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Significant ~~texts~~ texts of any period arise from particular ways of thinking and possess an enduring relevance. The Romantic movement ~~is~~ that spanned from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century defied conventions of the time. ~~Their rebellion was one~~ They revolted against the scientific rationalisation of nature known as the Age of Enlightenment and chose emotion over reason. The Romantics moved away from urbanisation that resulted from the Industrial Revolution, instead focusing on nature. The individual became the ~~centre~~ key to escaping the disruption of the time, and through the imagination transcend. These scientific, economic and philosophic paradigms resonate in the poems Ode to a Nightingale and La Belle Dame sans Merci by John Keats and The Flower that Smiles Today by Percy Shelley. Emily Bronte's novel Wuthering Heights and Caspar Friedrich's painting Eldena Ruin also explore the links between nature, transcendence and the individual. The ideas in these texts have endured time and their themes are widely understood today.

Keats' Ode to a Nightingale examines the way nature allows one to transcend to an unattainable world and the consequent harsh coming back to reality. The repeated use of "I" throughout the poem highlights the significance of the individual and how he is separated from society. The persona states "my heart aches and a drowsy numbness pains ~~my~~ my sense", the ~~use~~ assonance of the "a" sound emphasising the ache and pain. He tries to escape through drinking "that I might drink and leave the world unseen, and with thee fade into the forest dim", the notion of ~~the~~ fading away emphasises nature's ability to consume him and make him at one with it. His desire to leave reality and be with the immortal bird is seen in the repetition in "Away! Away! For I fly to thee" and upon joining it nature is so abundant that "I cannot see what flowers are at my feet... the grass, the ~~the~~ thicket, the fruit-tree wild". The intense imagery shows ~~rather~~ this paradise created by nature and is further shown in "tasting of Flora and the country green", the synaesthesia overwhelming the senses. Here he wants to die because nothing will compare after "I have been half in

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in love with earthly Death". But alas he wakes "Was it a vision or a waking dream?" The rhetorical question highlighting the conflict between reality and the imagination. Either way he is ~~forlorn~~ "Forlorn!" ~~because~~ because reality does not compare to the ideal which can never truly be.

La Belle Dame sans Merci was written in ballad form, one of the oldest literary forms. Keats use of this reflects the Romantic desire to escape their world and reach an older, almost magical, medieval era. A wandering passerby ~~after~~ says "I see a lily on thy brow, anguish moist and fever-due and on thy cheek a fading rose". The symbolism of the lily indicates death and the rose but -but it has faded, signifying deterioration. The knight proceeds to tell how he came to this said, retelling falling in love with a "faery's child", suggesting the experience is not real. He recalls the exotic food he ate while with her "roasts of relich sweet, honey wild and manna dew" the gastronomy imagery showing the beauty of nature in this bliss. However he wakes up "on the cold

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hill's side" the tactile ~~image~~ imagery underling his loneliness. He explains "this is why I sojourn here, alone and palely loitering" - he is waiting for something that will never be, reality is dreamy compared to what he felt.

Shelley's The Flower That Smiles Today similarly demonstrates the idea of transcending through nature to the ideal. The opening lines of the poem "the flower that smiles today / tomorrow dies", the personification of the smiling flower juxtaposed with tomorrow when it ~~does~~ dies emphasising the fleetingness of life. It seems nothing lasts and one has to rely on oneself and their mind ~~because~~ because "virtue how rare it is! Friendship how frail! Love how it seals poor bliss". The antithesis in "poor bliss" strongly suggests that these good human qualities are nothing as they fade and so not wanted. The third stanza brings in nature as something constant (contrasting with the ephemeral nature of the real world in the first stanza). "whilst skies are blue and bright, whilst flowers are gay... whilst", the anaphora and repetition of whilst emphasising constancy. ~~However~~ However "whilst the calm hours creep, dream, dream thou and

from the they sleep/wake to weep" the rhyme building up to the 'weep' where one realises ~~the~~ it was all a dream. They ~~are~~ are miserable because the ~~dream~~ dream was so much better and like Keats' poems, the audience understands how the imagination gives us something we want but can never have.

Bronte's Wuthering Heights explores the healing power of nature and the imagination. ~~is~~ when Catherine is ill she exclaims "I wish I were out of doors... half savage and hardy and free", "I should be myself were I once among the heather on the heeds", the alliterative 'h' sound highlighting her yearning for the moors and its ability to heal. Her heightened emotions are evident when she confesses "if all else perished and he ~~to~~ remained I should still continue to be; ~~and~~ and if all else remained and he were annihilated the universe would turn to a mighty ~~str~~ stranger", the emotive language showing how Catherine and Heathcliff's love transcends mortality. Their ~~love~~ unacceptable love is so strong that only in ~~death~~ death is it at peace, ~~seen~~ seen in the novel's last words "how anyone could imagine inquiet ~~than~~ slumbers for the sleepers in the quiet

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earth". Heathcliff's intense emotions also cause him to hallucinate "I felt that Cathy was there", the power of the imagination and his obsession ~~with~~ knowing only her. This is further seen as he says "~~that~~" "I have to remind myself to breathe, almost to remind my heart to beat". To be ~~with~~ with Katherine, to him, is heaven seen when he says "I have nearly attained MY heaven" the emphasis showing ~~to~~ the individual's ideal and how it is different to the conventional heaven. ~~He does not~~ Society does not matter and this is extended in Bronte's setting of the novel far away from civilisation. The audience can sympathise with the intense emotions of the protagonists and understand nature's ability to heal as these concepts ~~are~~ are universal.

Friedrich's painting of 'Eldena Abbey, Eldena Ruin painted in 1825 shows ~~nature~~ the Romantics' love of nature and the idea of 'individuality' they strived for. The humans in the painting are small and have their backs turned, facing ahead, an indication that they have turned to nature. Their size indicates man's absence of power and destruction among so much life. The abbey is surrounded by nature, overgrown ~~from~~ by trees,

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~~showing~~ an indication of nature's victory. ~~The~~ The trees are a vector leading to the ~~an~~ large arch at the centre ~~and the~~ which symbolises the gateway to an eternity ~~beyond~~. The foggy colours beyond suggest the sublime - an imagination ~~is~~ unique to each individual that only they know the meaning to. The subdued colours further highlights the loneliness of the painting but also the power of the individual to decide for themself. Despite there being more than person on the painting, the ~~focus~~ large focus is ~~of~~ that of the ~~ruined~~ abbey and indicates the power of it, infused by nature to take each person somewhere perfect. ~~The~~ The ruined abbey itself is different from the well-cared for traditional church and <sup>seems to</sup> suggests that each person should find their own heaven. Like Wuthering Heights the painting is set far away from society and shows the ultimate power of nature. Even today the idea of needing to escape to a place undisturbed by man to discover one's true self, is ~~highly~~ highly sought after.

Thus, the poems Ode to a Nightingale and La Belle Dame sans Merci by John Keats and The Flower that Smiles Today by Percy Shelley

explores the ~~the~~ <sup>ability</sup> ~~concept~~ of nature in allowing one to transcend, but that always one must come back to reality because the ideal is only that - an ~~ideal~~ ideal. All three poems along with Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights and Caspar Friedrich's painting Olden Ruin examine the links between nature, ~~the~~ transcendence and the individual. These ways of thinking arise from the scientific, economic and philosophic paradigms <sup>of the time</sup> and the way the Romantics ~~defied~~ challenged what was ~~way~~ <sup>what was</sup> accepted. These ideas have become universal and widely known <sup>and studied</sup> today.

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