

# **Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

Samuel Taylor Coleridge



## Table of Contents

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| <u>Selected Poems</u> .....          | 1  |
| <u>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</u> ..... | 2  |
| <u>Frost at Midnight</u> .....       | 21 |

# Selected Poems

## Samuel Taylor Coleridge

### *The Æolian Harp*

My pensive SARA ! thy soft cheek reclined  
Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is  
To sit beside our Cot, our Cot o'ergrown  
With white-flower'd Jasmin, and the broad-leav'd Myrtle,  
(Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love !)  
And watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,  
Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve  
Serenely brilliant (such should Wisdom be)  
Shine opposite ! How exquisite the scents  
Snatch'd from yon bean-field ! and the world so hush'd !  
The stilly murmur of the distant Sea  
Tells us of silence.  
And that simplest Lute,

Plac'd length-ways in the clasping casement, hark !  
How by the desultory breeze caress'd,  
Like some coy maid half-yielding to her lover,  
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs  
Tempt to repeat the wrong ! And now, its strings  
Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes  
Over delicious surges sink and rise,  
Such a soft floating witchery of sound  
As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve  
Voyage on gentle gales from Faery-Land,  
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,  
Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,  
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untam'd wing !  
O ! the one Life within us and abroad,  
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,  
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light,  
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance every where--  
Methinks, it should have been impossible  
Not to love all things in a world so fill'd ;  
Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air  
Is Music slumbering on her instrument.  
And thus, my Love ! as on the midway slope

Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,  
Whilst thro' my half-clos'd eye-lids I behold  
The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main,  
And tranquil muse upon tranquility ;  
Full many a thought uncall'd and undetain'd,  
And many idle flitting phantasies,

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Traverse my indolent and passive brain,  
As wild and various, as the random gales  
That swell and flutter on this subject Lute !

And what if all of animated nature

Be but organic Harps diversly fram'd,  
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps  
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,  
At once the Soul of each, and God of all ?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof

Darts, O belovéd Woman ! nor such thoughts  
Dim and unhallow'd dost thou not reject,  
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.  
Meek Daughter in the Family of Christ !  
Well hast thou said and holily disprais'd  
These shapings of the unregenerate mind ;  
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break  
On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.  
For never guiltless may I speak of him,  
The Incomprehensible ! save when with awe  
I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels ;  
Who with his saving mercies healéd me,  
A sinful and most miserable man,  
Wilder'd and dark, and gave me to possess  
Peace, and this Cot, and thee, heart-honour'd Maid !

*This Lime-Tree Bower my Prison*

ADDRESSED TO CHARLES LAMB, OF THE INDIA HOUSE, LONDON

Well, they are gone, and here must I remain,  
This lime-tree bower my prison ! I have lost  
Beauties and feelings, such as would have been  
Most sweet to my remembrance even when age  
Had dimm'd mine eyes to blindness ! They, meanwhile,  
Friends, whom I never more may meet again,  
On springy heath, along the hill-top edge,  
Wander in gladness, and wind down, perchance,  
To that still roaring dell, of which I told ;  
The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow, deep,  
And only speckled by the mid-day sun ;  
Where its slim trunk the ash from rock to rock  
Flings arching like a bridge ;--that branchless ash,  
Unsun'd and damp, whose few poor yellow leaves  
Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble still,  
Fann'd by the water-fall ! and there my friends

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Behold the dark green file of long lank weeds,  
That all at once (a most fantastic sight !)  
Still nod and drip beneath the dripping edge  
Of the blue clay--stone.

Now, my friends emerge

Beneath the wide wide Heaven--and view again  
The many--steeped tract magnificent  
Of hilly fields and meadows, and the sea,  
With some fair bark, perhaps, whose sails light up  
The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt two Isles  
Of purple shadow ! Yes ! they wander on  
In gladness all ; but thou, methinks, most glad,  
My gentle--hearted Charles ! for thou hast pined  
And hunger'd after Nature, many a year,  
In the great City pent, winning thy way  
With sad yet patient soul, through evil and pain  
And strange calamity ! Ah ! slowly sink  
Behind the western ridge, thou glorious Sun !  
Shine in the slant beams of the sinking orb,  
Ye purple heath--flowers ! richlier burn, ye clouds !  
Live in the yellow light, ye distant groves !  
And kindle, thou blue Ocean ! So my friend  
Struck with deep joy may stand, as I have stood,  
Silent with swimming sense ; yea, gazing round  
On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth seem  
Less gross than bodily ; and of such hues  
As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet he makes  
Spirits perceive his presence.  
A delight

