sun of poesy is set,
These lovers did embrace, and we must weep
That there is no old power left to steep
A quill immortal in their joyous tears.
Long time in silence did their anxious fears
Question that thus it was; long time they lay
Fondling and kissing every doubt away;
Long time ere soft caressing sobs began
To mellow into words, and then there ran 740
Two bubbling springs of talk from their sweet lips.
"O known Unknown! from whom my being sips
Such darling essence, wherefore may I not
Be ever in these arms? in this sweet spot
Pillow my chin for ever? ever press
These toying hands and kiss their smooth excess?
Why not for ever and for ever feel
That breath about my eyes? Ah, thou wilt steal
Away from me again, indeed, indeed —
Thou wilt be gone away, and wilt not heed 750
My lonely madness. Speak, my kindest fair!
Is — is it to be so? No! Who will dare
To pluck thee from me? And, of thine own will,
Full well I feel thou wouldst not leave me. Still
Let me entwine thee surer, surer — now
How can we part? Elysium! who art thou?
Who, that thou canst not be for ever here,
Or lift me with thee to some starry sphere?
Enchantress! tell me by this soft embrace,
By the most soft completion of thy face,
Those lips, O slippery blisses, twinkling eyes, 760
And by these tenderest, milky sovereignties —
These tenderest, and by the nectar-wine,
The passion" — "O lov'd Ida the divine!
Endymion! dearest! Ah, unhappy me!
His soul will 'scape us — O felicity!
How he does love me! His poor temples beat
To the very tune of love — how sweet, sweet, sweet.
Revive, dear youth, or I shall faint and die;
Revive, or these soft hours will hurry by
In tranced dulness; speak, and let that spell 770
Affright this lethargy! I cannot quell
Its heavy pressure, and will press at least
My lips to thine, that they may richly feast

THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Until we taste the life of love again.
 What! dost thou move? dost kiss? O bliss! O pain!
 I love thee, youth, more than I can conceive;
 And so long absence from thee doth bereave
 My soul of any rest: yet must I hence:
 Yet, can I not to starry eminence
 Uplift thee; nor for very shame can own 780
 Myself to thee. Ah, dearest, do not groan
 Or thou wilt force me from this secrecy,
 And I must blush in heaven. O that I
 Had done it already; that the dreadful smiles
 At my lost brightness, my impassion'd wiles,
 Had waned from Olympus' solemn height,
 And from all serious Gods; that our delight
 Was quite forgotten, save of us alone!
 And wherefore so ashamed? 'Tis but to atone
 For endless pleasure, by some coward blushes: 790
 Yet must I be a coward! — Horror rushes
 Too palpable before me — the sad look
 Of Jove — Minerva's start — no bosom shook
 With awe of purity — no Cupid pinion
 In reverence veiled — my crystalline dominion
 Half lost, and all old hymns made nullity!
 But what is this to love? O I could fly
 With thee into the ken of heavenly powers,
 So thou wouldst thus, for many sequent hours,
 Press me so sweetly. Now I swear at once 800
 That I am wise, that Pallas is a dunce —
 Perhaps her love like mine is but unknown —
 O I do think that I have been alone
 In chastity: yes, Pallas has been sighing,
 While every eve saw me my hair uptying
 With fingers cool as aspen leaves. Sweet love,
 I was as vague as solitary dove,
 Nor knew that nests were built. Now a soft kiss —
 Aye, by that kiss, I vow an endless bliss,
 An immortality of passion's thine: 810
 Ere long I will exalt thee to the shine
 Of heaven ambrosial; and we will shade
 Ourselves whole summers by a river glade;
 And I will tell thee stories of the sky,
 And breathe thee whispers of its minstrelsy.
 My happy love will overwing all bounds!
 O let me melt into thee; let the sounds
 Of our close voices marry at their birth;
 Let us entwine hoveringly — O dearth
 Of human words! roughness of mortal speech! 820
 Lispings empyrean will I sometime teach
 Thine honied tongue — lute-breathings, which I gasp
 To have thee understand, now while I clasp
 Thee thus, and weep for fondness — I am pain'd,
 Endymion: woe! woe! is grief contain'd
 In the very deeps of pleasure, my sole life?" —
 Hereat, with many sobs, her gentle strife
 Melted into a languor. He return'd
 Entranced vows and tears.

 Ye who have yearn'd 830
 With too much passion, will here stay and pity,
 For the mere sake of truth; as 'tis a ditty
 Not of these days, but long ago 'twas told
 By a cavern wind unto a forest old;
 And then the forest told it in a dream
 To a sleeping lake, whose cool and level gleam
 A poet caught as he was journeying



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

To Phoebus' shrine; and in it he did fling
His weary limbs, bathing an hour's space,
And after, straight in that inspired place, 840
He sang the story up into the air,
Giving it universal freedom. There
Has it been ever sounding for those ears
Whose tips are glowing hot. The legend cheers
Yon centinel stars; and he who listens to it
Must surely be self-doomed or he will rue it:
For quenchless burnings come upon the heart,
Made fiercer by a fear lest any part
Should be engulfed in the eddying wind.
As much as here is penn'd doth always find 840[50]
A resting place, thus much comes clear and plain;
Anon the strange voice is upon the wane —
And 'tis but echo'd from departing sound,
That the fair visitant at last unwound
Her gentle limbs, and left the youth asleep. —
Thus the tradition of the gusty deep.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Now turn we to our former chroniclers. —
Endymion awoke, that grief of hers
Sweet paining on his ear: he sickly guess'd
How lone he was once more, and sadly press'd 860
His empty arms together, hung his head,
And most forlorn upon that widow'd bed
Sat silently. Love's madness he had known:
Often with more than tortured lion's groan
Moanings had burst from him; but now that rage
Had pass'd away: no longer did he wage
A rough-voic'd war against the dooming stars.
No, he had felt too much for such harsh jars:
The lyre of his soul Eolian tun'd
Forgot all violence, and but commun'd 870
With melancholy thought: O he had swoon'd
Drunken from pleasure's nipple; and his love
Henceforth was dove-like. — Loth was he to move
From the imprinted couch, and when he did,
'Twas with slow, languid paces, and face hid
In muffling hands. So temper'd, out he stray'd
Half seeing visions that might have dismay'd
Alecto's serpents; ravishments more keen
Than Hermes' pipe, when anxious he did lean 880
Over eclipsing eyes: and at the last
It was a sounding grotto, vaulted, vast,
O'er studded with a thousand, thousand pearls,
And crimson mouthed shells with stubborn curls,
Of every shape and size, even to the bulk
In which whales arbour close, to brood and sulk
Against an endless storm. Moreover too,
Fish-semblances, of green and azure hue,
Ready to snort their streams. In this cool wonder
Endymion sat down, and 'gan to ponder 890
On all his life: his youth, up to the day
When 'mid acclaim, and feasts, and garlands gay,
He stept upon his shepherd throne: the look
Of his white palace in wild forest nook,
And all the revels he had lorded there:
Each tender maiden whom he once thought fair,
With every friend and fellow-woodlander —
Pass'd like a dream before him. Then the spur
Of the old bards to mighty deeds: his plans
To nurse the golden age 'mong shepherd clans:
That wondrous night: the great Pan-festival: 900
His sister's sorrow; and his wanderings all,
Until into the earth's deep maw he rush'd:
Then all its buried magic, till it flush'd
High with excessive love. "And now," thought he,
"How long must I remain in jeopardy
Of blank amazements that amaze no more?
Now I have tasted her sweet soul to the core
All other depths are shallow: essences,
Once spiritual, are like muddy lees, 910
Meant but to fertilize my earthly root,
And make my branches lift a golden fruit
Into the bloom of heaven: other light,
Though it be quick and sharp enough to blight
The Olympian eagle's vision, is dark,
Dark as the parentage of chaos. Hark!
My silent thoughts are echoing from these shells;
Or they are but the ghosts, the dying swells
Of noises far away? — list!" — Hereupon
He kept an anxious ear. The humming tone
Came louder, and behold, there as he lay, 920
On either side outgush'd, with misty spray,



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A copious spring; and both together dash'd
Swift, mad, fantastic round the rocks, and lash'd
Among the conchs and shells of the lofty grot,
Leaving a trickling dew. At last they shot
Down from the ceiling's height, pouring a noise
As of some breathless racers whose hopes poize
Upon the last few steps, and with spent force
Along the ground they took a winding course.
Endymion follow'd — for it seem'd that one
Ever pursued, the other strove to shun —
Follow'd their languid mazes, till well nigh
He had left thinking of the mystery, —
And was now rapt in tender hoverings
Over the vanish'd bliss. Ah! what is it sings
His dream away? What melodies are these?
They sound as through the whispering of trees,
Not native in such barren vaults. Give ear!

930



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“O Arethusa, peerless nymph! why fear
Such tenderness as mine? Great Dian, why,
Why didst thou hear her prayer? O that I
Were rippling round her dainty fairness now,
Circling about her waist, and striving how
To entice her to a dive! then stealing in
Between her luscious lips and eyelids thin.
O that her shining hair was in the sun,
And I distilling from it thence to run
In amorous rillets down her shrinking form!
To linger on her lily shoulders, warm
Between her kissing breasts, and every charm
Touch raptur’d! — See how painfully I flow:
Fair maid, be pitiful to my great woe.
Stay, stay thy weary course, and let me lead,
A happy wooer, to the flowery mead
Where all that beauty snar’d me.” — “Cruel god,
Desist! or my offended mistress’ nod
Will stagnate all thy fountains: — tease me not
With syren words — Ah, have I really got
Such power to madden thee? And is it true —
Away, away, or I shall dearly rue
My very thoughts: in mercy then away,
Kindest Alpheus for should I obey
My own dear will, ‘twould be a deadly bane.” —
“O, Oread-Queen! would that thou hadst a pain
Like this of mine, then would I fearless turn
And be a criminal.” — “Alas, I burn,
I shudder — gentle river, get thee hence.
Alpheus! thou enchanter! every sense
Of mine was once made perfect in these woods.
Fresh breezes, bowery lawns, and innocent floods,
Ripe fruits, and lonely couch, contentment gave;
But ever since I heedlessly did lave
In thy deceitful stream, a panting glow
Grew strong within me: wherefore serve me so,
And call it love? Alas, ‘twas cruelty.
Not once more did I close my happy eyes
Amid the thrush’s song. Away! Avaunt!
O ‘twas a cruel thing.” — “Now thou dost taunt
So softly, Arethusa, that I think
If thou wast playing on my shady brink,
Thou wouldst bathe once again. Innocent maid!
Stifle thine heart no more; — nor be afraid
Of angry powers: there are deities
Will shade us with their wings. Those fitful sighs
‘Tis almost death to hear: O let me pour
A dewy balm upon them! — fear no more,
Sweet Arethusa! Dian’s self must feel
Sometimes these very pangs. Dear maiden, steal
Blushing into my soul, and let us fly
These dreary caverns for the open sky.
I will delight thee all my winding course,
From the green sea up to my hidden source
About Arcadian forests; and will shew
The channels where my coolest waters flow
Through mossy rocks; where, ‘mid exuberant green,
I roam in pleasant darkness, more unseen
Than Saturn in his exile; where I brim
Round flowery islands, and take thence a skim
Of mealy sweets, which myriads of bees
Buzz from their honied wings: and thou shouldst please
Thyself to choose the richest, where we might
Be incense-pillow’d every summer night.
Doff all sad fears, thou white deliciousness,



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

And let us be thus comforted; unless
Thou couldst rejoice to see my hopeless stream
Hurry distracted from Sol's temperate beam,
And pour to death along some hungry sands." —
"What can I do, Alpheus? Dian stands
Severe before me: persecuting fate!
Unhappy Arethusa! thou wast late 1010
A huntress free in" — At this, sudden fell
Those two sad streams adown a fearful dell.
The Latmian listen'd, but he heard no more,
Save echo, faint repeating o'er and o'er
The name of Arethusa. On the verge
Of that dark gulph he wept, and said: "I urge
Thee, gentle Goddess of my pilgrimage,
By our eternal hopes, to soothe, to assuage,
If thou art powerful, these lovers pains;
And make them happy in some happy plains. 1020

He turn'd — there was a whelming sound — he stept,
There was a cooler light; and so he kept
Towards it by a sandy path, and lo!
More suddenly than doth a moment go,
The visions of the earth were gone and fled —
He saw the giant sea above his head.



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

ENDYMION

BOOK III

THERE are who lord it o'er their fellow-men
With most prevailing tinsel: who unpen
Their baaing vanities, to browse away
The comfortable green and juicy hay
From human pastures; or, O torturing fact!
Who, through an idiot blink, will see unpack'd
Fire-branded foxes to sear up and singe
Our gold and ripe-ear'd hopes. With not one tinge
Of sanctuary splendour, not a sight
Able to face an owl's, they still are dight 10
By the blear-eyed nations in empurpled vests,
And crowns, and turbans. With unladen breasts,
Save of blown self-applause, they proudly mount
To their spirit's perch, their being's high account,
Their tiptop nothings, their dull skies, their thrones —
Amid the fierce intoxicating tones
Of trumpets, shoutings, and belabour'd drums,
And sudden cannon. Ah! how all this hums,
In wakeful ears, like uproar past and gone —
Like thunder clouds that spake to Babylon, 20
And set those old Chaldeans to their tasks. —
Are then regalities all gilded masks?
No, there are throned seats unscalable
But by a patient wing, a constant spell,
Or by ethereal things that, unconfin'd,
Can make a ladder of the eternal wind,
And poise about in cloudy thunder-tents
To watch the abysm-birth of elements.
Aye, 'bove the withering of old-lipp'd Fate
A thousand Powers keep religious state, 30
In water, fiery realm, and airy bourne;
And, silent as a consecrated urn,
Hold sphery sessions for a season due.
Yet few of these far majesties, ah, few!
Have bared their operations to this globe —
Few, who with gorgeous pageantry enrobe
Our piece of heaven — whose benevolence
Shakes hand with our own Ceres; every sense
Filling with spiritual sweets to plenitude,
As bees gorge full their cells. And, by the feud 40
'Twixt Nothing and Creation, I here swear,
Eterne Apollo! that thy Sister fair
Is of all these the gentlier-mightiest.
When thy gold breath is misting in the west,
She unobserved steals unto her throne,
And there she sits most meek and most alone;
As if she had not pomp subservient;
As if thine eye, high Poet! was not bent
Towards her with the Muses in thine heart;
As if the ministring stars kept not apart, 50
Waiting for silver-footed messages.
O Moon! the oldest shades 'mong oldest trees
Feel palpitations when thou lookest in:
O Moon! old boughs lisp forth a holier din
The while they feel thine airy fellowship.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Thou dost bless every where, with silver lip
Kissing dead things to life. The sleeping kine,
Couched in thy brightness, dream of fields divine:
Innumerable mountains rise, and rise,
Ambitious for the hallowing of thine eyes; 60
And yet thy benediction passeth not
One obscure hiding-place, one little spot
Where pleasure may be sent: the nested wren
Has thy fair face within its tranquil ken,
And from beneath a sheltering ivy leaf
Takes glimpses of thee; thou art a relief
To the poor patient oyster, where it sleeps
Within its pearly house. — The mighty deeps,
The monstrous sea is thine — the myriad sea!
O Moon! far-spooming Ocean bows to thee, 70
And Tellus feels his forehead's cumbrous load.

