

Keats in Colour: One Whose Name was Writ in Paint

An evaluation between the poetic and the painterly visions of John Keats' Romantic verses through the exploration of similar themes in both the mediums.

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ABSTRACT

Literature derived from the observation of art is one such area of harmony, and the reverse is only an inevitable action, bound to happen. While creative minds indulged in ekphrasis, painters attempted its reversal, leading to results that retained its significance over years. This unique yet inevitable marriage held its own, and with time, has developed as surprising complements to each other. Thus, as a form of art goes beyond its restrictions, encroaches into a sister art, and the resulting osmosis leads to a broadening of both the fields.

This paper aims to bring poetry and painting together through the lens of John Keats' Romantic verses. It seeks to explore the complexities of this collaboration – the loyalty maintained or not maintained in adapting literature to art, the points of similarity or difference between the poetic and the painterly visions and the exploration of themes in both the mediums. In conclusion, I would attempt to prove poetry and painting as potent paradigms by dint of which the other can be explored, analysed and thus developed- each being a means of adding and yet removing layers of meaning to and from the other. And finally, deal on the question to what magnitude the blending of poetry and artistic creativity may be achieved in literature.

Keyword: John Keats, Romantic poetry, ekphrasis, Pre-Raphaelite Paintings, Victorian medievalism

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“Next, Keats can only be a painter” (D. G. Rossetti, quoted in Ford 122)

The conversion of thoughts into the written word led to the birth of literature and the reproduction of these thoughts into images in order to capture its trace led one towards painting. Both literature and painting are, thus, translations that leap over genres and are attempts to preserve the elusive. The two, therefore, overlap each other on many occasions.

Literature derived from the observation of art is one such area of harmony, and the reverse is only an inevitable action, bound to happen. While creative minds indulged in ekphrasis, painters attempted its reversal, leading to results that retained its significance over years. This unique yet inevitable marriage held its own, and with time, has developed as surprising complements to each other. Thus, as a form of art goes beyond its restrictions, encroaches into a sister art, and the resulting osmosis leads to a broadening of both the fields.

Romantic poetry is one of the richest genres of literature in terms of its visual potential, considering the dual characteristics of Pantheism and Medievalism preached by its primary exponents- William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy B. Shelley, John Keats and George G. Byron. Among them, it is John Keats who dealt with expertise with all the five senses- touch, taste, smell, hearing and sight. His poetry abounds in sensual imagery that is visually, synesthetically and onomatopoeically rich. This can be best shown through his Odes, where, words are so pregnant with images that the poet becomes a visual artist. Keats creates images that appear to let his readers see what he sees, smell what he smells, like the stanza in “Ode to a Nightingale” –

“I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;

White hawthorn and the pastoral eglantine
Fast fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves." (Lines 50-60)

Or the stanzas in "To Autumn", reading which one can spontaneously imagine a painting developing, step by step, as the poet personifies the season -

"Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fumes of poppies," (12-17)

Keats' mastery in writing in an extremely visual language may be attributed to the fact that he himself was a painter, having drawn the Sosibios Vase of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn". He was also a close friend of the painter Joseph Severn of the Royal Academy. Having first met in May 1817, they together travelled to Rome and Severn accompanied Keats up until his death by tuberculosis. A close association with a painter must have led a sensitive poet like Keats to delve deeper into the world of art and imbibe it even in his poems, as is seen in the ekphrastic poem "Ode on a Grecian Urn", written in 1819, where Keats observes the urn and loses himself in its essence, personifies it and raises it into a symbol of permanence, Truth and Beauty.

"Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme;" (1-4)

A poem that echoes with similar lines is "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles", written earlier in March 1817, of which a critic remarks,

"It is a splendid evocation of the grandeur of monumental art set against the aspirations of the individual artist, of human weakness and pain poised against an aesthetic vision of gods." (The Poetry Foundation)

Keats' proximity to art, therefore, might indeed be one of the reasons for the visual images he cultivated and professed.