Comes sudden on my heart, and I am glad  
As I myself were there ! Nor in this bower,  
This little lime--tree bower, have I not mark'd  
Much that has sooth'd me. Pale beneath the blaze  
Hung the transparent foliage ; and I watch'd  
Some broad and sunny leaf, and lov'd to see  
The shadow of the leaf and stem above  
Dappling its sunshine ! And that walnut--tree  
Was richly ting'd, and a deep radiance lay  
Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps  
Those fronting elms, and now, with blackest mass  
Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter hue  
Through the late twilight : and though now the bat  
Wheels silent by, and not a swallow twitters,  
Yet still the solitary humble--bee  
Sings in the bean--flower ! Henceforth I shall know  
That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure ;  
No plot so narrow, be but Nature there,  
No waste so vacant, but may well employ

## Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart  
Awake to Love and Beauty ! and sometimes  
'Tis well to be bereft of promis'd good,  
That we may lift the soul, and contemplate  
With lively joy the joys we cannot share.  
My gentle-hearted Charles ! when the last rook  
Beat its straight path across the dusky air  
Homewards, I blest it ! deeming its black wing  
(Now a dim speck, now vanishing in light)  
Had cross'd the mighty Orb's dilated glory,  
While thou stood'st gazing ; or, when all was still,  
Flew creaking o'er thy head, and had a charm  
For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to whom  
No sound is dissonant which tells of Life.

### *Christabel*

#### **PART I**

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock ;  
Tu--whit !-- -- Tu--who !  
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew.  
Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,  
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch ;  
From her kennel beneath the rock  
She maketh answer to the clock,  
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour ;  
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,  
Sixteen short howls, not over loud ;  
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark ?  
The night is chilly, but not dark.  
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,  
It covers but not hides the sky.  
The moon is behind, and at the full ;  
And yet she looks both small and dull.  
The night is chill, the cloud is gray :  
'Tis a month before the month of May,  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well,  
What makes her in the wood so late,  
A furlong from the castle gate ?  
She had dreams all yesternight  
Of her own betrothéd knight ;



Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

And she in the midnight wood will pray  
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,  
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,  
And naught was green upon the oak  
But moss and rarest misletoe :  
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,  
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,  
The lovely lady, Christabel !  
It moaned as near, as near can be,  
But what it is she cannot tell.--  
On the other side it seems to be,  
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill ; the forest bare ;  
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak ?  
There is not wind enough in the air  
To move away the ringlet curl  
From the lovely lady's cheek--  
There is not wind enough to twirl  
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
That dances as often as dance it can,  
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel !  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !  
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,  
And stole to the other side of the oak.

What sees she there ?  
There she sees a damsel bright,  
Dressed in a silken robe of white,  
That shadowy in the moonlight shone :  
The neck that made that white robe wan,  
Her stately neck, and arms were bare ;  
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were ;  
And wildly glittered here and there  
The gems entangled in her hair.  
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see  
A lady so richly clad as she--  
Beautiful exceedingly !  
Mary mother, save me now !  
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou ?

The lady strange made answer meet,  
And her voice was faint and sweet :--

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Have pity on my sore distress,  
I scarce can speak for weariness :  
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear !  
Said Christabel, How camest thou here ?  
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,  
Did thus pursue her answer meet :—

My sire is of a noble line,  
And my name is Geraldine :  
Five warriors seized me yestermorn,  
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :  
They choked my cries with force and fright,  
And tied me on a palfrey white.  
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,  
And they rode furiously behind.  
They spurred amain, their steeds were white :  
And once we crossed the shade of night.  
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,  
I have no thought what men they be ;  
Nor do I know how long it is  
(For I have lain entranced, I wis)  
Since one, the tallest of the five,  
Took me from the palfrey's back,  
A weary woman, scarce alive.  
Some muttered words his comrades spoke :  
He placed me underneath this oak ;  
He swore they would return with haste ;  
Whither they went I cannot tell—  
I thought I heard, some minutes past,  
Sounds as of a castle bell.  
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),  
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,  
And comforted fair Geraldine :  
O well, bright dame ! may you command  
The service of Sir Leoline ;  
And gladly our stout chivalry  
Will he send forth and friends withal  
To guide and guard you safe and free  
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they passed  
That strove to be, and were not, fast.  
Her gracious stars the lady blest,  
And thus spake on sweet Christabel :  
All our household are at rest,  
The hall is silent as the cell ;  
Sir Leoline is weak in health,  
And may not well awakened be,  
But we will move as if in stealth,