Cynthia! where art thou now? What far abode
Of green or silvery bower doth enshrine
Such utmost beauty? Alas, thou dost pine
For one as sorrowful: thy cheek is pale
For one whose cheek is pale: thou dost bewail
His tears, who weeps for thee. Where dost thou sigh?
Ah! surely that light peeps from Vesper's eye,
Or what a thing is love! 'Tis She, but lo!
How chang'd, how full of ache, how gone in woe! 80
She dies at the thinnest cloud; her loveliness
Is wan on Neptune's blue: yet there's a stress
Of love-spangles, just off yon cape of trees,
Dancing upon the waves, as if to please
The curly foam with amorous influence.
O, not so idle: for down-glancing thence
She fathoms eddies, and runs wild about
O'erwhelming water-courses; scaring out
The thorny sharks from hiding-holes, and fright'ning
Their savage eyes with unaccustomed lightning. 90
Where will the splendor be content to reach?
O love! how potent hast thou been to teach
Strange journeyings! Wherever beauty dwells,
In gulf or aerie, mountains or deep dells,
In light, in gloom, in star or blazing sun,
Thou pointest out the way, and straight 'tis won.
Amid his toil thou gav'st Leander breath;
Thou leddest Orpheus through the gleams of death;
Thou madest Pluto bear thin element;
And now, O winged Chieftain! thou hast sent 100
A moon-beam to the deep, deep water-world,
To find Endymion.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

On gold sand impearl'd
With lily shells, and pebbles milky white,
Poor Cynthia greeted him, and sooth'd her light
Against his pallid face: he felt the charm
To breathlessness, and suddenly a warm
Of his heart's blood: 'twas very sweet; he stay'd
His wandering steps, and half-entranced laid
His head upon a tuft of straggling weeds, 110
To taste the gentle moon, and freshening beads,
Lashed from the crystal roof by fishes' tails.
And so he kept, until the rosy veils
Mantling the east, by Aurora's peering hand
Were lifted from the water's breast, and fann'd
Into sweet air; and sober'd morning came
Meekly through billows: — when like taper-flame
Left sudden by a dallying breath of air,
He rose in silence, and once more 'gan fare
Along his fated way. 120

Far had he roam'd,
With nothing save the hollow vast, that foam'd
Above, around, and at his feet; save things
More dead than Morpheus' imaginings:
Old rusted anchors, helmets, breast-plates large
Of gone sea-warriors; brazen beaks and targe;
Rudders that for a hundred years had lost
The sway of human hand; gold vase emboss'd
With long-forgotten story, and wherein 130
No reveller had ever dipp'd a chin
But those of Saturn's vintage; mouldering scrolls,
Writ in the tongue of heaven, by those souls
Who first were on the earth; and sculptures rude
In ponderous stone, developing the mood
Of ancient Nox; — then skeletons of man,
Of beast, behemoth, and leviathan,
And elephant, and eagle, and huge jaw
Of nameless monster. A cold leaden awe
These secrets struck into him; and unless 140
Dian had chaced away that heaviness,
He might have died: but now, with cheered feel,
He onward kept; wooing these thoughts to steal
About the labyrinth in his soul of love.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“What is there in thee, Moon! that thou shouldst move
My heart so potently? When yet a child
I oft have dried my tears when thou hast smil’d.
Thou seem’dst my sister: hand in hand we went
From eve to morn across the firmament.
No apples would I gather from the tree,
Till thou hadst cool’d their cheeks deliciously: 150
No tumbling water ever spake romance,
But when my eyes with thine thereon could dance:
No woods were green enough, no bower divine,
Until thou liftedst up thine eyelids fine:
In sowing time ne’er would I dibble take,
Or drop a seed, till thou wast wide awake;
And, in the summer tide of blossoming,
No one but thee hath heard me blithly sing
And mesh my dewy flowers all the night.
No melody was like a passing spright 160
If it went not to solemnize thy reign.
Yes, in my boyhood, every joy and pain
By thee were fashion’d to the self-same end;
And as I grew in years, still didst thou blend
With all my ardours: thou wast the deep glen;
Thou wast the mountain-top — the sage’s pen —
The poet’s harp — the voice of friends — the sun;
Thou wast the river — thou wast glory won;
Thou wast my clarion’s blast — thou wast my steed —
My goblet full of wine — my topmost deed: — 170
Thou wast the charm of women, lovely Moon!
O what a wild and harmonized tune
My spirit struck from all the beautiful!
On some bright essence could I lean, and lull
Myself to immortality: I prest
Nature’s soft pillow in a wakeful rest.
But, gentle Orb! there came a nearer bliss —
My strange love came — Felicity’s abyss!
She came, and thou didst fade, and fade away —
Yet not entirely; no, thy starry sway 180
Has been an under-passion to this hour.
Now I begin to feel thine orby power
Is coming fresh upon me: O be kind,
Keep back thine influence, and do not blind
My sovereign vision. — Dearest love, forgive
That I can think away from thee and live! —
Pardon me, airy planet, that I prize
One thought beyond thine argent luxuries!
How far beyond!” At this a surpris’d start 190
Frosted the springing verdure of his heart;
For as he lifted up his eyes to swear
How his own goddess was past all things fair,
He saw far in the concave green of the sea
An old man sitting calm and peacefully.
Upon a weeded rock this old man sat,
And his white hair was awful, and a mat
Of weeds were cold beneath his cold thin feet;
And, ample as the largest winding-sheet,
A cloak of blue wrapp’d up his aged bones,
O’erwrought with symbols by the deepest groans 200
Of ambitious magic: every ocean-form
Was woven in with black distinctness; storm,
And calm, and whispering, and hideous roar
Were emblem’d in the woof; with every shape
That skims, or dives, or sleeps, ‘twixt cape and cape.
The gulphing whale was like a dot in the spell,
Yet look upon it, and ‘twould size and swell
To its huge self; and the minutest fish



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Would pass the very hardest gazer's wish,
And show his little eye's anatomy. 210
Then there was pictur'd the regality
Of Neptune; and the sea nymphs round his state,
In beauteous vassalage, look up and wait.
Beside this old man lay a pearly wand,
And in his lap a book, the which he conn'd
So stedfastly, that the new denizen
Had time to keep him in amazed ken,
To mark these shadowings, and stand in awe.

The old man rais'd his hoary head and saw
The wilder'd stranger — seeming not to see, 220
His features were so lifeless. Suddenly
He woke as from a trance; his snow-white brows
Went arching up, and like two magic ploughs
Furrow'd deep wrinkles in his forehead large,
Which kept as fixedly as rocky marge,
Till round his wither'd lips had gone a smile.
Then up he rose, like one whose tedious toil
Had watch'd for years in forlorn hermitage,
Who had not from mid-life to utmost age
Eas'd in one accent his o'er-burden'd soul, 230
Even to the trees. He rose: he grasp'd his stole,
With convuls'd clenches waving it abroad,
And in a voice of solemn joy, that aw'd
Echo into oblivion, he said: —



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Thou art the man! Now shall I lay my head
In peace upon my watery pillow: now
Sleep will come smoothly to my weary brow.
O Jove! I shall be young again, be young!
O shell-borne Neptune, I am pierc’d and stung
With new-born life! What shall I do? Where go, 240
When I have cast this serpent-skin of woe? —
I’ll swim to the syrens, and one moment listen
Their melodies, and see their long hair glisten;
Anon upon that giant’s arm I’ll be,
That writhes about the roots of Sicily:
To northern seas I’ll in a twinkling sail,
And mount upon the snortings of a whale
To some black cloud; thence down I’ll madly sweep
On forked lightning, to the deepest deep,
Where through some sucking pool I will be hurl’d 250
With rapture to the other side of the world!
O, I am full of gladness! Sisters three,
I bow full hearted to your old decree!
Yes, every god be thank’d, and power benign,
For I no more shall wither, droop, and pine.
Thou art the man!” Endymion started back
Dismay’d; and, like a wretch from whom the rack
Tortures hot breath, and speech of agony,
Mutter’d: “What lonely death am I to die 260
In this cold region? Will he let me freeze,
And float my brittle limbs o’er polar seas?
Or will he touch me with his searing hand,
And leave a black memorial on the sand?
Or tear me piece-meal with a bony saw,
And keep me as a chosen food to draw
His magian fish through hated fire and flame?
O misery of hell! resistless, tame,
Am I to be burnt up? No, I will shout,
Until the gods through heaven’s blue look out! —
O Tartarus! but some few days ago 270
Her soft arms were entwining me, and on
Her voice I hung like fruit among green leaves:
Her lips were all my own, and — ah, ripe sheaves
Of happiness! ye on the stubble droop,
But never may be garner’d. I must stoop
My head, and kiss death’s foot. Love! love, farewell!
Is there no hope from thee? This horrid spell
Would melt at thy sweet breath. — By Dian’s hind
Feeding from her white fingers, on the wind
I see thy streaming hair! and now, by Pan, 280
I care not for this old mysterious man!”

He spake, and walking to that aged form,
Look’d high defiance. Lo! his heart ‘gan warm
With pity, for the grey-hair’d creature wept.
Had he then wrong’d a heart where sorrow kept?
Had he, though blindly contumelious, brought
Rheum to kind eyes, a sting to human thought,
Convulsion to a mouth of many years?
He had in truth; and he was ripe for tears.
The penitent shower fell, as down he knelt 290
Before that care-worn sage, who trembling felt
About his large dark locks, and faltering spake:



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Arise, good youth, for sacred Phoebus’ sake!
I know thine inmost bosom, and I feel
A very brother’s yearning for thee steal
Into mine own: for why? thou openest
The prison gates that have so long opprest
My weary watching. Though thou know’st it not,
Thou art commission’d to this fated spot
For great enfranchisement. O weep no more; 300
I am a friend to love, to loves of yore:
Aye, hadst thou never lov’d an unknown power
I had been grieving at this joyous hour
But even now most miserable old,
I saw thee, and my blood no longer cold
Gave mighty pulses: in this tottering case
Grew a new heart, which at this moment plays
As dancingly as thine. Be not afraid,
For thou shalt hear this secret all display’d,
Now as we speed towards our joyous task.” 310

So saying, this young soul in age’s mask
Went forward with the Carian side by side:
Resuming quickly thus; while ocean’s tide
Hung swollen at their backs, and jewel’d sands
Took silently their foot-prints.

“My soul stands
Now past the midway from mortality,
And so I can prepare without a sigh
To tell thee briefly all my joy and pain. 320
I was a fisher once, upon this main,
And my boat danc’d in every creek and bay;
Rough billows were my home by night and day, —
The sea-gulls not more constant; for I had
No housing from the storm and tempests mad,
But hollow rocks, — and they were palaces
Of silent happiness, of slumberous ease:
Long years of misery have told me so.
Aye, thus it was one thousand years ago.
One thousand years! — Is it then possible 330
To look so plainly through them? to dispel
A thousand years with backward glance sublime?
To breathe away as ‘twere all scummy slime
From off a crystal pool, to see its deep,
And one’s own image from the bottom peep?
Yes: now I am no longer wretched thrall,
My long captivity and moanings all
Are but a slime, a thin-pervading scum,
The which I breathe away, and thronging come
Like things of yesterday my youthful pleasures.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“I touch’d no lute, I sang not, trod no measures: 340
I was a lonely youth on desert shores.
My sports were lonely, ‘mid continuous roars,
And craggy isles, and sea-mew’s plaintive cry
Plaining discrepant between sea and sky.
Dolphins were still my playmates; shapes unseen
Would let me feel their scales of gold and green,
Nor be my desolation; and, full oft,
When a dread waterspout had rear’d aloft
Its hungry hugeness, seeming ready ripe
To burst with hoarsest thunderings, and wipe 350
My life away like a vast sponge of fate,
Some friendly monster, pitying my sad state,
Has dived to its foundations, gulph’d it down,
And left me tossing safely. But the crown
Of all my life was utmost quietude:
More did I love to lie in cavern rude,
Keeping in wait whole days for Neptune’s voice,
And if it came at last, hark, and rejoice!
There blush’d no summer eve but I would steer
My skiff along green shelving coasts, to hear 360
The shepherd’s pipe come clear from aery steep,
Mingled with ceaseless bleatings of his sheep:
And never was a day of summer shine,
But I beheld its birth upon the brine:
For I would watch all night to see unfold
Heaven’s gates, and Aethon snort his morning gold
Wide o’er the swelling streams: and constantly
At brim of day-tide, on some grassy lea,
My nets would be spread out, and I at rest.
The poor folk of the sea-country I blest 370
With daily boon of fish most delicate:
They knew not whence this bounty, and elate
Would strew sweet flowers on a sterile beach.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Why was I not contented? Wherefore reach
At things which, but for thee, O Latmian!
Had been my dreary death? Fool! I began
To feel distemper’d longings: to desire
The utmost privilege that ocean’s sire
Could grant in benediction: to be free
Of all his kingdom. Long in misery 380
I wasted, ere in one extremest fit
I plung’d for life or death. To interknit
One’s senses with so dense a breathing stuff
Might seem a work of pain; so not enough
Can I admire how crystal-smooth it felt,
And buoyant round my limbs. At first I dwelt
Whole days and days in sheer astonishment;
Forgetful utterly of self-intent;
Moving but with the mighty ebb and flow.
Then, like a new fledg’d bird that first doth shew 390
His spreaded feathers to the morrow chill,
I tried in fear the pinions of my will.
‘Twas freedom! and at once I visited
The ceaseless wonders of this ocean-bed.
No need to tell thee of them, for I see
That thou hast been a witness — it must be
For these I know thou canst not feel a drouth,
By the melancholy corners of that mouth.
So I will in my story straightway pass
To more immediate matter. Woe, alas! 400
That love should be my bane! Ah, Scylla fair!
Why did poor Glaucus ever — ever dare
To sue thee to his heart? Kind stranger-youth!
I lov’d her to the very white of truth,
And she would not conceive it. Timid thing!
She fled me swift as sea-bird on the wing,
Round every isle, and point, and promontory,
From where large Hercules wound up his story
Far as Egyptian Nile. My passion grew
The more, the more I saw her dainty hue 410
Gleam delicately through the azure clear:
Until ‘twas too fierce agony to bear;
And in that agony, across my grief
It flash’d, that Circe might find some relief —
Cruel enchantress! So above the water
I rear’d my head, and look’d for Phoebus’ daughter.
Aeaea’s isle was wondering at the moon: —
It seem’d to whirl around me, and a swoon
Left me dead-drifting to that fatal power.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“When I awoke, ‘twas in a twilight bower; 420
Just when the light of morn, with hum of bees,
Stole through its verdurous matting of fresh trees.
How sweet, and sweeter! for I heard a lyre,
And over it a sighing voice expire.

It ceased — I caught light footsteps; and anon
The fairest face that morn e’er look’d upon
Push’d through a screen of roses. Starry Jove!
With tears, and smiles, and honey-words she wove
A net whose thraldom was more bliss than all
The range of flower’d Elysium. Thus did fall 430
The dew of her rich speech: “Ah! Art awake?
O let me hear thee speak, for Cupid’s sake!

I am so oppress’d with joy! Why, I have shed
An urn of tears, as though thou wert cold dead;
And now I find thee living, I will pour
From these devoted eyes their silver store,
Until exhausted of the latest drop,
So it will pleasure thee, and force thee stop
Here, that I too may live: but if beyond 440
Such cool and sorrowful offerings, thou art fond

Of soothing warmth, of dalliance supreme;
If thou art ripe to taste a long love dream;
If smiles, if dimples, tongues for ardour mute,
Hang in thy vision like a tempting fruit,
O let me pluck it for thee.” Thus she link’d
Her charming syllables, till indistinct
Their music came to my o’er-sweeten’d soul;
And then she hover’d over me, and stole
So near, that if no nearer it had been
This furrow’d visage thou hadst never seen. 450

“Young man of Latmos! thus particular
Am I, that thou may’st plainly see how far
This fierce temptation went: and thou may’st not
Exclaim, How then, was Scylla quite forgot?

“Who could resist? Who in this universe?
She did so breathe ambrosia; so immerse
My fine existence in a golden clime.
She took me like a child of suckling time,
And cradled me in roses. Thus condemn’d,
The current of my former life was stemm’d, 460
And to this arbitrary queen of sense

I bow’d a tranced vassal: nor would thence
Have mov’d, even though Amphion’s harp had woo’d
Me back to Scylla o’er the billows rude.

For as Apollo each eve doth devise
A new appareling for western skies;
So every eve, nay every spendthrift hour
Shed balmy consciousness within that bower.
And I was free of haunts umbrageous;
Could wander in the mazy forest-house 470
Of squirrels, foxes shy, and antler’d deer,
And birds from coverts innermost and drear
Warbling for very joy mellifluous sorrow —
To me new born delights!

“Now let me borrow,
For moments few, a temperament as stern
As Pluto’s sceptre, that my words not burn
These uttering lips, while I in calm speech tell
How specious heaven was changed to real hell.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Or give me to the air, or let me die!
I sue not for my happy crown again;
I sue not for my phalanx on the plain;
I sue not for my lone, my widow'd wife;
I sue not for my ruddy drops of life,
My children fair, my lovely girls and boys! 550
I will forget them; I will pass these joys;
Ask nought so heavenward, so too — too high:
Only I pray, as fairest boon, to die,
Or be deliver'd from this cumbrous flesh,
From this gross, detestable, filthy mesh,
And merely given to the cold bleak air.
Have mercy, Goddess! Circe, feel my prayer!"