The possibility of rendering a visual version to Keats' work was recognised by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, who aimed "to restore freshness and conviction to British art that they found in early Italian painting before the era of Raphael." (Turner 25: 554). Formed in 1848, one of the creators of the Brotherhood, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, chose Keats as their "spiritual leader" (Bottai). In a letter to his brother William Michael dated 1848 (n. 50), he writes-

“I have not yet had time to get quite through the first volume of Keats, which is exceedingly interesting. He seems to have been a glorious fellow, and says in one place (to my great delight) that, having just looked over a folio of the first and second schools of Italian painting, he has come to the conclusion that the early men surpassed Raphael himself!” (qtd. in Bottai)

Rossetti, along with painters William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, Ford Madox Brown, William Bell Scott, John William Waterhouse and Arthur Hughes came together to show art as a mirror of reality. They primarily dealt with medieval subject matter, giving birth to the imaginary Victorian medievalism and Shakespeare, Keats and Tennyson were their literary heroes in whose works they breathed in new, vivid life. Like the Romantics, the Pre-Raphaelites believed in staying faithful “to . . . own emotion and imagination and then express them.” (15: 25) Pre-Raphaelite paintings are remarkable examples of extremely precise and empirical details, “brilliant colours painted on wet, white ground with painstakingly minute touch, giving a dazzling effect of sharp all-over focus”, “symbolism and typology” that relies more on “showing people and things precisely as they were.” (Turner 25: 555; 15: 26)

“Isabella, or The Pot of Basil,” “The Eve of Saint Agnes” and “La Belle Dame Sans Merci”, with their medieval setting in castles with tinted glass windows and mysterious forests where frightened maidens, lost knights and loyal lovers roam in the alleys, made for the most popular poems to inspire a visual representation on the canvas.

In “Isabella, or The Pot of Basil, as the subtitle suggests, Keats adapts a story from Boccaccio (Novel V from day 4 of Decameron) into his verse showing the tragic love of Isabella and Lorenzo. The latter being a servant is murdered by Isabella’s rich brothers. Lorenzo’s ghost appears before Isabella in a dream vision leading her to his corpse. She severs Lorenzo’s head and keeps it in a pot of basil shrub, cherishing it as a relic. The poem ends as Isabella ‘died forlorn’ seeking her basil pot that her brothers had taken away before fleeing.

John Everett Millais exhibited his pictorial version of the poem naming it *Isabella* at the Royal Academy in 1849. Millais’ painting delves on a single line in the poem-

“They could not sit at meals but feel how well

It soothed each to be the other by;” (5-6)

Keats himself departs from Boccaccio’s story in the sense that he not only portrays Isabella as the forlorn lover but also brings in a sense of commercialisation wherein the unscrupulousness of Isabella’s brothers are said to be the result of their “ancestral merchandize” that “enriched” them; making them “money-bags” (116), “self retired / In

hungry pride and gainful cowardice.” (130) (Zasempa 97). On the other hand, Boccaccio treated their conduct towards Lorenzo as “a piece of natural common sense” (Palgrave).



Millais, John Everett. *Isabella*. 1849.

In Millais' painterly interpretation, Julie F. Codell observes, the painting “fuses dramatic themes woven throughout the poem: the revelation of desire, the deferral of sexual consummation and the threat of death.” (348). The two sides of the table, establishes binaries that are posed against each other. On the left, Millais places the three calculating and opportunist bothers while the right is occupied by Isabella and Lorenzo, flooding their space on the canvas with an impression of calm and gentleness. Millais places Isabella and Lorenzo in the foreground, where Isabella's shyness is quite evident as she is served oranges by Lorenzo. On the other hand, the brothers' faces are evidence of their cruel intensions. One of them tries to kick the greyhound being nursed by Isabella while he simultaneously tries to crack a nut. Herein, the violent nature of the brothers is revealed as he tries to encroach upon the sphere of peacefulness around the lovers (Zasempa 98). His act is a representation of his future attempt and subsequent success in murdering Lorenzo. Beside him, Isabella's brother holds a glass in front of him through which he glances at the lovers, measuring and conspiring against them. Along with the two contrasting forces, one can also see the social class, so rigidly depicted by Keats, in the colour of the garments (97). While Isabella and her brothers are dressed in fineries- radiant gowns, caps, cloaks in red and purplish hues while the servants adorn a black colour. Amongst this conflict between the lovers to pressure their relation and the willingness of the brothers oust a lowly man from corrupting their social class, Millais places the basil pot in the background, that shall later be the only object of

