

A sunset scene over the ocean. The sun is a bright white-yellow circle partially obscured by the text 'Calm', casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, orange-tinted clouds. In the foreground, a dark, long pier with a railing extends from the bottom left towards the right. A few small birds are visible in the sky.

It Is A Beauteous Evening, **C**alm and Free

By William
Wordsworth

William Wordsworth

- Born in Cumberland, United Kingdom in 1770.
- One of the founders of the Romantic Movement in poetry.
- Wordsworth had a great love for nature.
- He believed that poetry should be created from the scenes of everyday life and the speech of everyday people.
- He died in 1850.



It is a beauteous evening, calm and free

By William Wordsworth

1. It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
2. The holy time is quiet as a Nun
3. Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
4. Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
5. The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea;
6. Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
7. And doth with his eternal motion make
8. A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
9. Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,
10. If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
11. Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
12. Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
13. And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
14. God being with thee when we know it not.

Analysis

- The speaker is struck by the physical beauty of the evening and the mood it creates.
- The speaker views the scene through a spiritual lens and assures his young companion (believed to be his daughter, Caroline) that God's presence is everywhere, even if we are not fully conscious of it.
- Whether or not the companion knows it, the speaker feels, God is with her.

STRUCTURE AND FORM

- Petrarchan or Italian sonnet, divided into TWO parts.
- The octave: Describes the beauty of the evening.
- The sestet: Comments on the spirituality of the scene and life in general.

beautiful

1. It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,

Personification and simile: “holy time” (the evening) is compared to a Nun that is quiet and breathless because of her love for God.

2. The holy time is quiet as a Nun

Words with spiritual connotation. Contributes to respectful tone and peaceful mood.

3. Breathless with adoration; the broad sun

sunset

peacefulness

4. Is sinking down in its tranquillity;

spiritual connotation

5. The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea;

Personification: heaven described as gentle

Poet addresses his companion (girl)

6. Listen! the mighty Being is awake,

Exclamation indicates excitement of the speaker

Literally refers to the sea.
Figuratively refers to God.

Contemplates deeply: heaven seems to watch over the sea below. Figuratively God is watching over the world

7. And doth with his eternal motion make

does

Simile: breaking waves sound like thunder. Indicates power of nature and God

God and the sea are eternal and will go on for ever.

Alliteration emphasizes the thunder of the sea

8. A sound like thunder - everlastingly.

Thunderous sound of waves contrasts with the calm and quiet of lines 1-3.

9. Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,

Indicates excitement and emotion of the speaker

Speaker addresses his companion, possibly his daughter

you

She seems oblivious to the beauty around her.
She does not seem particularly religious

10. If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,

serious

Your spirituality

11. Thy nature is not therefore less divine:

Even if the girl is not touched by the beauty of the scene, it does not mean she is removed from God or less spiritual.

12. Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;

at all times – God is always present to protect her.

Metaphor: refers to heaven – Like a father holds a baby to protect it, the girl is unknowingly protected by God.

13. And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,

Reference to nature – even if she does not express devotion to God or spend time in a physical place of worship (like a church), God is always present in nature.

Assonance emphasises God's presence.

14. God being with thee when we know it not.

God is with you, even if you are not aware of it.

THEME

- The beauty of nature reveals God.
- Wordsworth believes the sunset is so beautiful because heaven is present in the sky at this time.
- The force behind the sea is a 'mighty Being', or God. Gazing at a sunset is the same as being present in the Temple to adore God.

TONE

- There is a serious and respectful tone throughout.