



Walter Scott 1771-1832

Walter Scott's Short Poems: Poems and Questions

The first four lines is from Burns' poem about the Highlands. In Walter Scott's novel, Waverley, the singer adds the last four lines.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild-deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

[He changes tune.]

There's nought in the Highlands but syboes and leeks,
And lang-leggit callans gaun wanting the breeks;
Wanting the breeks, and without hose and shoon,
But we'll a' win the breeks when King Jamie comes hame.

– Waverley

1. Look up any words you do not know in the word bank or the Dictionary of Scots: [Dictionaries of the Scots Language \(dsl.ac.uk\)](http://dsl.ac.uk)
2. What is nice about the Highlands according to the first four lines?
3. What is wrong with the Highlands, according to the last four lines?

- Think of a place you know well. Describe it in a positive way and in a negative way.



Walter Scott 1771-1832

Fortune, you say, flies from us—She but circles,
Like the fleet sea-bird round the fowler's skiff,—
Lost in the mist one moment, and the next
Brushing the white sail with her whiter wing,
As if to court the aim.—Experience watches,
And has her on the wheel.—

—*The Antiquary*

1. What does the speaker describe fortune (luck) as?
2. What is luck circling around?
3. What do you think the speaker is saying about luck?

- Choose one of the following: luck, love, hope, fear. Describe it as an animal. How do you think it would behave?



Walter Scott 1771-1832

Look not thou on Beauty's charming, –
Sit thou still when Kings are arming, –
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens, –
Speak not when the people listens, –
Stop thine ear against the singer, –
From the red gold keep thy finger, –
Vacant heart, and hand, and eye, –
Easy live and quiet die.

–*The Bride of Lammermoor*

1. What things does the speaker say you should do
 - to the charms of beauty?
 - when Kings get ready to go to war?
 - when someone offers you a cup of wine?
 - when people want to listen to you?
 - when someone is singing?
 - when you see money?
2. What do you think 'Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,–' means?
3. How do you think the speaker thinks you should live?

- Think of some advice to tell someone about how to live their life.



Walter Scott 1771-1832

Birds of omen dark and foul,
Night-crow, raven, bat and owl,
Leave the sick man to his dream—
All night long he heard your scream. —
Haste to cave and ruined tower,
Ivy-tod, or dinged-bower,
There to wink and mop, for hark!
In the mid air sings the lark.

—A Legend of the Wars of Montrose

1. What birds does the speaker think are bad omens (that is, birds that represent evil)?
2. Who has listened to the sound of the birds all night?
3. The lark sings in the early morning. Where do the 'Birds of omen' go when the lark appears?

- In this poem, the speaker thinks nighttime, with its birds, is scary. Think of a time or place that you think is scary and describe it.



Walter Scott 1771-1832

Person 1:

Anna-Marie, love, up is the sun,
Anna-Marie, love, morn is begun,
Mists are dispersing, love, birds are singing free,
Up in the morning, love, Anna-Marie.
Anna-Marie, love, up in the morn,
The hunter is winding blythe sounds on his horn,
The echo rings merry from rock and from tree,
'Tis time to arouse thee, love, Anna-Marie.

Person 2:

O Tybalt, love, Tybalt, awake me not yet,
Around my soft pillow while softer dreams flit;
For what are the joys that in waking we prove,
Compared with these visions, O Tybalt, my love?
Let the birds to the rise of the mist carol shrill,
Let the hunter blow out his loud horn on the hill,
Softer sounds, softer pleasures in slumber I prove, –
But think not I dream'd of thee, Tybalt my love.

–Ivanhoe

1. What does Tybalt want Anna-Marie to do?
2. Pick out a quote to show that Tybalt thinks that morning is a happy time.
3. What does Anna-Marie think is better than enjoying the morning?

- Think of a time when an adult asked you to do a chore. What arguments could you have said to persuade them to not make you do it? OR think about a time when you had to ask an adult permission to do something. What arguments could you have made to persuade them to let you do it.



Walter Scott 1771-1832

Soldier, wake—the day is peeping,
Honour ne'er was won in sleeping,
Never when the sunbeams still
Lay unreflected on the hill:
'Tis when they are glinted back
From axe and armour, spear and jack,
That they promise future story
Many a page of deathless glory.
Shields that are the foeman's terror,
Ever are the morning's mirror.

—*The Betrothed*

1. Why does the speaker think that the soldier needs to wake up?
2. What is 'honour' and why can someone not win it when they are sleeping?
3. What does the speaker describe as the 'morning's mirror'? What is being reflected in these things?

- Imagine you are trying to get a friend to wake up and get up. What would you say?



Walter Scott 1771-1832

The western breezes fanned the brook
As pensive by its side
The Youthful Angler marked the hook
Float dancing down the tide.
And as he watched with heedful eye
The eddying ebbs and flows
From yon deep whirlpool swelling high
The wily Mermaid rose.

– 'The Mermaid' from *The Shorter Poems*.
translated from Goethe's German

1. What is the angler (fisherman) watching when he sees the mermaid?
2. What do you think the weather is like? Explain your answer.
3. What does the word 'wily' mean? Based on this, what do you think might happen in the poem?

- What do you think happens next between the angler and the mermaid. Make up a conversation.



Walter Scott 1771-1832

Of yore, in old England, it was not thought good
To carry two visages under one hood:
What should folks say to *you*? who have faces such plenty,
That from under one hood you last night showed us twenty!
Stand forth, Arch-deceiver! and tell us in truth,
Are you handsome or ugly, in age or in youth?
Man, woman, or child? or a dog, or a mouse?
Or are you, at once, each live thing in the house?
Each live thing, did I ask? each dead implement too!
A work-shop your person—saw, chisel, and screw.

Above all, are you *one* individual? I know
You must be, at the least, Alexandre *and Co*.
But I think you're a troop—an assemblage—a mob—
And that I, as the Sheriff, must take up the job;
And, instead of rehearsing your wonders in verse,
Must read you the Riot Act, and bid you disperse!

— 'To Monsieur Alexandre', *The Shorter Poems*

This poem was written when an actor, Alexandre, came to Scott's house and acted lots of different characters. A visage is a face, so Scott thought he had lots of different faces hidden under his hood.

1. How many characters does Scott say Alexandre acted out last night?
2. Name five of the characters Alexandre acted.
3. Even though Scott calls Alexandre an 'Arch-deceiver' and a 'mob', he actually enjoyed the visit. How do we know this?

- Pretend you're Alexandre. How many characters can you act out/write about?