Isabella's affection and survival and subsequently, the absence of which shall cause her demise.

“And she forgot the stars, the moon and sun,
And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
And the new morn she saw not: but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with the tears unto the core” (417-424)



Hunt, William Holman. *Isabella and the Pot of Basil*. 1868.

These lines from Keats' poem seem to have been the inspiration behind William Holman Hunt's *Isabella and the Pot of Basil* where Isabella "melancholically embraces" (Zasempa 99) the basil pot which she cherishes. There are slight departures from the verse source in Hunt's work. Firstly, the pot depicted is neither Keats' "garden pot" (414) nor Boccaccio's "large and handsome vase"; rather it is more of an ornamental pot, the skull figurine engraved on it points towards "Lorenzo's face" (476) that dwelt within it. Isabella's face is painted rather composed and composed and calm instead of "sighing all day . . . and wept" (408). However, the expression might be justified from the fact that Keats had written "And so she pined, and so she died forlorn." (497), only after her beloved basil pot was stolen (100). Isabella's face perhaps depicts her numbness and insensitivity to everything but her relic. Another distinguishing feature of Hunt's painting is the exoticised surrounding – the eastern, oriental styled decor, the candle-lit golden chandelier, detailed tiles and marble walls which serves to remind one of the medieval setting of the poem, similar to "Venice during the Renaissance" (Wilsey 40). The ignored watering pot and handkerchief in Isabella's hand echo the lines-

"And so she ever fed it with thin tears." (425)

Isabella's careless demeanour, with dishevelled hair, the blue cloak falling down, bare feet, all serve to emphasize the multitude of "forgot" that Keats attributes to her, visualizing her melancholy, her withdrawal from public life and society into her private shrine that houses Lorenzo's decapitated head. Codell rightly observes, "Hunt sublimates Keats' rich sensuous descriptions, displacing them into the imitation objects around Isabella." (361)

Hunt however completely does away with the socio-economic angle of the poem that Millais addresses quite vividly. The two paintings, on being examined together, bring together the two pillars of theme on which the poem stands. While Millais depicts an illustrative representation of the story itself, Hunt dives into Isabella's emotions and meditations. Both the Pre-Raphaelite versions may be brought together to express a merging of the polarities on which the poem rests.

The same can be argued in terms of Hunt and Millais' interpretation of "The Eve of Saint Agnes", another poem located in the medieval ages. Kenneth Allott has described the poem as a "romantic celebration of erotic fantasy." (qtd. in Stone 44), wherein a Romeo-Juliet like situation ends in elopement and fulfilment. Keats takes up the medieval ceremony of Saint Agnes' Eve, based on a folklore according to which young girls were greeted with visions of their future husbands at midnight. While Madeline observes the superstition, Porphyro, her suitor from a rival family, aided by the nurse Angela, sneaks into her room and appears to Madeline as she awaits a divine vision. Keats juxtaposes the binaries of imagination and reality, the "flawed ideality of dream" and "the hard truth of waking" as Madeline mistakes Porphyro's presence as a vision (Stone 44). When Porphyro reveals his extremely real presence, they decide to elope, a plan made successful due to the drunken revelry of the celebrating guards.