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

That curst magician's name fell icy numb
Upon my wild conjecturing: truth had come
Naked and sabre-like against my heart. 560
I saw a fury whetting a death-dart;
And my slain spirit, overwrought with fright,
Fainted away in that dark lair of night.
Think, my deliverer, how desolate
My waking must have been! disgust, and hate,
And terrors manifold divided me
A spoil amongst them. I prepar'd to flee
Into the dungeon core of that wild wood:
I fled three days — when lo! before me stood
Glaring the angry witch. O Dis, even now, 570
A clammy dew is beading on my brow,
At mere remembering her pale laugh, and curse.
“Ha! ha! Sir Dainty! there must be a nurse
Made of rose leaves and thistledown, express,
To cradle thee my sweet, and lull thee: yes,
I am too flinty-hard for thy nice touch:
My tenderest squeeze is but a giant's clutch.
So, fairy-thing, it shall have lullabies
Unheard of yet; and it shall still its cries
Upon some breast more lily-feminine. 580
Oh, no — it shall not pine, and pine, and pine
More than one pretty, trifling thousand years;
And then 'twere pity, but fate's gentle shears
Cut short its immortality. Sea-flirt!
Young dove of the waters! truly I'll not hurt
One hair of thine: see how I weep and sigh,
That our heart-broken parting is so nigh.
And must we part? Ah, yes, it must be so.
Yet ere thou leavest me in utter woe,
Let me sob over thee my last adieus, 590
And speak a blessing: Mark me! thou hast thews
Immortal, for thou art of heavenly race:
But such a love is mine, that here I chase
Eternally away from thee all bloom
Of youth, and destine thee towards a tomb.
Hence shalt thou quickly to the watery vast;
And there, ere many days be overpast,
Disabled age shall seize thee; and even then
Thou shalt not go the way of aged men;
But live and wither, cripple and still breathe 600
Ten hundred years: which gone, I then bequeath
Thy fragile bones to unknown burial.
Adieu, sweet love, adieu!” — As shot stars fall,
She fled ere I could groan for mercy. Stung
And poisoned was my spirit: despair sung
A war-song of defiance 'gainst all hell.
A hand was at my shoulder to compel
My sullen steps; another 'fore my eyes
Moved on with pointed finger. In this guise
Enforced, at the last by ocean's foam 610
I found me; by my fresh, my native home.
Its tempering coolness, to my life akin,
Came salutary as I waded in;
And, with a blind voluptuous rage, I gave
Battle to the swollen billow-ridge, and drave
Large froth before me, while there yet remain'd
Hale strength, nor from my bones all marrow drain'd.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Young lover, I must weep — such hellish spite
With dry cheek who can tell? While thus my might
Proving upon this element, dismay’d, 620
Upon a dead thing’s face my hand I laid;
I look’d — ’twas Scylla! Cursed, cursed Circe!
O vulture-witch, hast never heard of mercy?
Could not thy harshest vengeance be content,
But thou must nip this tender innocent
Because I lov’d her? — Cold, O cold indeed
Were her fair limbs, and like a common weed
The sea-swell took her hair. Dead as she was
I clung about her waist, nor ceas’d to pass
Fleet as an arrow through unfathom’d brine, 630
Until there shone a fabric crystalline,
Ribb’d and inlaid with coral, pebble, and pearl.
Headlong I darted; at one eager swirl
Gain’d its bright portal, enter’d, and behold!
’Twas vast, and desolate, and icy-cold;
And all around — But wherefore this to thee
Who in few minutes more thyself shalt see? —
I left poor Scylla in a niche and fled.
My fever’d parchings up, my scathing dread
Met palsy half way: soon these limbs became 640
Gaunt, wither’d, sapless, feeble, cramp’d, and lame.

“Now let me pass a cruel, cruel space,
Without one hope, without one faintest trace
Of mitigation, or redeeming bubble
Of colour’d phantasy; for I fear ’twould trouble
Thy brain to loss of reason: and next tell
How a restoring chance came down to quell
One half of the witch in me.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

On a day,
Sitting upon a rock above the spray, 650
I saw grow up from the horizon's brink
A gallant vessel: soon she seem'd to sink
Away from me again, as though her course
Had been resum'd in spite of hindering force —
So vanish'd: and not long, before arose
Dark clouds, and muttering of winds morose.
Old Eolus would stifle his mad spleen,
But could not: therefore all the billows green
Toss'd up the silver spume against the clouds.
The tempest came: I saw that vessel's shrouds 660
In perilous bustle; while upon the deck
Stood trembling creatures. I beheld the wreck;
The final gulphing; the poor struggling souls:
I heard their cries amid loud thunder-rolls.
O they had all been sav'd but crazed eld
Annull'd my vigorous cravings: and thus quell'd
And curb'd, think on't, O Latmian! did I sit
Writhing with pity, and a cursing fit
Against that hell-born Circe. The crew had gone,
By one and one, to pale oblivion; 670
And I was gazing on the surges prone,
With many a scalding tear and many a groan,
When at my feet emerg'd an old man's hand,
Grasping this scroll, and this same slender wand.
I knelt with pain — reached out my hand — had grasp'd
These treasures — touch'd the knuckles — they unclasp'd —
I caught a finger: but the downward weight
O'erpowered me — it sank. Then 'gan abate
The storm, and through chill aguish gloom outburst
The comfortable sun. I was athirst 680
To search the book, and in the warming air
Parted its dripping leaves with eager care.
Strange matters did it treat of, and drew on
My soul page after page, till well-nigh won
Into forgetfulness; when, stupefied,
I read these words, and read again, and tried
My eyes against the heavens, and read again.
O what a load of misery and pain
Each Atlas-line bore off! — a shine of hope
Came gold around me, cheering me to cope 690
Strenuous with hellish tyranny. Attend!
For thou hast brought their promise to an end.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

In the wide sea there lives a forlorn wretch,
Doom'd with enfeebled carcase to outstretch
His loath'd existence through ten centuries,
And then to die alone. Who can devise
A total opposition? No one. So
One million times ocean must ebb and flow,
And he oppressed. Yet he shall not die,
These things accomplish'd: — If he utterly 700
Scans all the depths of magic, and expounds
The meanings of all motions, shapes, and sounds;
If he explores all forms and substances
Straight homeward to their symbol-essences;
He shall not die. Moreover, and in chief,
He must pursue this task of joy and grief
Most piously; — all lovers tempest-tost,
And in the savage overwhelming lost,
He shall deposit side by side, until 710
Time's creeping shall the dreary space fulfil:
Which done, and all these labours ripened,
A youth, by heavenly power lov'd and led,
Shall stand before him; whom he shall direct
How to consummate all. The youth elect
Must do the thing, or both will be destroy'd." —

"Then," cried the young Endymion, overjoy'd,
"We are twin brothers in this destiny!
Say, I intreat thee, what achievement high
Is, in this restless world, for me reserv'd.
What! if from thee my wandering feet had swerv'd, 720
Had we both perish'd?" — "Look!" the sage replied,
"Dost thou not mark a gleaming through the tide,
Of divers brilliances? 'tis the edifice
I told thee of, where lovely Scylla lies;
And where I have enshrined piously
All lovers, whom fell storms have doom'd to die
Throughout my bondage." Thus discoursing, on
They went till unobscur'd the porches shone;
Which hurryingly they gain'd, and enter'd straight. 730
Sure never since king Neptune held his state
Was seen such wonder underneath the stars.
Turn to some level plain where haughty Mars
Has legion'd all his battle; and behold
How every soldier, with firm foot, doth hold
His even breast: see, many steeled squares,
And rigid ranks of iron — whence who dares
One step? Imagine further, line by line,
These warrior thousands on the field supine: —
So in that crystal place, in silent rows, 740
Poor lovers lay at rest from joys and woes. —
The stranger from the mountains, breathless, trac'd
Such thousands of shut eyes in order plac'd;
Such ranges of white feet, and patient lips
All ruddy, — for here death no blossom nips.
He mark'd their brows and foreheads; saw their hair
Put sleekly on one side with nicest care;
And each one's gentle wrists, with reverence,
Put cross-wise to its heart.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Let us commence,
Whisper’d the guide, stuttering with joy, even now.” 750
He spake, and, trembling like an aspen-bough,
Began to tear his scroll in pieces small,
Uttering the while some mumblings funeral.
He tore it into pieces small as snow
That drifts unfeather’d when bleak northerns blow;
And having done it, took his dark blue cloak
And bound it round Endymion: then struck
His wand against the empty air times nine. —
“What more there is to do, young man, is thine:
But first a little patience; first undo 760
This tangled thread, and wind it to a clue.
Ah, gentle! ‘tis as weak as spider’s skein;
And shouldst thou break it — What, is it done so clean?
A power overshadows thee! Oh, brave!
The spite of hell is tumbling to its grave.
Here is a shell; ‘tis pearly blank to me,
Nor mark’d with any sign or character —
Canst thou read aught? O read for pity’s sake!
Olympus! we are safe! Now, Carian, break
This wand against yon lyre on the pedestal.” 770

‘Twas done: and straight with sudden swell and fall
Sweet music breath’d her soul away, and sigh’d
A lullaby to silence. —”Youth! now strew
These minced leaves on me, and passing through
Those files of dead, scatter the same around,
And thou wilt see the issue.” — ‘Mid the sound
Of flutes and viols, ravishing his heart,
Endymion from Glaucus stood apart,
And scatter’d in his face some fragments light.
How lightning-swift the change! a youthful wight 780
Smiling beneath a coral diadem,
Out-sparkling sudden like an upturn’d gem,
Appear’d, and, stepping to a beauteous corse,
Kneel’d down beside it, and with tenderest force
Press’d its cold hand, and wept — and Scylla sigh’d!
Endymion, with quick hand, the charm applied —
The nymph arose: he left them to their joy,
And onward went upon his high employ,
Showering those powerful fragments on the dead.
And, as he pass’d, each lifted up its head, 790
As doth a flower at Apollo’s touch.
Death felt it to his inwards; ‘twas too much:
Death fell a weeping in his charnel-house.
The Latmian persever’d along, and thus
All were re-animated. There arose
A noise of harmony, pulses and throes
Of gladness in the air — while many, who
Had died in mutual arms devout and true,
Sprang to each other madly; and the rest
Felt a high certainty of being blest. 800
They gaz’d upon Endymion. Enchantment
Grew drunken, and would have its head and bent.
Delicious symphonies, like airy flowers,
Budded, and swell’d, and, full-blown, shed full showers
Of light, soft, unseen leaves of sounds divine.
The two deliverers tasted a pure wine
Of happiness, from fairy-press ooz’d out.
Speechless they eyed each other, and about
The fair assembly wander’d to and fro,
Distracted with the richest overflow 810
Of joy that ever pour’d from heaven.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

— “Away!”
Shouted the new-born god; “Follow, and pay
Our piety to Neptunus supreme!” —
Then Scylla, blushing sweetly from her dream,
They led on first, bent to her meek surprise,
Through portal columns of a giant size,
Into the vaulted, boundless emerald.
Joyous all follow’d, as the leader call’d,
Down marble steps; pouring as easily 820
As hour-glass sand — and fast, as you might see
Swallows obeying the south summer’s call,
Or swans upon a gentle waterfall.

Thus went that beautiful multitude, nor far,
Ere from among some rocks of glittering spar,
Just within ken, they saw descending thick
Another multitude. Whereat more quick
Moved either host. On a wide sand they met,
And of those numbers every eye was wet;
For each their old love found. A murmuring rose, 830
Like what was never heard in all the throes
Of wind and waters: ‘tis past human wit
To tell; ‘tis dizziness to think of it.

This mighty consummation made, the host
Mov’d on for many a league; and gain’d, and lost
Huge sea-marks; vanward swelling in array,
And from the rear diminishing away, —
Till a faint dawn surpris’d them. Glaucus cried,
“Behold! behold, the palace of his pride!
God Neptune’s palaces!” With noise increas’d, 840
They shoulder’d on towards that brightening east.
At every onward step proud domes arose
In prospect, — diamond gleams, and golden glows
Of amber ‘gainst their faces levelling.
Joyous, and many as the leaves in spring,
Still onward; still the splendour gradual swell’d.
Rich opal domes were seen, on high upheld
By jasper pillars, letting through their shafts
A blush of coral. Copious wonder-draughts
Each gazer drank; and deeper drank more near: 850
For what poor mortals fragment up, as mere
As marble was there lavish, to the vast
Of one fair palace, that far far surpass’d,
Even for common bulk, those olden three,
Memphis, and Babylon, and Nineveh.

As large, as bright, as colour’d as the bow
Of Iris, when unfading it doth shew
Beyond a silvery shower, was the arch
Through which this Paphian army took its march, 860
Into the outer courts of Neptune’s state:
Whence could be seen, direct, a golden gate,
To which the leaders sped; but not half raught
Ere it burst open swift as fairy thought,
And made those dazzled thousands veil their eyes
Like callow eagles at the first sunrise.
Soon with an eagle nativeness their gaze
Ripe from hue-golden swoons took all the blaze,
And then, behold! large Neptune on his throne
Of emerald deep: yet not exalt alone;
At his right hand stood winged Love, and on 870
His left sat smiling Beauty’s paragon.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Far as the mariner on highest mast
Can see all round upon the calmed vast,
So wide was Neptune's hall: and as the blue
Doth vault the waters, so the waters drew
Their doming curtains, high, magnificent,
Aw'd from the throne aloof; — and when storm-rent
Disclos'd the thunder-gloomings in Jove's air;
But sooth'd as now, flash'd sudden everywhere,
Noiseless, sub-marine cloudlets, glittering 880
Death to a human eye: for there did spring
From natural west, and east, and south, and north,
A light as of four sunsets, blazing forth
A gold-green zenith 'bove the Sea-God's head.
Of lucid depth the floor, and far outspread
As breezeless lake, on which the slim canoe
Of feather'd Indian darts about, as through
The delicatest air: air verily,
But for the portraiture of clouds and sky:
This palace floor breath-air, — but for the amaze 890
Of deep-seen wonders motionless, — and blaze
Of the dome pomp, reflected in extremes,
Globing a golden sphere.

They stood in dreams
Till Triton blew his horn. The palace rang;
The Nereids danc'd; the Syrens faintly sang;
And the great Sea-King bow'd his dripping head.
Then Love took wing, and from his pinions shed
On all the multitude a nectarous dew. 900
The ooze-born Goddess beckoned and drew
Fair Scylla and her guides to conference;
And when they reach'd the throned eminence
She kist the sea-nymph's cheek, — who sat her down
A toying with the doves. Then, — "Mighty crown
And sceptre of this kingdom!" Venus said,
"Thy vows were on a time to Nais paid:
Behold!" — Two copious tear-drops instant fell
From the God's large eyes; he smil'd delectable,
And over Glaucus held his blessing hands. — 910
"Endymion! Ah! still wandering in the bands
Of love? Now this is cruel. Since the hour
I met thee in earth's bosom, all my power
Have I put forth to serve thee. What, not yet
Escap'd from dull mortality's harsh net?
A little patience, youth! 'twill not be long,
Or I am skillless quite: an idle tongue,
A humid eye, and steps luxurious,
Where these are new and strange, are ominous.
Aye, I have seen these signs in one of heaven,
When others were all blind; and were I given 920
To utter secrets, haply I might say
Some pleasant words: — but Love will have his day.
So wait awhile expectant. Pr'ythee soon,
Even in the passing of thine honey-moon,
Visit my Cytherea: thou wilt find
Cupid well-natured, my Adonis kind;
And pray persuade with thee — Ah, I have done,
All blisses be upon thee, my sweet son!" —
Thus the fair goddess: while Endymion
Knelt to receive those accents halcyon. 930



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Meantime a glorious revelry began
Before the Water-Monarch. Nectar ran
In courteous fountains to all cups outreach'd;
And plunder'd vines, teeming exhaustless, pleach'd
New growth about each shell and pendent lyre;
The which, in disentangling for their fire,
Pull'd down fresh foliage and coverture
For dainty toying. Cupid, empire-sure,
Flutter'd and laugh'd, and oft-times through the throng
Made a delighted way. Then dance, and song, 940
And garlanding grew wild; and pleasure reign'd.
In harmless tendrils they each other chain'd,
And strove who should be smother'd deepest in
Fresh crush of leaves.

O 'tis a very sin
For one so weak to venture his poor verse
In such a place as this. O do not curse,
High Muses! let him hurry to the ending.

All suddenly were silent. A soft blending
Of dulcet instruments came charmingly; 950
And then a hymn.

“KING of the stormy sea!
Brother of Jove, and co-inheritor
Of elements! Eternally before
Thee the waves awful bow. Fast, stubborn rock,
At thy fear'd trident shrinking, doth unlock
Its deep foundations, hissing into foam.
All mountain-rivers lost, in the wide home
Of thy capacious bosom ever flow. 960
Thou frownest, and old Eolus thy foe
Skulks to his cavern, 'mid the gruff complaint
Of all his rebel tempests. Dark clouds faint
When, from thy diadem, a silver gleam
Slants over blue dominion. Thy bright team
Gulphs in the morning light, and scuds along
To bring thee nearer to that golden song
Apollo singeth, while his chariot
Waits at the doors of heaven. Thou art not
For scenes like this: an empire stern hast thou;
And it hath furrow'd that large front: yet now, 970
As newly come of heaven, dost thou sit
To blend and interknit
Subdued majesty with this glad time.
O shell-borne King sublime!
We lay our hearts before thee evermore —
We sing, and we adore!

