

“She Walks in Beauty” Explication

(English Literature for BS English, M.A English, and competitive exams)

For College & University Students

By embracing the concept of self-expression, the poet, Lord Byron, has brought together the use of imagination and deep emotion in order to show his admiration for a woman of beauty. "She walks in Beauty" is a love poem in which the poet illustrates the physical beauties of such a woman and compares her qualities to the forces of light and darkness. Throughout the poem, the poet accentuates all aspects of her beauty in order to make it seem as if she were the perfect woman.

In the first two lines of the first stanza, "She walks in beauty, like the night / of cloudless climes and starry skies," (line 2) the poet brings together the contrasting qualities of darkness and light. The poet presents an extended metaphor by constantly comparing the lady to the beauty of night and day. There are many examples of assonance shown in the first few lines such as the words like, night, climes, skies, light, eyes, and light. The next two lines address the lady's angelic face and eyes as well as her interior beauty which has the same qualities as the light. These descriptions enable the readers to paint a vivid picture of this lady's beauty and her ability to make everything bright even during the night.

The next stanza emphasizes the lady's inner and outer beauty as well as the purity of her face. "One shade the more, one ray the less, / Had half impair'd the nameless grace / which waves in every raven tress, / Or softly lightens o'er her face;" (lines 7-10). The poet uses opposite words, "shade" and "ray", as another way of relating to the ideas of dark and light. He also employs metaphors such as "waves of raven tress" to depict her hair. This is also an example of consonance as the consonant "v" is repeated, which makes the poem sound smoother. With his words, the poet makes it easier for the reader to picture what such a woman would look like, and how her face would be as light as day while her hair is as dark as night. The poet also utilizes alliteration by paying more attention to her mind, and repeating the 's' sound because it gives a calming effect in the way he expresses the woman's thoughts. "Where thoughts serenely sweet express / How pure,