Millais, in his painting *The Eve of Saint Agnes*, focuses on the bedroom scene where Madeline undresses, unaware of Porphyro's presence-

"Anon his heart revives; her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Uncasps her warmed jewels one by one;

Loosens her fragrant bodice, by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees.” (226- 230)

The first thing that strikes one in Millais’ painting is the focus on Madeline that is enhanced by the shadow of the window, which creates a cage-like structure all over her being. It serves to, perhaps, show how she is actually entrapped in Porphyro’s gaze at the moment, who glances at her from the closet. It might also serve to explain the superstitions and social obligations that she is bound by within the four-walled cage of her room, from which she shall soon be freed. In depicting Madeline thus, Millais has also remained true to Keats’ words-

“Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline’s fair breast.”(217-218)



Millais, John Everett. *The Eve of Saint Agnes*. 1863.

The fact that neither the closet nor Porphyro hiding within is recognisable anywhere in the painting, leads to the conclusion that Millais has indeed painted Madeline as seen by Porphyro. Thus, it is not only Porphyro, but also Millais himself who is hidden in the closet. And through this painting, Millais also invites his viewers into experiencing a Keatsian Negative Capability- to become Porphyro. Keats had written in a letter to his brother dated 27 October, 1818-

“A Poet is the most unpoetical of anything in existence, because he has no identity, he is continually filling some other body.” (Gittings)

Millais, through his painting, invites viewers to enter Porphyro's skin and be a poet while one does so.

Madeline, here, is shown falling prey to the voyeuristic desires of Porphyro as well as the viewers and this notion is further supported by the sexual advances of Porphyro as Madeline lays in her bed. The gaze on Madeline is further highlighted as Millais has blurred her surroundings, focusing on bathing Madeline in exquisite beauty, true to Keats' description of her as a “mermaid in sea-weed” (231). The blue and greenish dress, Madeline's disentangled hair, the embellished dress falling at her feet almost make her resemble a mermaid (Wilsey 29). The primary focus on Madeline, as seen by Porphyro who grows slightly “faint” (224) on watching her beauty, adds to the magic of the painting and serves to express the dream-like, enchanted, ambiguous and almost supernatural atmosphere that Keats envisioned. Just like Hunt's *Isabella*, Millais in this painting concentrates more on a pensive portrayal of Madeline's emotions and wishes more than anything else.

On the other hand, Hunt's depiction of Keats' poem, which he calls a story of the “sacredness of honest responsible love and the weakness of proud intemperance.” (Turner 15: 24) is more of a snippet of the story, a living scene through which the painter underlines broader themes. Hunt adapts his paintings from the following verses-

“They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Where lay the porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flaggon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns;
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:-
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones:-
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.” (361 - 368)



Hunt, William Holman. *The Flight of Madeline and Porphyro during the Drunkenness attending the Revelry*. 1848.

Hunt captures the characters at a moment when their elopement has not yet been successful. In the background, the revelry of Saint Agnes' Eve is shown occurring in full swing while the foreground is dedicated to the pair much like in Millais' *Isabella*. The distance between the festivities and the lovers' enclave on the right refers to Madeline's rejection of the superficial enjoyment arranged by her father- such apparent joys that ultimately chain her down. This caged metaphor is symbolised by the chain at her door and also the presence of the guards (Zasempa 103). The lovers are conscious of the ongoing festivities as well as the hounds and Millais aptly shows this on the faces of his characters as does Keats-

“... beset with fears,

For there were sleeping dragons all around,” (352-353)