“Breathe softly, flutes;
Be tender of your strings, ye soothing lutes;
Nor be the trumpet heard! O vain, O vain;
Not flowers budding in an April rain, 980
Nor breath of sleeping dove, nor river's flow, —
No, nor the Eolian twang of Love's own bow,
Can mingle music fit for the soft ear
Of goddess Cytherea!
Yet deign, white Queen of Beauty, thy fair eyes
On our souls' sacrifice.



PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

ENDYMION

BOOK IV

MUSE of my native land! loftiest Muse!
O first-born on the mountains! by the hues
Of heaven on the spiritual air begot:
Long didst thou sit alone in northern grot,
While yet our England was a wolfish den;
Before our forests heard the talk of men;
Before the first of Druids was a child; —
Long didst thou sit amid our regions wild
Rapt in a deep prophetic solitude.
There came an eastern voice of solemn mood: — 10
Yet wast thou patient. Then sang forth the Nine,
Apollo's garland: — yet didst thou divine
Such home-bred glory, that they cry'd in vain,
"Come hither, Sister of the Island!" Plain
Spake fair Ausonia; and once more she spake
A higher summons: — still didst thou betake
Thee to thy native hopes. O thou hast won
A full accomplishment! The thing is done,
Which undone, these our latter days had risen 20
On barren souls. Great Muse, thou know'st what prison
Of flesh and bone, curbs, and confines, and frets
Our spirit's wings: despondency besets
Our pillows; and the fresh to-morrow morn
Seems to give forth its light in very scorn
Of our dull, uninspired, snail-paced lives.
Long have I said, how happy he who shrives
To thee! But then I thought on poets gone,
And could not pray: — nor can I now — so on
I move to the end in lowliness of heart. —

"Ah, woe is me! that I should fondly part 30
From my dear native land! Ah, foolish maid!
Glad was the hour, when, with thee, myriads bade
Adieu to Ganges and their pleasant fields!
To one so friendless the clear freshet yields
A bitter coolness, the ripe grape is sour:
Yet I would have, great gods! but one short hour
Of native air — let me but die at home."

Endymion to heaven's airy dome
Was offering up a hecatomb of vows,
When these words reach'd him. Whereupon he bows 40
His head through thorny-green entanglement
Of underwood, and to the sound is bent,
Anxious as hind towards her hidden fawn.

"Is no one near to help me? No fair dawn
Of life from charitable voice? No sweet saying
To set my dull and sadden'd spirit playing?
No hand to toy with mine? No lips so sweet
That I may worship them? No eyelids meet
To twinkle on my bosom? No one dies
Before me, till from these enslaving eyes 50
Redemption sparkles! — I am sad and lost."



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Thou, Carian lord, hadst better have been tost
Into a whirlpool. Vanish into air,
Warm mountaineer! for canst thou only bear
A woman's sigh alone and in distress?
See not her charms! Is Phoebe passionless?
Phoebe is fairer far — O gaze no more: —
Yet if thou wilt behold all beauty's store,
Behold her panting in the forest grass!
Do not those curls of glossy jet surpass 60
For tenderness the arms so idly lain
Amongst them? Feelest not a kindred pain,
To see such lovely eyes in swimming search
After some warm delight, that seems to perch
Dovelike in the dim cell lying beyond
Their upper lids? — Hist!

“O for Hermes' wand
To touch this flower into human shape!
That woodland Hyacinthus could escape 70
From his green prison, and here kneeling down
Call me his queen, his second life's fair crown!
Ah me, how I could love! — My soul doth melt
For the unhappy youth — Love! I have felt
So faint a kindness, such a meek surrender
To what my own full thoughts had made too tender,
That but for tears my life had fled away! —
Ye deaf and senseless minutes of the day,
And thou, old forest, hold ye this for true,
There is no lightning, no authentic dew 80
But in the eye of love: there's not a sound,
Melodious howsoever, can confound
The heavens and earth in one to such a death
As doth the voice of love: there's not a breath
Will mingle kindly with the meadow air,
Till it has panted round, and stolen a share
Of passion from the heart!” —

Upon a bough
He leant, wretched. He surely cannot now
Thirst for another love: O impious,
That he can even dream upon it thus! — 90
Thought he, “Why am I not as are the dead,
Since to a woe like this I have been led
Through the dark earth, and through the wondrous sea?
Goddess! I love thee not the less: from thee
By Juno's smile I turn not — no, no, no —
While the great waters are at ebb and flow. —
I have a triple soul! O fond pretence —
For both, for both my love is so immense,
I feel my heart is cut in twain for them.”



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

And so he groan'd, as one by beauty slain. The lady's heart beat quick, and he could see Her gentle bosom heave tumultuously. He sprang from his green covert: there she lay, Sweet as a muskrose upon new-made hay; With all her limbs on tremble, and her eyes Shut softly up alive. To speak he tries. "Fair damsel, pity me! forgive that I Thus violate thy bower's sanctity! O pardon me, for I am full of grief — Grief born of thee, young angel! fairest thief! Who stolen hast away the wings wherewith I was to top the heavens. Dear maid, sith Thou art my executioner, and I feel Loving and hatred, misery and weal, Will in a few short hours be nothing to me, And all my story that much passion slew me; Do smile upon the evening of my days: And, for my tortur'd brain begins to craze, Be thou my nurse; and let me understand How dying I shall kiss that lily hand. — Dost weep for me? Then should I be content. Scowl on, ye fates! until the firmament Outblackens Erebus, and the full-cavern'd earth Crumbles into itself. By the cloud girth Of Jove, those tears have given me a thirst To meet oblivion." — As her heart would burst The maiden sobb'd awhile, and then replied: "Why must such desolation betide As that thou speakest of? Are not these green nooks Empty of all misfortune? Do the brooks Utter a gorgon voice? Does yonder thrush, Schooling its half-fledg'd little ones to brush About the dewy forest, whisper tales? — Speak not of grief, young stranger, or cold snails Will slime the rose to night. Though if thou wilt, Methinks 'twould be a guilt — a very guilt — Not to companion thee, and sigh away The light — the dusk — the dark — till break of day!" "Dear lady," said Endymion, "'tis past: I love thee! and my days can never last. That I may pass in patience still speak: Let me have music dying, and I seek No more delight — I bid adieu to all. Didst thou not after other climates call, And murmur about Indian streams?" — Then she, Sitting beneath the midmost forest tree, For pity sang this roundelay —	100
"O Sorrow, Why dost borrow The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips? — To give maiden blushes To the white rose bushes? Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips?	110
"O Sorrow, Why dost borrow The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye? — To give the glow-worm light? Or, on a moonless night, To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry?	120
As that thou speakest of? Are not these green nooks Empty of all misfortune? Do the brooks Utter a gorgon voice? Does yonder thrush, Schooling its half-fledg'd little ones to brush About the dewy forest, whisper tales? — Speak not of grief, young stranger, or cold snails Will slime the rose to night. Though if thou wilt, Methinks 'twould be a guilt — a very guilt — Not to companion thee, and sigh away The light — the dusk — the dark — till break of day!" "Dear lady," said Endymion, "'tis past: I love thee! and my days can never last. That I may pass in patience still speak: Let me have music dying, and I seek No more delight — I bid adieu to all. Didst thou not after other climates call, And murmur about Indian streams?" — Then she, Sitting beneath the midmost forest tree, For pity sang this roundelay —	130
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THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“O Sorrow, 160
Why dost borrow
The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue? —
To give at evening pale
Unto the nightingale,
That thou mayst listen the cold dews among?

“O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
Heart’s lightness from the merriment of May? —
A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head, 170
Though he should dance from eve till peep of day —
Nor any drooping flower
Held sacred for thy bower,
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

“To Sorrow
I bade good-morrow,
And thought to leave her far away behind;
But cheerly, cheerly,
She loves me dearly;
She is so constant to me, and so kind: 180
I would deceive her
And so leave her,
But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

“Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping: in the whole world wide
There was no one to ask me why I wept, —
And so I kept
Brimming the water-lily cups with tears
Cold as my fears.

“Beneath my palm trees, by the river side, 190
I sat a weeping: what enamour’d bride,
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,
But hides and shrouds
Beneath dark palm trees by a river side?

“And as I sat, over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revellers: the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue —
‘Twas Bacchus and his crew!
The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
From kissing cymbals made a merry din — 200
‘Twas Bacchus and his kin!
Like to a moving vintage down they came,
Crown’d with green leaves, and faces all on flame;
All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,
To scare thee, Melancholy!
O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!
And I forgot thee, as the berried holly
By shepherds is forgotten, when, in June,
Tall chesnuts keep away the sun and moon: —
I rush’d into the folly! 210



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,
Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,
 With sidelong laughing;
And little rills of crimson wine imbrued
His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white
 For Venus’ pearly bite;
And near him rode Silenus on his ass,
Pelted with flowers as he on did pass
 Tipsily quaffing.

“Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence came ye! 220
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your bowers desolate,
 Your lutes, and gentler fate? —
‘We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing?
 A conquering!
Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,
We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide: —
Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
 To our wild minstrelsy!’

“Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came ye! 230
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left
 Your nuts in oak-tree cleft? —
‘For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;
For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,
 And cold mushrooms;
For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth;
Great God of breathless cups and chirping mirth! —
Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
 To our mad minstrelsy!’ 240

“Over wide streams and mountains great we went,
And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,
 With Asian elephants:
Onward these myriads — with song and dance,
With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians’ prance,
Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,
Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,
Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil
Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers’ toil: 250
With toying oars and silken sails they glide,
 Nor care for wind and tide.

“Mounted on panthers’ furs and lions’ manes,
From rear to van they scour about the plains;
A three days’ journey in a moment done:
And always, at the rising of the sun,
About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,
 On spleenful unicorn.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

O what a sigh she gave in finishing,
And look, quite dead to every worldly thing!
Endymion could not speak, but gazed on her;
And listened to the wind that now did stir
About the crisped oaks full drearily,
Yet with as sweet a softness as might be
Remember'd from its velvet summer song.
At last he said: "Poor lady, how thus long
Have I been able to endure that voice? 300
Fair Melody! kind Syren! I've no choice;
I must be thy sad servant evermore:
I cannot choose but kneel here and adore.
Alas, I must not think — by Phoebe, no!
Let me not think, soft Angel! shall it be so?
Say, beautifullest, shall I never think?
O thou could'st foster me beyond the brink
Of recollection! make my watchful care
Close up its bloodshot eyes, nor see despair! 310
Do gently murder half my soul, and I
Shall feel the other half so utterly! —
I'm giddy at that cheek so fair and smooth;
O let it blush so ever! let it soothe
My madness! let it mantle rosy-warm
With the tinge of love, panting in safe alarm. —
This cannot be thy hand, and yet it is;
And this is sure thine other softling — this
Thine own fair bosom, and I am so near!
Wilt fall asleep? O let me sip that tear! 320
And whisper one sweet word that I may know
This is this world — sweet dewy blossom!" — Woe!
Woe! Woe to that Endymion! Where is he? —
Even these words went echoing dismally
Through the wide forest — a most fearful tone,
Like one repenting in his latest moan;
And while it died away a shade pass'd by,
As of a thunder cloud. When arrows fly
Through the thick branches, poor ring-doves sleek forth
Their timid necks and tremble; so these both 330
Leant to each other trembling, and sat so
Waiting for some destruction — when lo,
Foot-feather'd Mercury appear'd sublime
Beyond the tall tree tops; and in less time
Than shoots the slanted hail-storm, down he dropt
Towards the ground; but rested not, nor stopt
One moment from his home: only the sward
He with his wand light touch'd, and heavenward
Swifter than sight was gone — even before
The teeming earth a sudden witness bore 340
Of his swift magic. Diving swans appear
Above the crystal circlings white and clear;
And catch the cheated eye in wild surprise,
How they can dive in sight and unseen rise —
So from the turf outsprang two steeds jet-black,
Each with large dark blue wings upon his back.
The youth of Caria plac'd the lovely dame
On one, and felt himself in spleen to tame
The other's fierceness. Through the air they flew,
High as the eagles. Like two drops of dew 350
Exhal'd to Phoebus' lips, away they are gone,
Far from the earth away — unseen, alone,
Among cool clouds and winds, but that the free,
The buoyant life of song can floating be
Above their heads, and follow them untir'd. —
Muse of my native land, am I inspir'd?
This is the giddy air, and I must spread



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Wide pinions to keep here; nor do I dread
Or height, or depth, or width, or any chance
Precipitous: I have beneath my glance 360
Those towering horses and their mournful freight.
Could I thus sail, and see, and thus await
Fearless for power of thought, without thine aid? —
There is a sleepy dusk, an odorous shade
From some approaching wonder, and behold
Those winged steeds, with snorting nostrils bold
Snuff at its faint extreme, and seem to tire,
Dying to embers from their native fire!

There curl'd a purple mist around them; soon,
It seem'd as when around the pale new moon 370
Sad Zephyr droops the clouds like weeping willow:
'Twas Sleep slow journeying with head on pillow.
For the first time, since he came nigh dead born
From the old womb of night, his cave forlorn
Had he left more forlorn; for the first time,
He felt aloof the day and morning's prime —
Because into his depth Cimmerian

There came a dream, shewing how a young man,
Ere a lean bat could plump its wintery skin,
Would at high Jove's empyreal footstool win 380
An immortality, and how espouse
Jove's daughter, and be reckon'd of his house.
Now was he slumbering towards heaven's gate,
That he might at the threshold one hour wait
To hear the marriage melodies, and then
Sink downward to his dusky cave again.

His litter of smooth semiluculent mist,
Diversely ting'd with rose and amethyst,
Puzzled those eyes that for the centre sought;
And scarcely for one moment could be caught 390
His sluggish form reposing motionless.
Those two on winged steeds, with all the stress
Of vision search'd for him, as one would look
Athwart the shallows of a river nook
To catch a glance at silver throated eels, —
Or from old Skiddaw's top, when fog conceals
His rugged forehead in a mantle pale,
With an eye-guess towards some pleasant vale
Descry a favourite hamlet faint and far.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

These raven horses, though they foster'd are 400
Of earth's splenetic fire, dully drop
Their full-veined ears, nostrils blood wide, and stop;
Upon the spiritless mist have they outspread
Their ample feathers, are in slumber dead, —
And on those pinions, level in mid air,
Endymion sleepeth and the lady fair.
Slowly they sail, slowly as icy isle
Upon a calm sea drifting: and meanwhile
The mournful wanderer dreams. Behold! he walks
On heaven's pavement; brotherly he talks 410
To divine powers: from his hand full fain
Juno's proud birds are pecking pearly grain:
He tries the nerve of Phoebus' golden bow,
And asketh where the golden apples grow:
Upon his arm he braces Pallas' shield,
And strives in vain to unsettle and wield
A Jovian thunderbolt: arch Hebe brings
A full-brimm'd goblet, dances lightly, sings
And tantalizes long; at last he drinks,
And lost in pleasure at her feet he sinks, 420
Touching with dazzled lips her starlight hand.
He blows a bugle, — an ethereal band
Are visible above: the Seasons four, —
Green-kyrtled Spring, flush Summer, golden store
In Autumn's sickle, Winter frosty hoar,
Join dance with shadowy Hours; while still the blast,
In swells unmitigated, still doth last
To sway their floating morris. "Whose is this?
Whose bugle?" he inquires: they smile — "O Dis!
Why is this mortal here? Dost thou not know 430
Its mistress' lips? Not thou? — 'Tis Dian's: lo!
She rises crescented!" He looks, 'tis she,
His very goddess: good-bye earth, and sea,
And air, and pains, and care, and suffering;
Good-bye to all but love! Then doth he spring
Towards her, and awakes — and, strange, o'erhead,
Of those same fragrant exhalations bred,
Beheld awake his very dream: the gods
Stood smiling, merry Hebe laughs and nods;
And Phoebe bends towards him crescented. 440
O state perplexing! On the pinion bed,
Too well awake, he feels the panting side
Of his delicious lady. He who died
For soaring too audacious in the sun,
Where that same treacherous wax began to run,
Felt not more tongue-tied than Endymion.
His heart leapt up as to its rightful throne,
To that fair shadow'd passion puls'd its way —
Ah, what perplexity! Ah, well a day!
So fond, so beauteous was his bed-fellow, 450
He could not help but kiss her: then he grew
Awhile forgetful of all beauty save
Young Phoebe's, golden hair'd; and so 'gan crave
Forgiveness: yet he turn'd once more to look
At the sweet sleeper, — all his soul was shook, —
She press'd his hand in slumber; so once more
He could not help but kiss her and adore.
At this the shadow wept, melting away.
The Latmian started up: "Bright goddess, stay!
Search my most hidden breast! By truth's own tongue, 460
I have no dædale heart: why is it wrung
To desperation? Is there nought for me,
Upon the bourne of bliss, but misery?"



