

Lord Byron- she walks in beauty

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Maddy Wilson Mrs. Haines English 10H 25 January 2012 More Than Meets The Eye Love poems are one of the most simple and easy to understand forms of writing. They have a basic formula consisting of an introduction of the subject that is being written about, several comparisons, and a profession of the author's love towards the subject. Although this may vary from poem to poem, the initial idea remains the same. On the surface of these poems, the words seem to be very shallow and are general compliments that have no depth. In contrast, many lines of a love poem allude to a deeper meaning, but it is up to the reader to figure out these hidden implications. This is the case in Lord Byron's piece, *She Walks in Beauty*, composed in 1814. During the evening of June 11, 1814, Lord Byron- also known as George Gordon Byron- attended a party in which he met the stunning Anne Beatrix Wilmot, whom was the wife of his first cousin. She inspired the composition of this poem, although Byron could not marry her ("Byron *She Walks In Beauty*"). Throughout Lord Byron's poem, he references the night. This is so because the night harnesses an intense, powerful feeling, close to fear, that can only be felt if a true lust is occurring for another. Byron obviously feels this love and lust at the same time. The author also alludes to daytime as often as nighttime. Day represents protection and happiness along with reassurance and liveliness. These times he discusses are contrasting to each other, which fits with the main theme of the paper: Battling internal desires having to do with platonic love and lust. Byron wants to love this beautiful woman modestly and chastely but he lusts for her magnificence along with it. Byron includes multiple opposing comparisons between Anne and the objects she is identified with. In the first

stanza, line 3, Byron exclaims that this woman is both dark and bright together ("600. She Walks In Beauty"), referencing the dissimilarity between good and evil, an ongoing theme in many works of literature. Along with this, Byron also states qualities of matured beauty, such as using words like "mellow'd" and "gaudy", but then uses words like "pure" and "innocent", suggesting that the woman is young and blameless. Another oppositional juxtaposition is the differentiation between what the heart feels and what the mind feels. This is often the road traveled by many authors of love poems. They are torn between what their heart is feeling and what their thoughts are telling them. In line 17 and 18, Byron references both the mind as well as the heart ("600. She Walks In Beauty"). Readers can infer that he is conflicted with his love for this woman, being so because she is the wife of his first cousin. The contrast between the mind and the heart emphasizes the confusion and feelings one can undergo when in love. In line 11, Lord Byron states, "Had half impair'd the nameless grace// Which waves in ever raven tress." Here he is making his words have a double meaning, for her grace radiates through her entire entity, but also it makes it known that she has wavy, dark hair that was uncommon and therefore beautiful in the time period Byron wrote this work in. These words add to the immense beauty he sees in this woman and how he lusts greatly for her. Poems having to do with love can be very elementary when it comes to the surface of the words, therefore readers must search deeper into the text to understand the true beauty. Many words can bring out feelings, such as the words "cloudless climes and starry skies," said in line 2 makes the audience feel at peace with this imagery of perfect weather. Along with this, Byron states that the

woman is " so soft, so calm" in line 14 and makes the readers feel comforted by the word choice because they may associate those words with a soft blanket or a sincere hug from a dear friend. The triggering of feelings makes the reader feel especially gripped and connected to the poem's words and can initiate a richer understanding of the piece. This poem is contradictory to itself, but it is important to the initial theme of the poem and it only adds to the confusion and mystery Lord Byron himself experiences and makes his readers feel the same way by his word choice and his feelings linked to day and night. Works Cited " Byron's She Walks in Beauty: A Study Guide." Free Study Guides for Shakespeare and Other Authors. Web. 25 Jan. 2012. . " 600. She Walks in Beauty. George Gordon Byron, Lord Byron. The Oxford Book of English Verse." Bartleby. com: Great Books Online -- Quotes, Poems, Novels, Classics and Hundreds More. Web. 25 Jan. 2012. .