They cling to each other while Porphyro keeps his sword ready in his hand to attack if needed. However, the “sleeping dragons” (353), the drunken porter, has passed out intoxicated, clasping his “empty flaggon” (363). All the other inmates are either under the sleepy influence of having emptied jugs of wine or are raising their metals at the orchestrating hands of the old man seated higher in the background, who is probably *Isabella's* father (Wilsey 27). It is only the stirring hounds that are aware of their elopement and this causes alarm on the faces of the escapers. The medieval atmosphere is displayed by dint of the embroidered curtains, stained glass windows and decorative furnishings of the banquet hall as well as the porch. Even the tunic dresses of the servants and Porphyro's feather-capped, belted attire harp on medieval aspects (27). Madeline almost looks like an incarnation of the Virgin Mary in her white covered head and indeed, Saint Agnes' Eve was observed by young virgin girls. Porphyro is seen opening the door just by a crack and seeing the painting one can almost hear the “hinges groan” (368) as a streak of moonlight sneak into the action. The ignored bull's horn drenched in wine is symbolic of the intoxication that has disabled alarm and consciousness, paving the way for Madeline and Porphyro to flee “away into the storm” (370). This painting, which led to the friendship between Hunt and Rossetti, has been described by Turner as the dramatization of an issue dear to Hunt's art- “love and youthful idealism versus loyalty to one's family,” (15: 26).

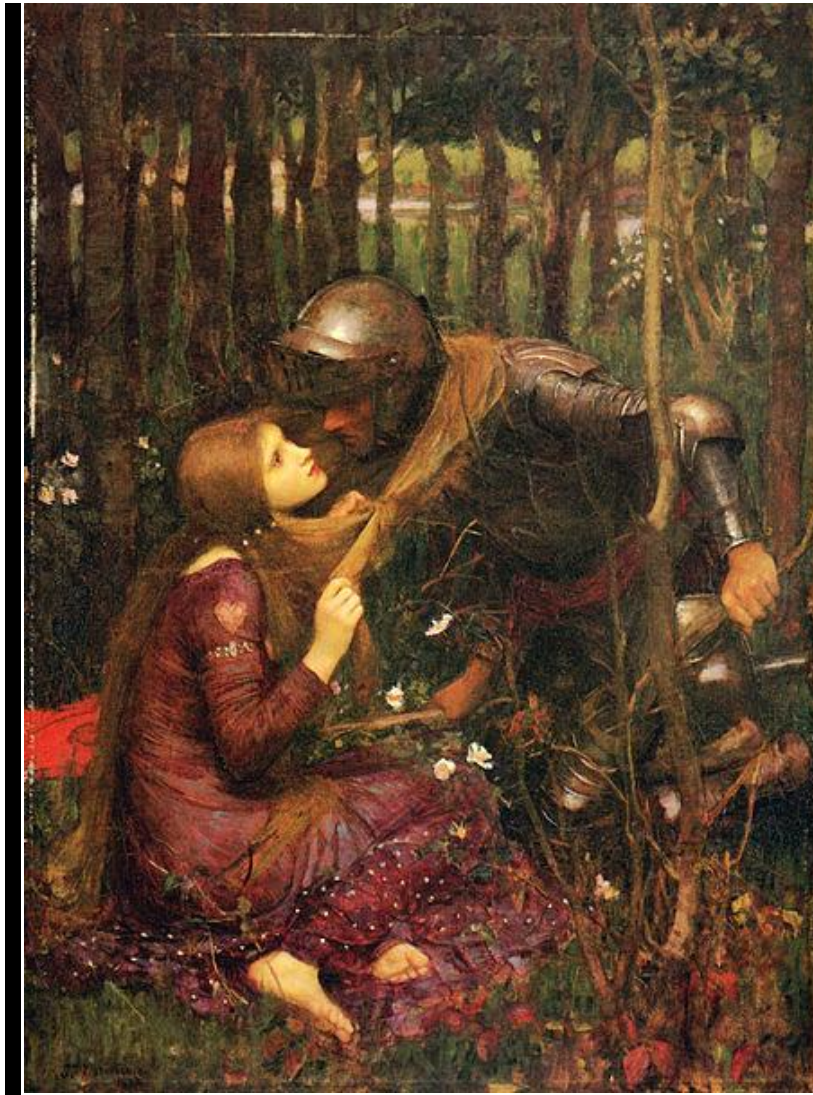
Just like in the “Eve of Saint Agnes”, sleep and enchantment forms the crux of Keats' “*La Belle Dame Sans Merci*”, but in a different way. Here, the poet recounts the experiences of a knight left desolate after having come under the spell of a mysterious enchantress. John William Waterhouse painted this story in 1893, inspired from the lines where the knight first meets the dame and is captured within her gaze-