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

These words awoke the stranger of dark tresses:
Her dawning love-look rapt Endymion blesses
With 'haviour soft. Sleep yawned from underneath.
"Thou swan of Ganges, let us no more breathe
This murky phantasm! thou contented seem'st
Pillow'd in lovely idleness, nor dream'st
What horrors may discomfort thee and me. 470
Ah, shouldst thou die from my heart-treachery! —
Yet did she merely weep — her gentle soul
Hath no revenge in it: as it is whole
In tenderness, would I were whole in love!
Can I prize thee, fair maid, all price above,
Even when I feel as true as innocence?
I do, I do. — What is this soul then? Whence
Came it? It does not seem my own, and I
Have no self-passion or identity.
Some fearful end must be: where, where is it? 480
By Nemesis, I see my spirit flit
Alone about the dark — Forgive me, sweet:
Shall we away?" He rous'd the steeds: they beat
Their wings chivalrous into the clear air,
Leaving old Sleep within his vapoury lair.

The good-night blush of eve was waning slow,
And Vesper, risen star, began to throe
In the dusk heavens silvery, when they
Thus sprang direct towards the Galaxy.
Nor did speed hinder converse soft and strange — 490
Eternal oaths and vows they interchange,
In such wise, in such temper, so aloof
Up in the winds, beneath a starry roof,
So witless of their doom, that verily
'Tis well nigh past man's search their hearts to see;
Whether they wept, or laugh'd, or griev'd, or toy'd —
Most like with joy gone mad, with sorrow cloy'd.

Full facing their swift flight, from ebon streak,
The moon put forth a little diamond peak,
No bigger than an unobserved star, 500
Or tiny point of fairy scymetar;
Bright signal that she only stoop'd to tie
Her silver sandals, ere deliciously
She bow'd into the heavens her timid head.
Slowly she rose, as though she would have fled,
While to his lady meek the Carian turn'd,
To mark if her dark eyes had yet discern'd
This beauty in its birth — Despair! despair!
He saw her body fading gaunt and spare
In the cold moonshine. Straight he seiz'd her wrist; 510
It melted from his grasp: her hand he kiss'd,
And, horror! kiss'd his own — he was alone.
Her steed a little higher soar'd, and then
Dropt hawkwise to the earth.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

There lies a den,
Beyond the seeming confines of the space
Made for the soul to wander in and trace
Its own existence, of remotest glooms.
Dark regions are around it, where the tombs
Of buried griefs the spirit sees, but scarce 520
One hour doth linger weeping, for the pierce
Of new-born woe it feels more inly smart:
And in these regions many a venom'd dart
At random flies; they are the proper home
Of every ill: the man is yet to come
Who hath not journeyed in this native hell.
But few have ever felt how calm and well
Sleep may be had in that deep den of all.
There anguish does not sting; nor pleasure pall:
Woe-hurricanes beat ever at the gate, 530
Yet all is still within and desolate.
Beset with painful gusts, within ye hear
No sound so loud as when on curtain'd bier
The death-watch tick is stifled. Enter none
Who strive therefore: on the sudden it is won.
Just when the sufferer begins to burn,
Then it is free to him; and from an urn,
Still fed by melting ice, he takes a draught —
Young Semele such richness never quaff 540
In her maternal longing. Happy gloom!
Dark Paradise! where pale becomes the bloom
Of health by due; where silence dreariest
Is most articulate; where hopes infest;
Where those eyes are the brightest far that keep
Their lids shut longest in a dreamless sleep.
O happy spirit-home! O wondrous soul!
Pregnant with such a den to save the whole
In thine own depth. Hail, gentle Carian!
For, never since thy griefs and woes began,
Hast thou felt so content: a grievous feud 550
Hath let thee to this Cave of Quietude.
Aye, his lull'd soul was there, although upborne
With dangerous speed: and so he did not mourn
Because he knew not whither he was going.
So happy was he, not the aerial blowing
Of trumpets at clear parley from the east
Could rouse from that fine relish, that high feast.
They stung the feather'd horse: with fierce alarm
He flapp'd towards the sound. Alas, no charm
Could lift Endymion's head, or he had view'd 560
A skyey mask, a pinion'd multitude, —
And silvery was its passing: voices sweet
Warbling the while as if to lull and greet
The wanderer in his path. Thus warbled they,
While past the vision went in bright array.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Who, who from Dian’s feast would be away?
For all the golden bowers of the day
Are empty left? Who, who away would be
From Cynthia’s wedding and festivity?
Not Hesperus: lo! upon his silver wings 570
He leans away for highest heaven and sings,
Snapping his lucid fingers merrily! —
Ah, Zephyrus! art here, and Flora too!
Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,
Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,
Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill
 Your baskets high
With fennel green, and balm, and golden pines,
Savory, latter-mint, and columbines,
Cool parsley, basil sweet, and sunny thyme; 580
Yea, every flower and leaf of every clime,
All gather’d in the dewy morning: hie
 Away! fly, fly! —
Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,
Aquarius! to whom king Jove has given
Two liquid pulse streams ‘stead of feather’d wings,
Two fan-like fountains, — thine illuminings
 For Dian play:
Dissolve the frozen purity of air;
Let thy white shoulders silvery and bare 590
Shew cold through watery pinions; make more bright
The Star-Queen’s crescent on her marriage night:
 Haste, haste away! —
Castor has tamed the planet Lion, see!
And of the Bear has Pollux mastery:
A third is in the race! who is the third,
Speeding away swift as the eagle bird?
 The ramping Centaur!
The Lion’s mane’s on end: the Bear how fierce!
The Centaur’s arrow ready seems to pierce 600
Some enemy: far forth his bow is bent
Into the blue of heaven. He’ll be shent,
 Pale unrelentor,
When he shall hear the wedding lutes a playing. —
Andromeda! sweet woman! why delaying
So timidly among the stars: come hither!
Join this bright throng, and nimbly follow whither
 They all are going.
Danae’s Son, before Jove newly bow’d,
Has wept for thee, calling to Jove aloud. 610
Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral:
Ye shall for ever live and love, for all
 Thy tears are flowing. —
By Daphne’s fright, behold Apollo! —”

More

Endymion heard not: down his steed him bore,
Prone to the green head of a misty hill.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

His first touch of the earth went nigh to kill.
“Alas!” said he, “were I but always borne
Through dangerous winds, had but my footsteps worn 620
A path in hell, for ever would I bless
Horrors which nourish an uneasiness
For my own sullen conquering: to him
Who lives beyond earth’s boundary, grief is dim,
Sorrow is but a shadow: now I see
The grass; I feel the solid ground — Ah, me!
It is thy voice — divinest! Where? — who? who
Left thee so quiet on this bed of dew?
Behold upon this happy earth we are;
Let us ay love each other; let us fare 630
On forest-fruits, and never, never go
Among the abodes of mortals here below,
Or be by phantoms duped. O destiny!
Into a labyrinth now my soul would fly,
But with thy beauty will I deaden it.
Where didst thou melt too? By thee will I sit
For ever: let our fate stop here — a kid
I on this spot will offer: Pan will bid
Us live in peace, in love and peace among
His forest wildernesses. I have clung 640
To nothing, lov’d a nothing, nothing seen
Or felt but a great dream! O I have been
Presumptuous against love, against the sky,
Against all elements, against the tie
Of mortals each to each, against the blooms
Of flowers, rush of rivers, and the tombs
Of heroes gone! Against his proper glory
Has my own soul conspired: so my story
Will I to children utter, and repent.
There never liv’d a mortal man, who bent 650
His appetite beyond his natural sphere,
But starv’d and died. My sweetest Indian, here,
Here will I kneel, for thou redeemed hast
My life from too thin breathing: gone and past
Are cloudy phantasms. Caverns lone, farewell!
And air of visions, and the monstrous swell
Of visionary seas! No, never more
Shall airy voices cheat me to the shore
Of tangled wonder, breathless and aghast.
Adieu, my daintiest Dream! although so vast 660
My love is still for thee. The hour may come
When we shall meet in pure elysium.
On earth I may not love thee; and therefore
Doves will I offer up, and sweetest store
All through the teeming year: so thou wilt shine
On me, and on this damsel fair of mine,
And bless our simple lives. My Indian bliss!
My river-lily bud! one human kiss!
One sigh of real breath — one gentle squeeze, 670
Warm as a dove’s nest among summer trees,
And warm with dew at ooze from living blood!
Whither didst melt? Ah, what of that! — all good
We’ll talk about — no more of dreaming. — Now,
Where shall our dwelling be? Under the brow
Of some steep mossy hill, where ivy dun
Would hide us up, although spring leaves were none;
And where dark yew trees, as we rustle through,
Will drop their scarlet berry cups of dew?
O thou wouldst joy to live in such a place;
Dusk for our loves, yet light enough to grace 680
Those gentle limbs on mossy bed reclin’d:
For by one step the blue sky shouldst thou find,



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

And by another, in deep dell below,
See, through the trees, a little river go
All in its mid-day gold and glimmering.
Honey from out the gnarled hive I'll bring,
And apples, wan with sweetness, gather thee, —
Cresses that grow where no man may them see,
And sorrel untorn by the dew-claw'd stag:
Pipes will I fashion of the syrinx flag, 690
That thou mayst always know whither I roam,
When it shall please thee in our quiet home
To listen and think of love. Still let me speak;
Still let me dive into the joy I seek, —
For yet the past doth prison me. The rill,
Thou haply mayst delight in, will I fill
With fairy fishes from the mountain tarn,
And thou shalt feed them from the squirrel's barn.
Its bottom will I strew with amber shells, 700
And pebbles blue from deep enchanted wells.
Its sides I'll plant with dew-sweet eglantine,
And honeysuckles full of clear bee-wine.
I will entice this crystal rill to trace
Love's silver name upon the meadow's face.
I'll kneel to Vesta, for a flame of fire;
And to god Phoebus, for a golden lyre;
To Empress Dian, for a hunting spear;
To Vesper, for a taper silver-clear,
That I may see thy beauty through the night;
To Flora, and a nightingale shall light 710
Tame on thy finger; to the River-gods,
And they shall bring thee taper fishing-rods
Of gold, and lines of Naiads' long bright tress.
Heaven shield thee for thine utter loveliness!
Thy mossy footstool shall the altar be
'Fore which I'll bend, bending, dear love, to thee:
Those lips shall be my Delphos, and shall speak
Laws to my footsteps, colour to my cheek,
Trembling or stedfastness to this same voice, 720
And of three sweetest pleasurings the choice:
And that affectionate light, those diamond things,
Those eyes, those passions, those supreme pearl springs,
Shall be my grief, or twinkle me to pleasure.
Say, is not bliss within our perfect seisure?
O that I could not doubt?"



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

The mountaineer
Thus strove by fancies vain and crude to clear
His briar'd path to some tranquillity.
It gave bright gladness to his lady's eye,
And yet the tears she wept were tears of sorrow; 730
Answering thus, just as the golden morrow
Beam'd upward from the vallies of the east:
"O that the flutter of this heart had ceas'd,
Or the sweet name of love had pass'd away.
Young feather'd tyrant! by a swift decay
Wilt thou devote this body to the earth:
And I do think that at my very birth
I lisp'd thy blooming titles inwardly;
For at the first, first dawn and thought of thee,
With uplift hands I blest the stars of heaven. 740
Art thou not cruel? Ever have I striven
To think thee kind, but ah, it will not do!
When yet a child, I heard that kisses drew
Favour from thee, and so I kisses gave
To the void air, bidding them find out love:
But when I came to feel how far above
All fancy, pride, and fickle maidenhood,
All earthly pleasure, all imagin'd good,
Was the warm tremble of a devout kiss, —
Even then, that moment, at the thought of this, 750
Fainting I fell into a bed of flowers,
And languish'd there three days. Ye milder powers,
Am I not cruelly wrong'd? Believe, believe
Me, dear Endymion, were I to weave
With my own fancies garlands of sweet life,
Thou shouldst be one of all. Ah, bitter strife!
I may not be thy love: I am forbidden —
Indeed I am — thwarted, affrighted, chidden,
By things I trembled at, and gorgon wrath.
Twice hast thou ask'd whither I went: henceforth 760
Ask me no more! I may not utter it,
Nor may I be thy love. We might commit
Ourselves at once to vengeance; we might die;
We might embrace and die: voluptuous thought!
Enlarge not to my hunger, or I'm caught
In trammels of perverse deliciousness.
No, no, that shall not be: thee will I bless,
And bid a long adieu."

The Carian
No word return'd: both lovelorn, silent, wan, 770
Into the vallies green together went.
Far wandering, they were perforce content
To sit beneath a fair lone beechen tree;
Nor at each other gaz'd, but heavily
Por'd on its hazle cirque of shedded leaves.

Endymion! unhappy! it nigh grieves
Me to behold thee thus in last extreme:
Ensky'd ere this, but truly that I deem
Truth the best music in a first-born song. 780
Thy lute-voic'd brother will I sing ere long,
And thou shalt aid — hast thou not aided me?
Yes, moonlight Emperor! felicity
Has been thy meed for many thousand years;
Yet often have I, on the brink of tears,
Mourn'd as if yet thou wert a forester, —
Forgetting the old tale.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

“Dear brother mine!
Endymion, weep not so! Why shouldst thou pine
When all great Latmos so exalt wilt be?
Thank the great gods, and look not bitterly;
And speak not one pale word, and sigh no more.
Sure I will not believe thou hast such store
Of grief, to last thee to my kiss again.
Thou surely canst not bear a mind in pain, 820
Come hand in hand with one so beautiful.
Be happy both of you! for I will pull
The flowers of autumn for your coronals.
Pan’s holy priest for young Endymion calls;
And when he is restor’d, thou, fairest dame,
Shalt be our queen. Now, is it not a shame
To see ye thus, — not very, very sad?
Perhaps ye are too happy to be glad:
O feel as if it were a common day;
Free-voic’d as one who never was away. 830
No tongue shall ask, whence come ye? but ye shall
Be gods of your own rest imperial.
Not even I, for one whole month, will pry
Into the hours that have pass’d us by,
Since in my arbour I did sing to thee.
O Hermes! on this very night will be
A hymning up to Cynthia, queen of light;
For the soothsayers old saw yesternight
Good visions in the air, — whence will befall,
As say these sages, health perpetual 840
To shepherds and their flocks; and furthermore,
In Dian’s face they read the gentle lore:
Therefore for her these vesper-carols are.
Our friends will all be there from nigh and far.
Many upon thy death have ditties made;
And many, even now, their foreheads shade
With cypress, on a day of sacrifice.
New singing for our maids shalt thou devise,
And pluck the sorrow from our huntsmen’s brows.
Tell me, my lady-queen, how to espouse 850
This wayward brother to his rightful joys!
His eyes are on thee bent, as thou didst poise
His fate most goddess-like. Help me, I pray,
To lure — Endymion, dear brother, say
What ails thee?” He could bear no more, and so
Bent his soul fiercely like a spiritual bow,
And twang’d it inwardly, and calmly said:
“I would have thee my only friend, sweet maid!
My only visitor! not ignorant though,
That those deceptions which for pleasure go 860
‘Mong men, are pleasures real as real may be:
But there are higher ones I may not see,
If impiously an earthly realm I take.
Since I saw thee, I have been wide awake
Night after night, and day by day, until
Of the empyrean I have drunk my fill.
Let it content thee, Sister, seeing me
More happy than betides mortality.
A hermit young, I’ll live in mossy cave,
Where thou alone shalt come to me, and lave 870
Thy spirit in the wonders I shall tell.
Through me the shepherd realm shall prosper well;
For to thy tongue will I all health confide.
And, for my sake, let this young maid abide
With thee as a dear sister. Thou alone,
Peona, mayst return to me. I own
This may sound strangely: but when, dearest girl,
Thou seest it for my happiness, no pearl
Will trespass down those cheeks. Companion fair!
Wilt be content to dwell with her, to share 880
This sister’s love with me?” Like one resign’d



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

And bent by circumstance, and thereby blind
In self-commitment, thus that meek unknown:
“Aye, but a buzzing by my ears has flown,
Of jubilee to Dian: — truth I heard!
Well then, I see there is no little bird,
Tender soever, but is Jove’s own care.
Long have I sought for rest, and, unaware,
Behold I find it! so exalted too!
So after my own heart! I knew, I knew
There was a place untenanted in it:
In that same void white Chastity shall sit,
And monitor me nightly to lone slumber.
With sanest lips I vow me to the number
Of Dian’s sisterhood; and, kind lady,
With thy good help, this very night shall see
My future days to her fane consecrate.”

