

## HOLY SONNETS

John Donne

## XIV.

Batter my heart, three-person'd God; for you  
 As yet but knock; breathe, shine, and seek to mend;  
 That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend  
 Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new.  
 I, like an usurp'd town, to another due, (5)  
 Labour to admit you, but O, to no end.  
 Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,  
 But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.  
 Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain, (10)  
 But am betroth'd unto your enemy;  
 Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,  
 Take me to you, imprison me, for I,  
 Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,  
 Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

1. What is the subject of "breathe in line two; what is the subject of "should defend" in line seven.
2. If we read the poem literally, the speaker of the poem is engaged? Who is the speaker engaged to? When we read the poem figuratively, what does this engagement represent?
3. What trope dominates the last two lines of the poem? Explain what these lines mean figuratively?
4. What do the words "usurp'd (line 5) and "enthrall" (line 13) mean? Explain their import to the overall meaning of the poem.
5. What is the specific genre of this poem? Explain how the last two lines reflect the classic structure of this type of poem. What trope dominates these last two lines? Explain what these lines mean figuratively.

2003 AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION  
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Question 3

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

According to critic Northrop Frye, “Tragic heroes are so much the highest points in their human landscape that they seem the inevitable conductors of the power about them, great trees more likely to be struck by lightning than a clump of grass. Conductors may of course be instruments as well as victims of the divine lightning.”

Select a novel or play in which a tragic figure functions as an instrument of the suffering of others. Then write an essay in which you explain how the suffering brought upon others by that figure contributes to the tragic vision of the work as a whole.

You may choose a work from the list below or another novel or play of comparable quality. Avoid mere plot summary.

*An American Tragedy*  
*Anna Karenina*  
*Antigone*  
*Beloved*  
*Crime and Punishment*  
*Death of a Salesman*  
*Ethan Frome*  
*Faust*  
*Fences*  
*For Whom the Bell Tolls*  
*Frankenstein*  
*Hedda Gabler*  
*King Lear*

*Light in August*  
*Long Day's Journey into Night*  
*Lord Jim*  
*Macbeth*  
*Medea*  
*Moby-Dick*  
*Oedipus Rex*  
*Phèdre*  
*Ragtime*  
*Sent for You Yesterday*  
*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*  
*Things Fall Apart*

END OF EXAMINATION

"When you are Old" by William Butler Yeats is based on Ronsard's poem "To Helene". Write a brief Essay in which you compare and contrast the poems forms, tone, and content.

### **To Helene**

By Pierre de Ronsard; translated by Robert Hollander

When you are very old, in evening candlelight,  
Moved closer to the coals and carding out your wool,  
You'll sing my songs and marvel that you were such a fool:  
"O Ronsard did praise me when I was young and bright."

Then you'll have no handmaid to help you pass the night,  
Spinning while your gossip leads her into lull,  
Until you say my name and her roused eyes grow full  
In wonder of your glory in what Ronsard did write.

When I am in the earth, poor ghost without his bones,  
A sleeper in the shade of myrtle trees and stones,  
Then you, beside the earth, old and crouched and gray,  
Will yearn for all that's lost, repenting your disdain.  
Live it well, I pray you, today won't come again:  
Gather up the roses before they fall away.

### **When You are Old**

by W. B. Yeats

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,  
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,  
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look  
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,  
And loved your beauty with love false or true,  
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,  
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,  
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled  
And paced upon the mountains overhead  
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.