“I met a lady in the meads

Full beautiful, a fairy's child;

Her hair was long, her foot was light,

And her eyes were wild.”(13-16)



Waterhouse, John William. *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*. 1893

The pastoral atmosphere in the “mead” (13) seems to enable the play of passion, beyond any societal order or conduct. It also provides ample opportunity for losing oneself in the wilderness. Waterhouse paints reed-like trees enclosing the knight and the temptress, almost capturing the helpless prey in unknown claustrophobia. Even her long hair that merges with the knight’s scarf twines around the knight’s neck, looking like a subtle attempt to disguise choking the knight. However the knight is completely unaware of her ploy as “she look’d at me as she did love,” (19). While the lady adorns a purple gown, as sign of royalty, her prey is in full medieval knightly armour. The seductress sits barefoot on the grass, offering a visage of submission; however, it is only to pull down the knight by dint of her charms, only to leave him “alone and palely loitering” (2) later. The white flowers surrounding the characters are daisies which are considered as symbols of innocence. Waterhouse has smartly placed these flowers in order to emphasize on the manipulative efforts of the femme fatale, whose beauty and innocent gaze holds the knight in a “thrall” (40). Situated in the Victorian Age where a woman was either the “angel in the house” or the “fallen woman” who wallows in misery, Waterhouse seems to go beyond the stereotypes and brings Keats’ enchantress to life, wherein a woman enthralls, charms, manipulates and has the last laugh too.

Frank Dicksee, another Pre-Raphaelite painter, interpreted the following lines from the poem

“I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sidelong would she bend and, and sing
A faery’s song,” (21-24)

Dicksee captures the captivating moment as the knight looks dumbstruck, captured by the lady’s intense gaze and her intoxicating Dionysian abilities as her “faery’s song”(24) makes him see “nothing else all . . . day long”(25). The painter remains true to the poet’s descriptions of the pastoral “mead” (12), the temptress, her long floating hair and the “garland for her head” (17) that the knight gifts her; the flowers of which are scattered across the bushes in the painting. A brown, muscular horse- a symbol of virile masculinity- is mounted on by the lady; an evident suggestion of her domination and enchanting prowess to master over the male animal.



Dicksee, Frank. *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, 1902

Even as the knight tries to hold on to his horse, he is overwhelmed by the lady’s charms as she hums a tune in his ears. And as the knight recounts his tale, his retrospection is coloured by the intensity of his experience and passion. Hence, Dicksee’s painting has the overstated fashion of a memory that one tends to magnify. Thus, the medieval knight adorns richly decorated armour, the lady wears a wealthy gown and even the horse is accessorised in regal

red and gold (Wilsey 35). The landscape, with lush growth of greenery, tinges of the setting sun reflected on the lake in the background further enhances the retrospective location of the poem as well as the painting. What is worth noting, her, is the culmination of the enchantress' magic on not only the knight who cannot help but fall prey to its charms but also the horse, that bows its head to her powers.

A lesser known painting inspired by this poem that has garnered acclaim in recent times is Arthur Hughes' rendition in paint of the same lines in 1863-



Hughes, Arthur. *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*. 1893

The painting presents a conflicting area wherein gender roles are explored. While most paintings have depicted the temptress in complete control of the knight's senses, Hughes binds the belle's hands with bracelets that look more like handcuffs. The seductive gaze is replaced by a pleading and wistful one of feminine helplessness while the knight exudes masculinity, his hands holding the leather bands of his shield. One might also regard the knight as vulnerable to the lady's charms as his sword, a symbol of masculinity, lies on her lap and the guard of his shield down, depicting the enchantress' dominating stature over him her superior grasp in the battle of the sexes as she is the one atop the horse. The pair is surrounded by briar roses and poppies- symbols of love, death and sleep; while the belle holds a poppy in her hands, symbolising the sleep that shall overcome the knight and the "living death to which he will awaken" (Cooper). Moreover, the knight's coat is embroidered

to depict a hand crushing a snake while he remains oblivious to the snake twined around the woman's neck as he-