890



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

As feels a dreamer what doth most create
His own particular fright, so these three felt:
Or like one who, in after ages, knelt 900
To Lucifer or Baal, when he'd pine
After a little sleep: or when in mine
Far under-ground, a sleeper meets his friends
Who know him not. Each diligently bends
Towards common thoughts and things for very fear;
Striving their ghastly malady to cheer,
By thinking it a thing of yes and no,
That housewives talk of. But the spirit-blow
Was struck, and all were dreamers. At the last
Endymion said: "Are not our fates all cast? 910
Why stand we here? Adieu, ye tender pair!
Adieu!" Whereat those maidens, with wild stare,
Walk'd dizzily away. Pained and hot
His eyes went after them, until they got
Near to a cypress grove, whose deadly maw,
In one swift moment, would what then he saw
Engulph for ever. "Stay!" he cried, "ah, stay!
Turn, damsels! hist! one word I have to say.
Sweet Indian, I would see thee once again.
It is a thing I dote on: so I'd fain, 920
Peona, ye should hand in hand repair
Into those holy groves, that silent are
Behind great Dian's temple. I'll be yon,
At vesper's earliest twinkle — they are gone —
But once, once, once again —" At this he press'd
His hands against his face, and then did rest
His head upon a mossy hillock green,
And so remain'd as he a corpse had been
All the long day; save when he scantly lifted 930
His eyes abroad, to see how shadows shifted
With the slow move of time, — sluggish and weary
Until the poplar tops, in journey dreary,
Had reach'd the river's brim. Then up he rose,
And, slowly as that very river flows,
Walk'd towards the temple grove with this lament:
"Why such a golden eve? The breeze is sent
Careful and soft, that not a leaf may fall
Before the serene father of them all
Bows down his summer head below the west.
Now am I of breath, speech, and speed possest, 940
But at the setting I must bid adieu
To her for the last time. Night will strew
On the damp grass myriads of lingering leaves,
And with them shall I die; nor much it grieves
To die, when summer dies on the cold sward.
Why, I have been a butterfly, a lord
Of flowers, garlands, love-knots, silly posies,
Groves, meadows, melodies, and arbour roses;
My kingdom's at its death, and just it is 950
That I should die with it: so in all this
We miscal grief, bale, sorrow, heartbreak, woe,
What is there to plain of? By Titan's foe
I am but rightly serv'd." So saying, he
Tripp'd lightly on, in sort of deathful glee;
Laughing at the clear stream and setting sun,
As though they jests had been: nor had he done
His laugh at nature's holy countenance,
Until that grove appear'd, as if perchance,
And then his tongue with sober seemlihed 960
Gave utterance as he entered: "Ha!" I said,
"King of the butterflies; but by this gloom,
And by old Rhadamanthus' tongue of doom,
This dusk religion, pomp of solitude,
And the Promethean clay by thief endued,
By old Saturnus' forelock, by his head
Shook with eternal palsy, I did wed



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Myself to things of light from infancy;
And thus to be cast out, thus lorn to die,
Is sure enough to make a mortal man
Grow impious." So he inwardly began 970
On things for which no wording can be found;
Deeper and deeper sinking, until drown'd
Beyond the reach of music: for the choir
Of Cynthia he heard not, though rough briar
Nor muffling thicket interpos'd to dull
The vesper hymn, far swollen, soft and full,
Through the dark pillars of those sylvan aisles.
He saw not the two maidens, nor their smiles,
Wan as primroses gather'd at midnight
By chilly finger'd spring. "Unhappy wight! 980
Endymion!" said Peona, "we are here!
What wouldst thou ere we all are laid on bier?"
Then he embrac'd her, and his lady's hand
Press'd, saying: "Sister, I would have command,
If it were heaven's will, on our sad fate."
At which that dark-eyed stranger stood elate
And said, in a new voice, but sweet as love,
To Endymion's amaze: "By Cupid's dove,
And so thou shalt! and by the lily truth 990
Of my own breast thou shalt, beloved youth!"
And as she spake, into her face there came
Light, as reflected from a silver flame:
Her long black hair swell'd ampler, in display
Full golden; in her eyes a brighter day
Dawn'd blue and full of love. Aye, he beheld
Phoebe, his passion! joyous she upheld
Her lucid bow, continuing thus: "Drear, drear
Has our delaying been; but foolish fear
Withheld me first; and then decrees of fate;
And then 'twas fit that from this mortal state 1000
Thou shouldst, my love, by some unlook'd for change
Be spiritualiz'd. Peona, we shall range
These forests, and to thee they safe shall be
As was thy cradle; hither shalt thou flee
To meet us many a time." Next Cynthia bright
Peona kiss'd, and bless'd with fair good night:
Her brother kiss'd her too, and knelt adown
Before his goddess, in a blissful swoon.
She gave her fair hands to him, and behold, 1010
Before three swiftest kisses he had told,
They vanish'd far away! — Peona went
Home through the gloomy wood in wonderment.

THE END.



August: Blackwood's Magazine and Quarterly Magazine attacked John Keats.

**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1819

➡ March 19, Friday: The Sinfonia “L’incendio” by Gaetano Donizetti was performed for the initial time, in Bergamo.

[John Keats](#) wrote his brother on the topic of indolence that relates to his poem “[Ode on Indolence](#)” — which helps us infer that the poem was probably written on about March 4th (it would remain unpublished until 1848).

➡ April 3, Saturday: The family of the teenager Fannie Brawne rented half of Wentworth Place next door to [John Keats](#). Fanny had already been introduced to him at a reception. Under these close circumstances he would interrupt his serious poetry to write quick sonnets for his neighbor lass, perhaps such as “Bright Star, would I were steadfast as thou art.” A relationship would develop.



BRIGHT star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature’s patient sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth’s human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow’d upon my fair love’s ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever — or else swoon to death.

finis

➡ April 11, Easter Sunday: James and William Smith of Gloucester, 14 and 16 years of age, drowned while fishing.

[Samuel Taylor Coleridge](#) met [John Keats](#).

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1st day 11th of 4th M 1819 / Our meeting was indeed a favored one to me this morning, being enable to experience that true quiet which giveth strenth under trying dispensations Yesterday & this morning has been seasons of large experience to me, & had to sympathise with one in affliction which had better not be explained here. – Father Rodman was favord in a short testimony & D Buffum twice engaged livingly & powerfully –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



July 1, Thursday: [John Keats](#) wrote from Shanklin on the Isle of Wight to Fanny Brawne:

My dearest Lady – I am glad I had not an opportunity of sending off a Letter which I wrote for you on Tuesday night – 'twas too much like one out of Rousseau's Heloise. I am more reasonable this morning. The morning is the only proper time for me to write to a beautiful Girl whom I love so much: for at night, when the lonely day has closed, and the lonely, silent, unmusical Chamber is waiting to receive me as into a Sepulchre, then believe me my passion gets entirely the sway, then I would not have you see those Rhapsodies which I once thought it impossible I should ever give way to, and which I have often laughed at in another, for fear you should [think me] either too unhappy or perhaps a little mad.

I am now at a very pleasant Cottage window, looking onto a beautiful hilly country, with a glimpse of the sea; the morning is very fine. I do not know how elastic my spirit might be, what pleasure I might have in living here and breathing and wandering as free as a stag about this beautiful Coast if the remembrance of you did not weigh so upon me I have never known any unalloy'd Happiness for many days together: the death or sickness of some one has always spoilt my hours – and now when none such troubles oppress me, it is you must confess very hard that another sort of pain should haunt me.

Ask yourself my love whether you are not very cruel to have so entrammelled me, so destroyed my freedom. Will you confess this in the Letter you must write immediately, and do all you can to console me in it – make it rich as a draught of poppies to intoxicate me – write the softest words and kiss them that I may at least touch my lips where yours have been. For myself I know not how to express my devotion to so fair a form: I want a brighter word than bright, a fairer word than fair. I almost wish we were butterflies and liv'd but three summer days – three such days with you I could fill with more delight than fifty common years could ever contain. But however selfish I may feel, I am sure I could never act selfishly: as I told you a day or two before I left Hampstead, I will never return to London if my Fate does not turn up Pam or at least a Court-card. Though I could centre my Happiness in you, I cannot expect to engross your heart so entirely – indeed if I thought you felt as much for me as I do for you at this moment I do not think I could restrain myself from seeing you again tomorrow for the delight of one embrace.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

But no – I must live upon hope and Chance. In case of the worst that can happen, I shall still love you – but what hatred shall I have for another!

Some lines I read the other day are continually ringing a peal in my ears:

*To see those eyes I prize above mine own
Dart favors on another–
And those sweet lips (yielding immortal nectar)
Be gently press'd by any but myself–
Think, think Francesca, what a cursed thing
It were beyond expression!
J.*

*Do write immediately. There is no Post from this Place, so you must address Post Office, Newport, Isle of Wight. I know before night I shall curse myself for having sent you so cold a Letter; yet it is better to do it as much in my senses as possible. Be as kind as the distance will permit to your
John Keats*

Present my Compliments to your mother, my love to Margaret and best remembrances to your Brother – if you please so.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

(The letter would be posted on the 3d.)

Dissension had developed in the Jerusalem, [New York](#) sanctuary of the followers of “Universal Friend,” [Jemimah Wilkinson](#), as she had become rather demanding of gifts and special treatment, and had come to institute various punishments for infractions of the rules of the Society of Universal Friends. Finally the community resolved its problem by erecting this two and a half story Federal-style mansion for its inspirational leader at some considerable distance from the other homes. It is now referred to as “Friend House” and is not open to the public:



After spending her last years in isolation, at the age of 67 the religious leader died (or “left time” as her followers described it), and would be interred in a temporary vault in the building’s cellar while her followers faithfully waited for her to come back into animation, and watched as signs of decay accumulated. As her will attests, she had never swerved from the pronouncement she had originally made under the oak tree in [Cumberland, Rhode Island](#) after recovering from [typhoid fever](#), that she had died and her spirit had been replaced with “Divine Spirit.” (Her Jerusalem community would, within the following two decades, entirely disperse. At some later date the decomposing body has been removed from its temporary vault for burial at an

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THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

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unmarked location on the property.)



Last Will and Testament:

The last Will and Testament of the person called the Universal Friend of Jerusalem, in the County of Ontario, State of New York, who in the year 1777, was called Jemima Wilkinson, and ever since that time, the Friend, a new name which the mouth of the Lord hath named.

My will is that all my just debts be paid by my executors, hereafter named.

I give, bequeath and devise unto Rachel Malin and Margaret Malin, now of said Jerusalem, all my earthly property both real and personal; and that is to say all my land lying in said Jerusalem and in Benton, or elsewhere in the County of Ontario, together with all the buildings thereon, to them the said Rachel and Margaret, and their heirs and assigns forever, to be equally and amicably be shared between them, the said Rachel and Margaret – and I do also give and bequeath to the said Rachel and Margaret, all my wearing apparel, all my household furniture, and my horses, cattle, sheep and swine, of every kind, together with all my farming utensils, and all my movable property of every nature and description whatever.

My will is, that all the present members of my family and each of them, be employed if they please, and if employed, supported during their natural life, by the said Rachel and Margaret, and whenever any of them become unable to help themselves, they are according to such inability, kindly to be taken care of by the said Rachel and Margaret. And my will also is, that all poor persons belonging to the society of the Universal Friend, shall receive from the said Rachel and Margaret such assistance, comfort and support during their natural life as they may need; and in case any or either of my family, or others elsewhere in the society shall turn away, such shall forfeit the provisions herein made for them.

I hereby ordain and appoint the above-named Rachel Malin and Margaret Malin, Executors of this my last will and testament.

In Witness whereof, I, the person called Jemina Wilkinson, but in, and ever since the year 1777, known as the Public Universal Friend, have hereunto affixed my name and Seal, this 25th day



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of the 2d Month, in the year of our Lord 1819.

The Public Universal Friend [L.S.]

In the presence of, &c.

Be it Remembered – That in order to remove all doubt of the due execution of the foregoing will and testament of the person who before the year 1777, was known and called by the name of Jemima Wilkinson, but since that time, as the Universal Friend, do make, publish and declare the within instrument to be my Last Will and Testament, as witness my hand and seal, this 17th day of the 7th month, 1819.

Jemima Wilkinson X

Her Cross or mark,

Or, Universal Friend.

[“Witness,” &c.]

That evening after sunset the [comet](#) that had passed unnoticed between the earth and the sun on or about June 26th, with its tail brushing over the earth also unnoticed, became visible low in the west. (So much for comets exerting a vast influence!)¹⁴

SKY EVENT

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day 1st of 7th M 1819 / Our Meeting looked small in a great room, but I believe nearly all the members were present that are in ability to attend, & several that are not members. – I believe it was a comfortable season to some present, it was in good measure so to me. – Father Rodman delivered a short testimony

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



July 8, Thursday: [John Keats](#) wrote again to Fanny Brawne:

My Sweet Girl:

Your Letter gave me more delight than any thing in the world but yourself could do; indeed I am almost astonished that any absent one should have that luxurious power over my senses which I feel. Even when I am not thinking of you I receive your influence and a tenderer nature stealing upon me. All my thoughts, my unhappiest days and nights have I find not at all cured me of my love of Beauty, but made it so intense that I am miserable that you are not with me: or rather breathe in that dull sort of patience that cannot be called Life. I never knew before, what such a love as you have made me feel, was; I did not believe in it; my Fancy was afraid of it, lest it should burn me up. But if you will fully love me, though there may be some fire, 'twill not be more than we can bear when moistened and bedewed with pleasures. You mention "horrid people" and ask me whether it

14. “GREAT COMET, (C/1819 N1=1819 II. Period of naked eye visibility spanned the month of Jul., T=1819 June 28. Also known as [Comet Tralles](#). Spotted on July 1st in the evening sky a little to the north of the Sun, the head being of about zero magnitude. Comet crossed eastern Auriga and was visible at both dusk and dawn for several weeks. At the end of the first week of July, 1st magnitude with a 7-8 degree tail. Comet faded rapidly as it moved toward the northeast, almost pacing the Sun. At mid-month situated in Lynx, an object of 3rd magnitude with a short tail. In the last few days of July the comet’s brightness rapidly approached the naked eye threshold.”



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depend upon them whether I see you again. Do understand me, my love, in this. I have so much of you in my heart that I must turn mentor when I see a chance of harm befalling you. I would never see any thing but pleasure in your eyes, love on your lips, and happiness in your steps. I would wish to see you among those amusements suitable to your inclinations and spirits; so that our loves might be a delight in the midst of pleasures agreeable enough, rather than a resource from vexations and cares. But I doubt much, in case of the worst, whether I shall be philosopher enough to follow my own lessons: if I saw my resolution give you a pain I could not. Why may I not speak of your beauty, since without that I could never have lov'd you? - I cannot conceive any beginning of such love as I have for you but beauty. There may be a sort of love for which, without the least sneer at it, I have the highest respect and can admire it in others: but it has not the richness, the bloom, the full form, the enchantment of love after my own heart. So let me speak of your beauty, though to my own endangering; if you could be so cruel to me as to try elsewhere its power. You say you are afraid I shall think you do not love me - in saying this you make me ache the more to be near you. I am at the diligent use of my faculties here, I do not pass a day without sprawling some blank verse or tagging some rhymes; and here I must confess, that, (since I am on that subject) I love you the more in that I believe you have liked me for my own sake and for nothing else. I have met with women whom I really think would like to be married to a poem and to be given away by a novel. I have seen your comet, and only wish it was a sign that poor Rice would get well, whose illness makes him rather a melancholy companion: and the more so as so to conquer his feelings and hide them from me, with a forc'd pun. I kiss'd your writing over in the hope you had indulg'd me by leaving a trace of honey. What was your dream? Tell it me and I will tell you the interpretation thereof.

Ever yours, my love!

John Keats

Do not accuse me of delay - we have not here any opportunity of sending letters every day. Write speedily.

(The letter would be postmarked from Newport on the Isle of Wight on July 10th.)