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

And I beseech your courtesy,  
This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel  
Took the key that fitted well ;  
A little door she opened straight,  
All in the middle of the gate ;  
The gate that was ironed within and without,  
Where an army in battle array had marched out.  
The lady sank, belike through pain,  
And Christabel with might and main  
Lifted her up, a weary weight,  
Over the threshold of the gate :  
Then the lady rose again,  
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court : right glad they were.  
And Christabel devoutly cried  
To the Lady by her side,  
Praise we the Virgin all divine  
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress !  
Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,  
I cannot speak for weariness.  
So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old  
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.  
The mastiff old did not awake,  
Yet she an angry moan did make !  
And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?  
Never till now she uttered yell  
Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
Perhaps it is the owl's scritch :  
For what can aid the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,  
Pass as lightly as you will !  
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,  
Amid their own white ashes lying ;  
But when the lady passed, there came  
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;  
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,  
And nothing else saw she thereby,  
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,  
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.  
O softly tread, said Christabel,  
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

And jealous of the listening air  
They steal their way from stair to stair,  
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,  
And now they pass the Baron's room,  
As still as death, with stifled breath !  
And now have reached her chamber door ;  
And now doth Geraldine press down  
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,  
And not a moonbeam enters here.  
But they without its light can see  
The chamber carved so curiously,  
Carved with figures strange and sweet,  
All made out of the carver's brain,  
For a lady's chamber meet :  
The lamp with twofold silver chain  
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;  
But Christabel the lamp will trim.  
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,  
And left it swinging to and fro,  
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,  
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,  
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !  
It is a wine of virtuous powers ;  
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,  
Who am a maiden most forlorn ?  
Christabel answered--Woe is me !  
She died the hour that I was born.  
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell  
How on her death-bed she did say,  
That she should hear the castle-bell  
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.  
O mother dear ! that thou wert here !  
I would, said Geraldine, she were !

But soon with altered voice, said she--  
'Off, wandering mother ! Peak and pine !  
I have power to bid thee flee.'  
Alas ! what ails poor Geraldine ?  
Why stares she with unsettled eye ?  
Can she the bodiless dead espy ?  
And why with hollow voice cries she,  
'Off, woman, off ! this hour is mine--  
Though thou her guardian spirit be,

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Off, woman. off ! 'tis given to me.'

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,  
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue--  
Alas ! said she, this ghastly ride--  
Dear lady ! it hath wildered you !  
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,  
And faintly said, `Tis over now !'

Again the wild-flower wine she drank :  
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,  
And from the floor whereon she sank,  
The lofty lady stood upright :  
She was most beautiful to see,  
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake--  
`All they who live in the upper sky,  
Do love you, holy Christabel !  
And you love them, and for their sake  
And for the good which me befel,  
Even I in my degree will try,  
Fair maiden, to requite you well.  
But now unrobe yourself ; for I  
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.'

Quoth Christabel, So let it be !  
And as the lady bade, did she.  
Her gentle limbs did she undress  
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe  
So many thoughts moved to and fro,  
That vain it were her lids to close ;  
So half-way from the bed she rose,  
And on her elbow did recline  
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,  
And slowly rolled her eyes around ;  
Then drawing in her breath aloud,  
Like one that shuddered, she unbound  
The cincture from beneath her breast :  
Her silken robe, and inner vest,  
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,  
Behold ! her bosom, and half her side-- --  
A sight to dream of, not to tell !  
O shield her ! shield sweet Christabel !

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs ;  
Ah ! what a stricken look was hers !

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Deep from within she seems half-way  
To lift some weight with sick assay,  
And eyes the maid and seeks delay ;  
Then suddenly as one defied  
Collects herself in scorn and pride,  
And lay down by the Maiden's side !—  
And in her arms the maid she took,

Ah wel—a-day !