"Saw pale kings and princes too,

Pale warriors, death-pale were they all ;"(37-38)

Hughes has brought in these warning visions along with the depiction of the knight's seduction, which seems to stand in the way of locating a particular time frame for his painting. However, it is the conflict of "male abduction" and "female seduction" that attracts one's interest in this painting (Cooper). One might question whether Hughes depicts a damsel in distress needing rescue from her knight in shining armour in keeping with the Victorian construct of the "angel in the house" or is it the "fallen woman" who lures knights and traps them in their concoction of beauty and cunning.

One can indeed claim that these Pre-Raphaelite interpretations are not simply stagnant and sterile images but they actively depict the poem. Every character is caught in a sense of movement whose 'before' and 'after' are also subtly hinted at by the painting itself and thus it carries the essence of the whole poem within it (Zasempa 105). Keats' word-pictures, that enable vivid images to come to life, thus are sewn into the fabric of a visual narrative, where myriad threads twin and intertwine to produce real meaning that evokes a sense of a moving, happening movie rather than the motionless canvas that we see. No doubt, Julie Codell argues that these paintings "telescope several separate sentences" (351).

These paintings, however, not only succeed in replicating the movement in a poem but also bring out the masked issues that Keats sought to express. It was not only the stained glass windows, valourous knights and medieval ladies in distress that inspired painterly renditions of Keats' poetry but also its intense belief in Truth and Beauty, its acceptance of ambiguities and mysteries, its hazy, translucent, dream-like environment that belittles fact and reason but rather embraces 'a life of sensations rather than of thoughts.' (Gittings 37). The Pre-Raphaelite painters have put on canvas these very sensations of the poet's creations, trying to concretize the abstract emotions that flood Keats' verse. Doing so, as Anthony H. Harrison believes, was what Pre-Raphaelitism was all about-

"The Pre-Raphaelites predictably etherealized sensation, displacing it from logical contexts and all normally expected physical relations with objects in the external world. With the Pre-Raphaelites, the sensory and even the sensual become idealized, image becomes symbol and physical experience is superseded by mental states as we are thrust deeply into the self contained emotional worlds of their varied personae." (Quoted Zasempa 10)

This is something that would be agreed by Keats, and thus, one finds oneself in Porphyro's skin gazing at Madeline as Millais lets us step into the shoes of the 'camelion poet'. One is made aware of death and longing as Isabella hugs her pot. One is invited into an intense fear of the unknown, watching the knight entrapped and lost. Looking into the Odes, one seeks to be transported in the eulogized being as the lifeless wake up to satisfy very human roles of "a gleaner", a "close bosom friend" or a "Goddess", an "Attic Shape", a "bride". A reader moves in and out of several identities and creating these masquerades would be a painter's delight. Thus, many painters, even after the Pre-Raphaelites, have produced works inspired by Keats like W. J. Neatby, John White Alexander and Walter Crane.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty believes that an artist's aim is to make new worlds by rediscovering all that is not visible and make it visible (Zasempa 28). And it is exactly due to this reason that literature and art form a combination that can enable clearer vision through rediscovery. Art provides a visual resonance that has been little explored by litterateurs. Bringing art under the ambit of literary research shall only broaden the horizon of scholarly endeavours, adding insight, an inter-disciplinary analysis, a deeper dialogue and of course colour into it. The artist's paint is perhaps that potion in a vial that contains a bit of the trace that escaped the poet while transforming his vision into a version-

“The artist gathers up the shattered remains of a vision together with the broken glass of his imaginative powers, adds all his artistic skill and puts together a puzzle which eventually forms a work of art.” (28)

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