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day 8th of 7th M / Our meeting rather Small & silent & a degree of favor witnessed. - Attended (this afternoon) the funeral of Jos Barker son of James & Mary Barker a child about 4 years old, their relations & acquaintances being large, there was a considerable collection of people. The Sitting was remarkably solid & towards the close of it D Buffum was concerned in a short but very solid & impressive testimony. - he observed that the time had about come for us to proceed to the buisness we had assembled for & believed it best for him to express the manner in which his mind had him occupied which was on the subject of the removal of little



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children from one state of existence to another. - his mind had been dipt into sympathy with those who had been deprived of near connections, & while thus reflecting, a passage or two of Scripture had been brought to his remembrance which was the saying of our blessed Lord "Suffer the little children to come unto me & forbid them not for of such is the Kingdom of heaven" & another which equally seemed obligatory to review was "Unless ye become converted & as little children ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of heaven" from this he said much doctrine might be drawn, but he had no prospect of many words, having had a desire that our minds might be stirred up, he wished us to bear in remembrance that it was from the highest Authority that "unless we become converted and as little children we shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of heaven his testimony appeared to have a solemnizing effect on the Minds of the Audience & I have no doubt it will be remembered by some when he may be no more numbered among Men

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



July 15, Thursday: [George Gordon, Lord Byron](#)'s DON JUAN I-II was published anonymously and then, to Murray's distress, pirated.

On this evening [John Keats](#) wrote again from Shanklin on the Isle of Wight to Fanny Brawne:

My love - I have been in so irritable a state of health these two or three last days, that I did not think I should be able to write this week. Not that I was so ill, but so much so as only to be capable of an unhealthy teasing letter. To night I am greatly recovered only to feel the languor I have felt after you touched with ardency.

You say you perhaps might have made me better: you would then have made me worse: now you could quite effect a cure: What fee my sweet Physician would I not give you to do so.

Do not call it folly, when I tell you I took your letter last night to bed with me. In the morning I found your name on the sealing wax obliterated. I was startled at the bad omen till I recollected that it must have happened in my dreams, and they you know fall out by contraries. You must have found out by this time I am a little given to bode ill like the raven; it is my misfortune not my fault; it has proceeded from the general tenor of the circumstances of my life, and rendered every event suspicious. However I will no more trouble either you or myself with sad prophecies; though so far I am pleased at it as it has given me opportunity to love your disinterestedness towards me. I can be a raven no more; you and pleasure take possession of me at the same moment. I am afraid you have been unwell. If through me illness have touched you (but it must be with a very gentle hand) I must be selfish enough to feel a little glad at it. Will you forgive me this?

I have been reading lately an oriental tale of a very beautiful color. It is of a city of melancholy men, all made so by this circumstance. Through a series of adventures each one of them by turns reach some gardens of Paradise where they meet with a



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most enchanting Lady; and just as they are going to embrace her, she bids them shut their eyes they shut them and on opening their eyes again find themselves descending to the earth in a magic basket. The remembrance of this Lady and their delights lost beyond all recovery render them melancholy ever after. How I applied this to you, my dear; how I palpitated at it; how the certainty that you were in the same world with myself, and though as beautiful, not so talismanic as that Lady; how I could not bear you should be so you must believe because I swear it by yourself.

I cannot say when I shall get a volume ready. I have three or four stories half done, but as I cannot write for the mere sake of the press, I am obliged to let them progress or lie still as my fancy chooses. By Christmas perhaps they may appear, but I am not yet sure they ever will. 'Twill be no matter, for Poems are as common as newspapers and I do not see why it is a greater crime in me than in another to let the verses of an half-fledged brain tumble into the reading-rooms and drawing-room windows. Rice has been better lately than usual: he is not suffering from any neglect of his parents who have for some years been able to appreciate him better than they did in his first youth, and are now devoted to his comfort.

Tomorrow I shall, if my health continues to improve during the night, take a look fa[r]ther About the country, and spy at the parties about here who come hunting after the picturesque like beagles. It is astonishing how they raven down scenery like children do sweetmeats. The wondrous Chine here as a very great Lion: I wish I had as many guineas as there have been spy-glasses in it.

I have been, I cannot tell why, in capital spirits this last hour. What reason? When I have to take my candle and retire to a lonely room, without the thought as I fall asleep, of seeing you tomorrow morning? or the next day, or the next – it takes on the appearance of impossibility and eternity – I will say a month – I will say I will see you in a month at most, though no one but yourself should see me; if it be but for an hour. I should not like to be so near you as London without being continually with you: after having once more kissed you Sweet I would rather be here alone at my task than in the bustle and hateful literary chitchat. Meantime you must write to me as I will every week for your letters keep me alive. My sweet Girl I cannot speak my love for you.

Good night! and

Ever yours

John Keats

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day 15th 7th M 1819 / Our meeting today was rather thin but we had the company of several who were not members, some of whom I believe suffer loss by standing without the pale of society. may the time come when they may come forward in usefulness among us. –it was a season of some favor & Hannah Dennis was engaged



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in a lively & pertinent testimony.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

 July 25, Sunday: On Sunday night [John Keats](#) wrote again to Fanny Brawne:



My sweet Girl – I hope you did not blame me much for not obeying your request of a Letter on Saturday: we have had four in our small room playing at cards night and morning leaving me no undisturb'd opportunity to write. Now Rice and Martin are gone I am at liberty. Brown to my sorrow confirms the account you give of your ill health. You cannot conceive how I ache to be with you: how I would die for one hour – for what is in the world? I say you cannot conceive; it is impossible you should look with such eyes upon me as I have upon you: it cannot be. Forgive me if I wander a little this evening, for I have been all day employ'd in a very abstract Poem and I am in deep love with you two things which must excuse me. I have, believe me, not been an age in letting you take possession of me; the very first week I knew you I wrote myself your vassal; but burnt the Letter as the very next time I saw you I thought you manifested some dislike to me. If you should ever feel for Man at the first sight what I did for you, I am lost. Yet I should not quarrel with you, but hate myself if such a thing were to happen – only I should burst if the thing were not as fine as a Man as you are as a Woman.

Perhaps I am too vehement, then fancy me on my knees, especially when I mention a part of your Letter which hurt me; you say speaking of Mr. Severn 'but you must be satisfied in knowing that I admired you much more than your friend.' My dear love, I cannot believe there ever was or ever could be any thing to admire in me especially as far as sight goes – I cannot be admired, I am not a thing to be admired. You are, I love you; all I can bring you is a swooning admiration of your Beauty. I hold that place among Men which snub-nos'd brunettes with meeting eyebrows do among women – they are trash to me – unless I



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should find one among them with a fire in her heart like the one that burns in mine.

You absorb me in spite of myself – you alone: for I look not forward with any pleasure to what is called being settled in the world; I tremble at domestic cares – yet for you I would meet them, though if it would leave you the happier I would rather die than do so.

I have two luxuries to brood over in my walks, your Loveliness and the hour of my death. O that I could have possession of them both in the same minute. I hate the world: it batters too much the wings of my self-will, and would I could take a sweet poison from your lips to send me out of it. From no others would I take it. I am indeed astonish'd to find myself so careless of all charms but yours – remembering as I do the time when even a bit of ribband was a matter of interest with me.

What softer words can I find for you after this – what it is I will not read. Nor will I say more here, but in a Postscript answer any thing else you may have mentioned in your Letter in so many words – for I am distracted with a thousand thoughts. I will imagine you Venus tonight and pray, pray, pray to your star like a Heathen.

Your's ever, fair Star,

John Keats

My seal is mark'd like a family table cloth with my Mother's initial F for Fanny: put between my Father's initials. You will soon hear from me again. My respectful Compliments to your Mother. Tell Margaret I'll send her a reef of best rocks and tell Sam I will give him my light bay hunter if he will tie the Bishop hand and foot and pack him in a hamper and send him down for me to bathe him for his health with a Necklace of good snubby stones about his Neck.

(This letter would be postmarked on the 27th.)

A hurricane began along the gulf coast of the North American continent. It would continue for four days.

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

1st day 25th of 7th M / Our Meeting this Morning was silent –In the afternoon a short pertinent & sweet testimony from Father Rodman. – Rather barran time tho' I believe a degree of Divine favor was witnessed


RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



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 September 14, Tuesday: Notice of the death of [Jonathan Plummer](#) on the previous day appeared in the Newburyport Herald: “Yesterday afternoon Mr. Jonathan Plummer, aged 58, poet laureate and preacher to their majesties the sovereign people.”

We know, from a report in the Nashville, Tennessee Clarion of this date, that the initial newspaper to be published in Texas, the Texas Republican, had begun to be published by Eli Harris, formerly of Franklin, Tennessee, who had originated in North Carolina. It had been issued a month earlier in Nacogdoches by General James Long and seems to have been edited by a member of his “Supreme Council,” Horatio Bigelow (no copy of it seems to have been preserved).


[John Keats](#) posted, from Lombard Street in London, a letter to Fanny Brawne that he had begun to compose on Fleet Street on the morning of the previous day:

*My dear Girl – I have been hurried to town by a Letter from my brother George; it is not of the brightest intelligence. Am I mad or not? I came by the Friday night coach and have not yet been to Hampstead. Upon my soul it is not my fault. I cannot resolve to mix any pleasure with my days: they go one like another, indistinguishable. If I were to see you to-day it would destroy the half comfortable sullenness I enjoy at present into downright perplexities. I love you too much to venture to Hampstead, I feel it is not paying a visit, but venturing into a fire. Que feraije? as the French novel writers say in fun, and I in earnest: really what can I do? Knowing well that my life must be passed in fatigue and trouble, I have been endeavouring to wean myself from you: for to myself alone what can be much of a misery? As far as they regard myself I can despise all events: but I cannot cease to love you. This morning I scarcely know what I am doing. I am going to Walthamstow. I shall return to Winchester to-morrow; whence you shall hear from me in a few days. I am a Coward, I cannot bear the pain of being happy: 't is out of the question: I must admit no thought of it.
Yours ever affectionately
John Keats.*

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

3rd day 14th of 9 M / ANN McCOY a young woman from Savanna who has boarded a few weeks at Aunt Anne Carpenters, left Town for Providence. – Her conduct has been such as has endeared her all her acquaintance, & we parted with her with regret. –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

 October 13, Wednesday: [John Keats](#) wrote from 25 College Street to Fanny Brawne:

*My dearest Girl,
This moment I have set myself to copy some verses out fair.
I cannot proceed with any degree of content. I must write you a line or two and see if that will assist in dismissing you from my Mind for ever so short a time. Upon my Soul I can think of nothing else – The time is passed when I had power to advise and warn you again[s]t the unpromising morning of my Life – My love has made me selfish. I cannot exist without you – I am forgetful*



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*of every thing but seeing you again - my Life seems to stop there - I see no further. You have absorb'd me. I have a sensation at the present moment as though I was dissolving - I should be exquisitely miserable without the hope of soon seeing you. I should be afraid to separate myself far from you. My sweet Fanny, will your heart never change? My love, will it? I have no limit now to my love - You note came in just here - I cannot be happier away from you - 'T is richer than an Argosy of Pearles. Do not threat me even in jest. I have been astonished that Men could die Martyrs for religion - I have shudder'd at it - I shudder no more - I could be martyr'd for my Religion - Love is my religion - I could die for that - I could die for you. My Creed is Love and you are its only tenet - You have ravish'd me away by a Power I cannot resist: and yet I could resist till I saw you; and even since I have seen you I have endeavoured often "to reason against the reasons of my Love."¹⁵ I can do that no more - the pain would be too great - My Love is selfish - I cannot breathe without you.
Yours for ever*

John Keats

The Reverend Moses Adams of [Acton](#) died at the age of 70.

The Rev. MOSES ADAMS was a native of Framingham, and a graduate of [Harvard College](#) in 1771. He died 13th of October, 1819, aged 70. During his long and peaceful ministry [in [Acton](#)], 147 were admitted to the church in full communion, 137 owned the covenant to receive baptism, 833 were baptized, and 246 marriages were solemnized. In his intercourse with his people he was conciliatory but independent. He had talents without ostentation, and piety without hypocrisy; all his public performances and private acts were distinguished for their superior good sense. He was emphatically a good, a worthy, and a useful man. Few had died and left a character more deservedly worthy of imitation than his.¹⁶



October 16, Saturday: [John Keats](#) wrote from Wentworth Place to his sister Fanny Keats (not to Fanny Brawne).

At a special assembly in the Park Street Church in Boston, one of the Hawaiian Islanders, the native Hopu, addressed the assembly.

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

7th day 16th of 10th M 1819 / Our Select meeting held this day was to my mind a season of solemnity. I was lead secretly to pray for holy help in the discharge of the important duties which

15. Keats was quoting from [John Ford](#)'s "['Tis Pity She's a Whore.](#)"

16. [Lemuel Shattuck](#)'s 1835 [A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CONCORD:...](#) Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company; Concord MA: [John Stacy](#)

(On or about November 11, 1837 [Henry Thoreau](#) would indicate a familiarity with the contents of at least pages 2-3 and 6-9 of this historical study. On July 16, 1859 he would correct a date mistake buried in the body of the text.)



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*devolve on those who are brought into the more conspicuous duties of society / Oh that I may so conduct as to be found worthy of the divine presence. –
Benjn Freeborn & wife Dined with us. –*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



October 19, Tuesday: [John Keats](#) wrote on Great Smith Street, beginning during the morning, and posted on College Street, another letter to Fanny Brawne:

*My sweet Fanny – On awakening from my three days dream ('I cry to dream again') I find one and another astonish'd at my idleness and thoughtlessness. I was miserable last night – the morning is always restorative. I must be busy, or try to be so. I have several things to speak to you of tomorrow morning. Mrs. Dilke I should think will tell you that I purpose living at Hampstead. I must impose chains upon myself. I shall be able to do nothing. I should like to cast the die for Love or death. I have no Patience with anything else – if you ever intend to be cruel to me as you say in jest now but perhaps may sometimes be in earnest, be so now – and I will – my mind is in a tremble, I cannot tell what I am writing.
Ever my love yours
John Keats.*

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1820

→ [John Keats](#)'s HYPERION.

→ February 3, Thursday: [John Keats](#)'s hemorrhaging began. Trained in medicine, he recognized the blood as arterial and understood that this indicated that his disease was terminal.¹⁷

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day attended the Quarterly Meeting at large, in the first meeting we were burdened with several appearances from Micah Ruggles who I desire & pray may experience deeper Wisdom than he has yet known Thos Anthony was engaged in a lively testimony -there were several other appearances of which I can say but little.- -

In the last meeting there was but little buisness & the heft of the first meeting remained I dined at [Moses Browns](#), spent the remainder of the Afternoon & evening, in a very agreeable & edifying conversation with Moses & several friends there -lodged & next morning rode again to [Providence](#) & set out for home over India Bridge - we dined at James Maxwells in [Warren](#) & proceeded to [Bristol](#) Ferry but found Ice obstructed so that it was not prudent to cross & we returned to [Warren](#) & lodged at James Maxwells who very kindly entertained us. - 7th day, This Morning set out from [Warren](#) to Sleids ferry where we crossed in season to get to Abraham Barkers to dinner & got home before night. This little journey tho' attended with considerable bodily & mental suffering I trust has been a proffitable one to me - I was impressed with a belief that it was best for me to go being

17. He would succumb at the age of 25, four months after his engagement to Fanny Brawne as depicted in the Jane Campion movie "Bright Star" — Fanny's loveletters would be placed in the coffin.



Fanny would not languish forever in grief, but would marry with Louis Lindon, Esq. and bear him three children and lead a long life.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

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in health & not knowing how soon it may be otherwise with me. – time is both short & Uncertain many of my towns men & women have been removed the last year, some of whom promised a long & useful life. -1st day [Sunday] 6th of 2nd M 1820 / Our Meetings were both silent & to me seasons of labor. –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

[Elisha Kent Kane](#) was born in Philadelphia.