And with low voice and doleful look  
These words did say :  
`In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,  
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel !  
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow  
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow ;

But vainly thou warrest,  
For this is alone in  
Thy power to declare,  
That in the dim forest  
Thou heard'st a low moaning,

And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair ;  
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,  
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.'

**THE CONCLUSION TO PART I**

It was a lovely sight to see  
The lady Christabel, when she  
Was praying at the old oak tree.

Amid the jagged shadows  
Of mossy leafless boughs,  
Kneeling in the moonlight,  
To make her gentle vows ;

Her slender palms together prest,  
Heaving sometimes on her breast ;  
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—  
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,  
And both blue eyes more bright than clear.  
Each about to have a tear.  
With open eyes (ah, woe is me !)  
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,  
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,

## Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Dreaming that alone, which is—  
O sorrow and shame ! Can this be she,  
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree ?  
And lo ! the worker of these harms,  
That holds the maiden in her arms,  
Seems to slumber still and mild,  
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,  
O Geraldine ! since arms of thine  
Have been the lovely lady's prison.  
O Geraldine ! one hour was thine—  
Thou'st had thy will ! By tairn and rill,  
The night-birds all that hour were still.  
But now they are jubilant anew,  
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo ! tu—whoo !  
Tu—whoo ! tu—whoo ! from wood and fell !

And see ! the lady Christabel  
Gathers herself from out her trance ;  
Her limbs relax, her countenance  
Grows sad and soft ; the smooth thin lids  
Close o'er her eyes ; and tears she sheds—  
Large tears that leave the lashes bright !  
And oft the while she seems to smile  
As infants at a sudden light !

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,  
Like a youthful hermitess,  
Beauteous in a wilderness,  
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.  
And, if she move unquietly,  
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free  
Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.  
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,  
What if she knew her mother near ?  
But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
That saints will aid if men will call :  
For the blue sky bends over all !

### **PART II**

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,  
Knells us back to a world of death.  
These words Sir Leoline first said,  
When he rose and found his lady dead :  
These words Sir Leoline will say  
Many a morn to his dying day !  
And hence the custom and law began

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

That still at dawn the sacristan,  
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,  
Five and forty beads must tell  
Between each stroke--a warning knell,  
Which not a soul can choose but hear  
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell !  
And let the drowsy sacristan  
Still count as slowly as he can !  
There is no lack of such, I ween,  
As well fill up the space between.  
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,  
And Dungeon--ghyll so foully rent,  
With ropes of rock and bells of air  
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,  
Who all give back, one after t'other,  
The death--note to their living brother ;  
And oft too, by the knell offended,  
Just as their one ! two ! three ! is ended,  
The devil mocks the doleful tale  
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still ! through mist and cloud  
That merry peal comes ringing loud ;  
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,  
And rises lightly from the bed ;  
Puts on her silken vestments white,  
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,  
And nothing doubting of her spell  
Awakens the lady Christabel.  
'Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel ?  
I trust that you have rested well.'

And Christabel awoke and spied  
The same who lay down by her side--  
O rather say, the same whom she  
Raised up beneath the old oak tree !  
Nay, fairer yet ! and yet more fair !  
For she belike hath drunken deep  
Of all the blessedness of sleep !  
And while she spake, her looks, her air  
Such gentle thankfulness declare,  
That (so it seemed) her girded vests  
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.  
'Sure I have sinn'd !' said Christabel,  
'Now heaven be praised if all be well !'  
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,  
Did she the lofty lady greet  
With such perplexity of mind  
As dreams too lively leave behind.



Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed  
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed  
That He, who on the cross did groan,  
Might wash away her sins unknown,  
She forthwith led fair Geraldine  
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall  
Are pacing both into the hall,  
And pacing on through page and groom,  
Enter the Baron's presence--room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest  
His gentle daughter to his breast,  
With cheerful wonder in his eyes  
The lady Geraldine espies,  
And gave such welcome to the same,  
As might beseem so bright a dame !

But when he heard the lady's tale,  
And when she told her father's name,  
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,  
Murmuring o'er the name again,  
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;  
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;  
And constancy lives in realms above ;  
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;  
And to be wroth with one we love,  
Doth work like madness in the brain.  
And thus it chanced, as I divine,  
With Roland and Sir Leoline.  
Each spake words of high disdain  
And insult to his heart's best brother :  
They parted--ne'er to meet again !  
But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining--  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;  
A dreary sea now flows between ;--  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,  
Stood gazing on the damsel's face :  
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine  
Came back upon his heart again.

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

O then the Baron forgot his age,  
His noble heart swelled high with rage ;  
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,  
He would proclaim it far and wide  
With trump and solemn heraldry,  
That they, who thus had wronged the dame,  
Were base as spotted infamy !  
`And if they dare deny the same,  
My herald shall appoint a week,  
And let the recreant traitors seek  
My tourney court--that there and then  
I may dislodge their reptile souls  
From the bodies and forms of men !'  
He spake : his eye in lightning rolls !  
For the lady was ruthlessly seized ; and he kened  
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend !

And now the tears were on his face,  
And fondly in his arms he took  
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,  
Prolonging it with joyous look.  
Which when she viewed, a vision fell  
Upon the soul of Christabel,  
The vision of fear, the touch and pain !  
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again--  
(Ah, woe is me ! Was it for thee,  
Thou gentle maid ! such sights to see ?)

Again she saw that bosom old,  
Again she felt that bosom cold,  
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound :  
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,  
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid  
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,  
And in its stead that vision blest,  
Which comforted her after--rest.  
While in the lady's arms she lay,  
Had put a rapture in her breast,  
And on her lips and o'er her eyes  
Spread smiles like light !

With new surprise,

`What ails then my beloved child ?'  
The Baron said--His daughter mild  
Made answer, `All will yet be well !'  
I ween, she had no power to tell  
Aught else : so mighty was the spell.

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,  
Had deemed her sure a thing divine :  
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,  
As if she feared she had offended  
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid !  
And with such lowly tones she prayed,  
She might be sent without delay  
Home to her father's mansion.

‘Nay !

Nay, by my soul !' said Leoline.  
‘Ho ! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine !  
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,  
And take two steeds with trappings proud,  
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best  
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,  
And clothe you both in solemn vest,  
And over the mountains haste along,  
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,  
Detain you on the valley road.  
‘And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,  
My merry bard ! he hastes, he hastes  
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,  
And reaches soon that castle good  
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

‘Bard Bracy ! bard Bracy ! your horses are fleet,  
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,  
More loud than your horses' echoing feet !  
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,  
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall !  
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free--  
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me !  
He bids thee come without delay  
With all thy numerous array  
And take thy lovely daughter home :  
And he will meet thee on the way  
With all his numerous array  
White with their panting palfreys' foam :  
And, by mine honour ! I will say,  
That I repent me of the day  
When I spake words of fierce disdain  
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine !--  
--For since that evil hour hath flown,  
Many a summer's sun hath shone ;  
Yet ne'er found I a friend again  
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine.'

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing ;  
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,  
His gracious hail on all bestowing !--  
'Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,  
Are sweeter than my harp can tell ;  
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,  
This day my journey should not be,  
So strange a dream hath come to me,  
That I had vowed with music loud  
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,  
Warned by a vision in my rest !  
For in my sleep I saw that dove,  
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,  
And call'st by thy own daughter's name--  
Sir Leoline ! I saw the same  
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,  
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.  
Which when I saw and when I heard,  
I wonder'd what might ail the bird ;  
For nothing near it could I see,  
Save the grass and herbs underneath the old tree.

'And in my dream methought I went  
To search out what might there be found ;  
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,  
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.  
I went and peered, and could descry  
No cause for her distressful cry ;  
But yet for her dear lady's sake  
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,  
When lo ! I saw a bright green snake  
Coiled around its wings and neck.  
Green as the herbs on which it couched,  
Close by the dove's its head it crouched ;  
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,  
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers !  
I woke ; it was the midnight hour,  
The clock was echoing in the tower ;  
But though my slumber was gone by,  
This dream it would not pass away--  
It seems to live upon my eye !  
And thence I vowed this self-same day,  
With music strong and saintly song  
To wander through the forest bare,  
Lest aught unholy loiter there.'