[Elisha Kent Kane](#) passed a relatively unremarkable childhood. A first-born child, his family moved several times as it grew, within the precincts of Philadelphia, finally moving to an estate named Rensselaer. According to his contemporaneous biographer, William Elder, Kane was an average student, who was accepted at the University of Virginia. In his second year of college he contracted rheumatic fever. This event, more than any other was to configure the rest of his life. The first outcome of his illness was his attraction to the world of medicine. Upon his graduation from the University of Virginia, Kane began the study of medicine in Philadelphia. By twenty-two, he had published a study of early pregnancy detection in the American Journal of Medical Sciences. More profound than this was the effect of the resulting terminal endocarditis on his world view. In the present time, of course, the existence of antibiotics would make short work of a chronic infection of the cardiac lining. In the early 19th century, however, it was a death sentence. Perhaps a couple of years would pass, perhaps a few decades, but the sentence was final. Kane set out with a vengeance to live a life that would be remembered. Joining the US Navy, he set out to discover the world. Finding himself in the South Pacific, he descended into the crater of an active volcano to retrieve water samples, much to the dismay of his companions, who fled the scene in mortal fear. Travelling to China, he practiced medicine on a hospital ship for several months before setting off to the west through India and Egypt, Athens and Paris. Two more tours of stultifying naval duty sent him to the White House to beg for a more exciting tour of duty. President Polk assigned him to an extremely dangerous mission: carry a message to the commander of American forces in Mexico during the Mexican-American War. After saving a Mexican general from being murdered by the mercenaries hired to escort him to Mexico City, Kane emerged as an important figure at the international level. Once again bored by navy duty, he wrote the Secretary of War, proposing a mission to the Arctic to rescue a missing British explorer, Sir John Franklin. Two weeks later began the most incredible chapters in this man's life, as he set off to Baffin Bay, between Canada and Greenland. Three out of the next five years were spent locked in pack ice, under unendurable conditions. After the incredible feat of leading eighteen of his twenty men to safety on foot, Kane wrote the largest selling book in American history about his adventures.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Although largely forgotten today, Elisha Kent Kane was a hugely popular figure in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It has been said that, if homesteaders heading west across the United States' frontier carried two books, one was certainly by Dr. Kane; the other was probably a Bible. His rescue missions to the Arctic were widely regarded as suicidal. Inasmuch as his missions were validated by the scientific goal of the discovery of the Open Polar Sea (a popular theory among scientists of the era,) his was a scientific as well as a cultural mandate. His published accounts held a nation spellbound. The efforts connected with the writing of the account of his second mission (abetted by the "dragon within" of his chronic endocaditis) eventually killed him. Upon his death in Havana at the age of thirty-seven, the Governor of Cuba personally escorted the cortege as far as New Orleans. From New Orleans to Cincinnati, the banks of Mississippi were lined with mourners, and the train trip from Cincinnati to Philadelphia took nearly four days because of the throngs on the tracks. His funeral was the largest in American history, eclipsed only by Lincoln's a decade later. Culturally, Kane was the embodiment of Patricia Limerick's "sustainable American hero," representing the ascent of American Science and Technology to the stature of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment movements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.



February 10, Thursday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

5th day 10th of 2 M / Meeting small but to me a season of some favor for which I desire to be thankful. - there was much Snow on the ground & travelling bad yet about 14 Woman attended Meeting & but few more men -

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

On about this day [John Keats](#) wrote to Fanny Brawne:

I can do nothing say nothing think nothing of you but what has its spring in the Love which has so long been my pleasure and torment. On the night I was taken ill when so violent a rush of blood came to my Lungs that I felt nearly suffocated - I assure you I felt it possible I might not survive and at that moment though[t] of nothing but you...



July 1, Saturday: The first toll was collected on the [Erie Canal](#).

1st publication of newspaper "Courrier de la Meuse."

This day marked the final appearance of Muzio Clementi at a meeting of the [London](#) Philharmonic Society.

LAMIA, ISABELLA, THE EVE OF ST AGNES, AND OTHER POEMS by [John Keats](#) was published.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1821

 February 23, Friday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

6th day 23rd of 2 M 1821 / This evening Sally Brown spent with us, & to me it was an agreeable time – Oh that she & I too were more religiously devoted. –

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

The “rapid [consumption](#)” mentioned by Shelley –the last stage of the [tuberculosis](#) he had caught from tending his brother Tom Keats in the previous year – resulted in [John Keats](#)’s death at the age of 25 in a small room overlooking the Spanish Steps in [Rome](#).

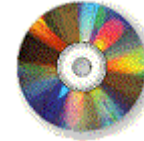
“Bring me the candle,” he called to Brown, with whom he was staying, “and let me see this blood.” He looked at the bright red spot on his pillow and then, his excitement and intoxication gone, he said calmly, “I know the colour of that blood. It’s arterial blood.... That blood is my death warrant.”

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Famous Last Words:



“What school is more profitably instructive than the death-bed of the righteous, impressing the understanding with a convincing evidence, that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but solid substantial truth.”



— A COLLECTION OF MEMORIALS CONCERNING DIVERS DECEASED MINISTERS, Philadelphia, 1787

“The death bed scenes & observations even of the best & wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life — to subject their whole lives to their will as he who said he might give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off — but he gave no sign Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows.”

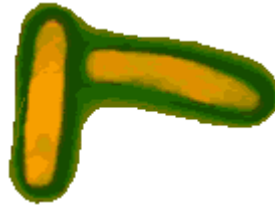
—Thoreau’s JOURNAL, March 12, 1853

1821	John Keats	dying of TB in Rome	<i>“Severn ... I am dying ... I shall die easy ... don't be frightened ... be firm and thank God it has come.”</i>
1825	Phebe Walker Bliss Emerson Ripley	died in Concord	<i>“Don't call Dr. Ripley his boots squeak so, Mr. Emerson used to step so softly, his boots never squeaked.”</i>
1826	Thomas Jefferson	died at 12:50PM	<i>“Is it the 4th? —Ah.”</i>
1826	John Adams	died at 5: 30PM — Jefferson actually had, in Virginia, predeceased him	<i>“Thomas Jefferson still surv...”</i>
1830	King George IV	early one morning in Windsor Castle	<i>“Good God, what is this? — My boy, this is death.”</i>
1832	Sam Sharpe	being hanged after an unsuccessful slave revolt on the island of Jamaica	<i>“I would rather die on yonder gallows than live in slavery.”</i>
<i>... other famous last words ...</i>			

THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK



Here is Keats's deathmask:





THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: We read that Aristæus "obtained of Jupiter and Neptune, that the pestilential heat of the dog-days, wherein was great mortality, should be mitigated with wind." This is one of those dateless benefits conferred on man, which have no record in our vulgar day, though we still find some similitude to them in our dreams, in which we have a more liberal and juster apprehension of things, unconstrained by habit, which is then in some measure put off, and divested of memory, which we call history. According to fable, when the island of Ægina was depopulated by sickness, at the instance of Æacus, Jupiter turned the ants into men, that is, as some think, he made men of the inhabitants who lived meanly like ants. This is perhaps the fullest history of those early days extant. The fable which is naturally and truly composed, so as to satisfy the imagination, ere it addresses the understanding, beautiful though strange as a wild-flower, is to the wise man an apothegm, and admits of his most generous interpretation. When we read that Bacchus made the Tyrrhenian mariners mad, so that they leapt into the sea, mistaking it for a meadow full of flowers, and so became dolphins, we are not concerned about the historical truth of this, but rather a higher poetical truth. We seem to hear the music of a thought, and care not if the understanding be not gratified. For their beauty, consider the fables of Narcissus, of Endymion, of Memnon son of Morning, the representative of all promising youths who have died a premature death, and whose memory is melodiously prolonged to the latest morning; the beautiful stories of Phaeton, and of the Sirens whose isle shone afar off white with the bones of unburied men; and the pregnant ones of Pan, Prometheus, and the Sphinx; and that long list of names which have already become part of the universal language of civilized men, and from proper are becoming common names or nouns, – the Sibyls, the Eumenides, the Parcae, the Graces, the Muses, Nemesis, &c. It is interesting to observe with what singular unanimity the farthest sundered nations and generations consent to give completeness and roundness to an ancient fable, of which they indistinctly appreciate the beauty or the truth. By a faint and dream-like effort, though it be only by the vote of a scientific body, the dullest posterity slowly add some trait to the mythus.

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

ENDYMION
JOHN KEATS



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



April 11, Wednesday: A letter from London informed [Percy Bysshe Shelley](#) of [John Keats](#)'s death in Rome.




THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1832

 Publication, by Chauncey Goodrich in Burlington, Vermont, of [Samuel Taylor Coleridge](#)'s THE STATESMAN'S MANUAL; OR, THE BIBLE THE BEST GUIDE TO POLITICAL SKILL AND FORESIGHT: A LAY SERMON. [Followed by] A LAY SERMON, ADDRESSED TO THE HIGHER AND MIDDLE CLASSES, ON THE EXISTING DISTRESSES AND DISCONTENTS. This volume would be in the personal library of [Waldo Emerson](#) and would be commented upon by [Henry Thoreau](#) during January 1841.

THE STATESMAN'S MANUAL

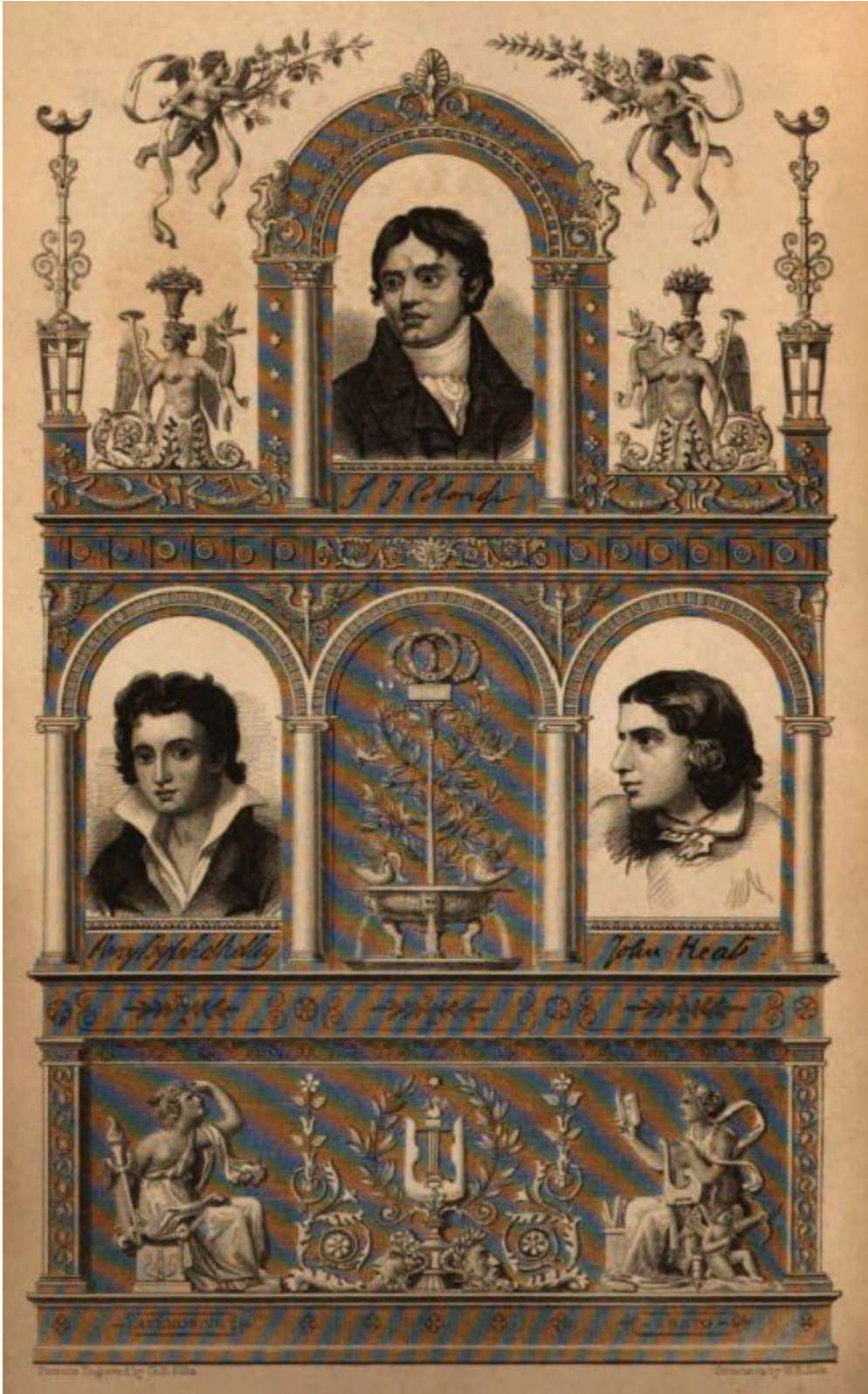
Publication, in Philadelphia, by the firm of J. Grigg, of THE POETICAL WORKS OF [COLERIDGE](#), [SHELLEY](#), AND [KEATS](#), COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME. STEREOTYPED BY JOHN HOWE. This volume would be in [Thoreau](#)'s personal library.

COLERIDGE, SHELLEY, KEATS

THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK






THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1860

The “Endymion: A Poetic Romance” of the beautiful young 5-foot poet [John Keats](#) had provided the British reader as of 1818  with a happy ending for the old story of [Endymion](#) beloved of Diana or Cynthia. In his essay on “BEHAVIOR” published as part of the volume CONDUCT OF LIFE in 1860, however, [Waldo Emerson](#) evidently made reference to another tradition about this shepherd figure, for his drowsy youth would be not supremely kissable but, mysteriously, “much deceived”:

Too weak to win, too fond to shun
The tyrants of his doom,
The much deceived Endymion
Slips behind a tomb.



CONDUCT OF LIFE

–Which is of course in distinct opposition to the comment [Henry Thoreau](#) had made about dreaming in “Wednesday” of [A WEEK](#):



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: I dreamed this night of an event which had occurred long before. It was a difference with a Friend, which had not ceased to give me pain, though I had no cause to blame myself. But in my dream ideal justice was at length done me for his suspicions, and I received that compensation which I had never obtained in my waking hours. I was unspeakably soothed and rejoiced, even after I awoke, because in dreams we never deceive ourselves, nor are deceived, and this seemed to have the authority of a final judgment.

We bless and curse ourselves. Some dreams are divine, as well as some waking thoughts. Donne sings of one

“Who dreamt devoutlier than most use to pray.”

PEOPLE OF A WEEK

REVEREND JOHN DONNE

GOD IN CONCORD by Jane Langton © 1992

40

*... in dreams we never deceive ourselves,
nor are deceived. ...*

*Thoreau, A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers
“Wednesday”*

Homer Kelly would have put it differently, but he might have come to a similar conclusion. Looking out at the shining

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THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

A WEEK: We read that Aristæus "obtained of Jupiter and Neptune, that the pestilential heat of the dog-days, wherein was great mortality, should be mitigated with wind." This is one of those dateless benefits conferred on man, which have no record in our vulgar day, though we still find some similitude to them in our dreams, in which we have a more liberal and juster apprehension of things, unconstrained by habit, which is then in some measure put off, and divested of memory, which we call history. According to fable, when the island of Ægina was depopulated by sickness, at the instance of Æacus, Jupiter turned the ants into men, that is, as some think, he made men of the inhabitants who lived meanly like ants. This is perhaps the fullest history of those early days extant. The fable which is naturally and truly composed, so as to satisfy the imagination, ere it addresses the understanding, beautiful though strange as a wild-flower, is to the wise man an apothegm, and admits of his most generous interpretation. When we read that Bacchus made the Tyrrhenian mariners mad, so that they leapt into the sea, mistaking it for a meadow full of flowers, and so became dolphins, we are not concerned about the historical truth of this, but rather a higher poetical truth. We seem to hear the music of a thought, and care not if the understanding be not gratified. For their beauty, consider the fables of Narcissus, of Endymion, of Memnon son of Morning, the representative of all promising youths who have died a premature death, and whose memory is melodiously prolonged to the latest morning; the beautiful stories of Phaeton, and of the Sirens whose isle shone afar off white with the bones of unburied men; and the pregnant ones of Pan, Prometheus, and the Sphinx; and that long list of names which have already become part of the universal language of civilized men, and from proper are becoming common names or nouns, — the Sibyls, the Eumenides, the Parcae, the Graces, the Muses, Nemesis, &c. It is interesting to observe with what singular unanimity the farthest sundered nations and generations consent to give completeness and roundness to an ancient fable, of which they indistinctly appreciate the beauty or the truth. By a faint and dream-like effort, though it be only by the vote of a scientific body, the dullest posterity slowly add some trait to the mythus.

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

ENDYMION
JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

1869

March 4, Thursday: [Thomas Carlyle](#) visited the Queen of England in her castle home. At one point this confirmed explainer became so intense in informing her about the beauties of his Galloway that he pinned her dress to the floor with the leg of his chair.¹⁸



Ulysses S. Grant was inaugurated as President of the United States of America.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

[James Russell Lowell](#) would become so alarmed with the political corruption that would be so obvious in this president’s administrations that he would attempt to manufacture models of heroism and idealism in literature. As co-editor, with Charles Eliot Norton, of the [North American Review](#) there would appear a series of critical essays on such major literary figures as [Dante Alighieri](#), [Geoffrey Chaucer](#), [Edmund Spenser](#), [John Milton](#), [William Shakespeare](#), [John Dryden](#), [William Wordsworth](#), and [John Keats](#). These and other critical essays would be collected in the two versions of AMONG MY BOOKS, the version of 1870 and the version of 1876.

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FABULATION: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY

18. Talk about captivating one’s audience! We were not amused. To her journal, [Victoria](#) would describe this man as “a strange-looking eccentric old Scotchman, who holds forth, in a drawling melancholy voice, with a broad Scotch accent, upon Scotland and upon the utter degeneration of everything.”



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: March 5, 2015



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT
GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



THE PEOPLE OF A WEEK:

JOHN KEATS

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN A WEEK

Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.