Thus Bracy said : the Baron, the while,  
Half-listening heard him with a smile ;  
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,  
His eyes made up of wonder and love ;  
And said in courtly accents fine,

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

`Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,  
With arms more strong than harp or song,  
Thy sire and I will crush the snake !'  
He kissed her forehead as he spake,  
And Geraldine in maiden wise,  
Casting down her large bright eyes,  
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine  
She turned her from Sir Leoline ;  
Softly gathering up her train,  
That o'er her right arm fell again ;  
And folded her arms across her chest,  
And couched her head upon her breast,  
And looked askance at Christabel-- --  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy ;  
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,  
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,  
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread,  
At Christabel she looked askance !--  
One moment--and the sight was fled !  
But Christabel in dizzy trance  
Stumbling on the unsteady ground  
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound ;  
And Geraldine again turned round,  
And like a thing, that sought relief,  
Full of wonder and full of grief,  
She rolled her large bright eyes divine  
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas ! her thoughts are gone,  
She nothing sees--no sight but one !  
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,  
I know not how, in fearful wise,  
So deeply had she drunken in  
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,  
That all her features were resigned  
To this sole image in her mind :  
And passively did imitate  
That look of dull and treacherous hate !  
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,  
Still picturing that look askance  
With forced unconscious sympathy  
Full before her father's view-- --  
As far as such a look could be  
In eyes so innocent and blue !

And when the trance was o'er, the maid  
Paused awhile, and inly prayed :  
Then falling at the Baron's feet,  
`By my mother's soul do I entreat

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

That thou this woman send away !  
She said : and more she could not say :  
For what she knew she could not tell,  
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,  
Sir Leoline ? Thy only child  
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,  
So fair, so innocent, so mild ;  
The same, for whom thy lady died !  
O by the pangs of her dear mother  
Think thou no evil of thy child !  
For her, and thee, and for no other,  
She prayed the moment ere she died :  
Prayed that the babe for whom she died,  
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride !

That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,  
Sir Leoline !  
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,  
Her child and thine ?

Within the Baron's heart and brain  
If thoughts, like these, had any share,  
They only swelled his rage and pain,  
And did but work confusion there.  
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,  
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,  
Dishonored thus in his old age ;  
Dishonored by his only child,  
And all his hospitality  
To the wronged daughter of his friend  
By more than woman's jealousy  
Brought thus to a disgraceful end--  
He rolled his eye with stern regard  
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,  
And said in tones abrupt, austere--  
'Why, Bracy ! dost thou loiter here ?  
I bade thee hence !' The bard obeyed ;  
And turning from his own sweet maid,  
The agéd knight, Sir Leoline,  
Led forth the lady Geraldine !

**THE CONCLUSION TO PART II**

A little child, a limber elf,  
Singing, dancing to itself,  
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,  
That always finds, and never seeks,  
Makes such a vision to the sight  
As fills a father's eyes with light ;  
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast  
Upon his heart, that he at last  
Must needs express his love's excess  
With words of unmeant bitterness.  
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together  
Thoughts so all unlike each other ;  
To mutter and mock a broken charm,  
To dally with wrong that does no harm.  
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty  
At each wild word to feel within  
A sweet recoil of love and pity.  
And what, if in a world of sin  
(O sorrow and shame should this be true !)  
Such giddiness of heart and brain  
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,  
So talks as it's most used to do.

## Frost at Midnight

The Frost performs its secret ministry,  
Unhelped by any wind. The owl's cry  
Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as before.  
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,  
Have left me to that solitude, which suits  
Abstruser musings : save that at my side  
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.  
'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it disturbs  
And vexes meditation with its strange  
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,  
This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and wood,  
With all the numberless goings-on of life,  
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame  
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not ;  
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,  
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.  
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature  
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,  
Making it a companionable form,  
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit  
By its own moods interprets, every where  
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,  
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O ! how oft,

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



Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,

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

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,

Whether the summer clothe the general earth  
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing  
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch  
Of mossy apple-tree, while the night thatch  
Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eave-drops fall  
Heard only in the trances of the blast,  
Or if the secret ministry of frost  
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,

Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

*Kubla Khan*

OR, A VISION IN A DREAM.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree :  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round :

Frost at Midnight

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !  
A savage place ! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover !  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
A mighty fountain momently was forced :  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :  
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever  
It flung up momently the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war !

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves ;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.

It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !  
A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw :  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,

That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,

Selected Poems -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

And drunk the milk of Paradise.