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The Catacombs of Life and Other Romantic Thoughts

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Abstract

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Introduction

There is a plethora of work on artists and addiction. For example, one can do a Google search of addiction, poets and addiction, or musicians and addiction and many websites are available for perusal. In fact, addiction seems to be a necessary in regards to poets and musicians. With this in mind, there are fewer studies pertaining to the meaning of artists' or poets' creative works regarding their personal lives and experiences of addiction. In this project, I ask questions about how addiction influences creativity and how creative works (i.e. poetry and music) are used as a coping mechanism. I argue that throughout diverse historical and cultural contexts poetry and music help artists get through trauma experienced at an individual and social level.

Background

Romanticism

I selected poems from Romantic poets Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Percy Bysshe Shelley. Romantics were, in my opinion, the first poets to express themselves in a personal and outward manner. They wrote about their experiences with solitude, their fears, and the ideas that possessed their minds. There are poets before the Romantics that wrote about self-expression, but they were not as intense nor straightforward as the Coleridge or Shelley. The Romantics built poems around the "I" as though they were the narrators rather than a distant or detached narrator or speaker.

One key text that illustrates the outward self of Romanticism is Thomas de Quincey's 1821 book *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, in which he exposes his personal experiences of opium abuse and outs fellow poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Another important aspect of the Romantic period is its aesthetics—the sublime and the picturesque. Poets of this era focused on

the awful and terror of nature and placed themselves in that terror. They envisioned themselves small and finite in the picturesque landscape of nature and wondered where they fit in. By 'losing' themselves in the awe of nature, they expressed themselves by focusing on the "I." They placed themselves in the terrors and awe that they personally experienced, i.e., addiction and melancholy. The backdrop of nature helped these poets

Grunge movement

The grunge movement of the early 1990's (alternative rock emanating from the Pacific Northwest), tackled many of the same issues that the Romantic poets did. Layne Staley, of the band Alice in Chains, struggled with addiction, which ultimately led to his demise. Many people refer to him as a "druggie" or a "wasted life" that had everything but threw it away to drugs. Like the Romantics, Alice in Chains also takes what is on the inside and transfers it outward. Staley's dark lyrics tackle his addiction head on. He, like Coleridge and Shelley, utilized "I" rather than what?? could the "other" go here, which gave his lyrics a persona or narrator. Unlike the Romantics, Staley loses himself in social issues rather than nature and focuses on addiction, depression, and the lack of addiction "help" he (and others like him) receives from psychologists. Because this is a musical movement, heavy distortion via guitar is implemented throughout the band's sound. The heavy distortion gives Alice in Chains the 'grungy' sound for which the band has become famous.

Modern-day context

As a recovered addict, poetry is my form of expression. Even before I became an addict, I wrote poetry to cope with my struggles at home. In order for me to cope with my parents' divorce, I started writing poetry. Poetry, to me, has always been a way for me to escape my reality as well as express myself in an honest manner. Through poetry, I am able to make sense

of my place in the world. I, like the Romantics and Grunge artists like Staley, utilize the “I” throughout my poems. I do not rely on a narrator or speaker to address my personal or social issues. In this project, I have coined my personal style of writing as *Neo Distorted Romanticism*. This means that my style is a new form of Romanticism, where I find awful terror in reality, and I distort it with the use of distortion through music as I combine my poetry with heavy guitar sounds. In my capstone project, I bring to life Neo Distorted Romanticism through an auto-ethnography set to music to showcase my self-expression of poetry and pair it with my own written lyrics.

In what follows, I present my analysis of the patterns that emerge around addiction and healing through art over time. My analysis will show that there are strong connections between Romanticism, Grunge, and Neo Distorted Romanticism, which illustrates that there is a connection to the individual sufferings and trauma that are often stuffed inward, but through art such as poems and lyrics they are released outward. The analysis below will provide evidence of this.

Theoretical Framework

I draw on anthropology and critical public health to analyze, interpret, and present my results. Anthropology is the “study of human societies and cultures and their development” (oxforddictionaries.com). In order to understand how addiction influences creativity and how creativity works through poetry and music as a coping mechanism, I chose to utilize an anthropological perspective, which focuses on historical and cultural contexts and the role of art, its symbolism and meaning, in people’s experiences. I focus on the historical and cultural contexts behind the chosen texts of artists from Romanticism, Grunge, and Neo Distorted Romanticism (see Appendix B and C for examples), which allowed me to acquire a better and

deeper understanding of the issues that led artists within each context to addiction and how the language of addiction changes over time.

I also chose to implement a critical public health perspective. This approach “challenges the status quo in public health, questions what have come to be defined as problems, and breaks down fundamental assumptions by considering them within the context of the social systems in which they are created” (criticalpublichealth.org). I use the Social Ecological Model (SEM) common to public health to understand how inequalities within macro (history, economics, and politics), exo (community), interpersonal (family, social relationships) systems intersect with the micro-level and influence individuals’ addiction and coping.

Methods

Overview

I chose five texts from each of four artists, including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Layne Staley, and myself individual, and did an inductive analysis of these textual data.

Creative works.

For my Honors Capstone Project, I analyzed five pieces of text (poems or songs) of three prominent male figures: Samuel Taylor Coleridge (a first-generation Romantic poet), Percy Bysshe Shelley (a second-generation Romantic poet), Layne Staley of the band Alice in Chains (a male grunge musical artist in the 1990s), and my own poems, which I modeled after each artist. I chose to create what anthropologists refer to as an auto-ethnography, which involves self-reflection, to understand how my own artistic work is connected to broader historical and cultural contexts and meaning of addiction and art. Music and poetry is the focus of my auto-ethnography because they are two important factors that helped me express myself and overcome

many traumatic events that had turned me into an addict. By having conducted an autoethnography and identifying my own texts for analysis, I was able to study the recordings of those artists and compare their works to mine.

For my project, I chose the following creative texts: Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan, or a Vision in a Dream. A Fragment," "Dejection: An Ode," "Rime of the Ancient Mariner (1834 text)," "Fears in Solitude," and "Frost at Midnight." Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Mont Blanc," "Alastor, or; The Spirit of Solitude," "Lines: The Cold Earth Slept Below," "To Night," "England in 1819," and "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty." Layne Staley's "Angry Chair," "Nutshell," "Junkhead," "Dirt," and "Hate to Feel." Angela Williams's "Confessions of the Deceived," "Drowning in It," "The Alternative," "The Traveler's Tale," and "Twisted in the Wind." I chose these particular texts because they encapsulate each of the movements as well as encompass addiction, social issues, and personal issues.

Text Analysis

I used an inductive approach to identify themes across the lives of these four persons. I analyzed five key texts from each of the four identified artists to identify themes and the meanings of the texts by relying on literary devices such as metaphors, similes, and images (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) Based on the themes that emerged, I created thematic codes and a codebook, which included a code definition and examples (see Appendix A for the detailed codebook). I then applied the codes to the texts. Lastly, I did a comparative analysis and identified patterns across the artists' lives, their addictions, and their creative expression (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

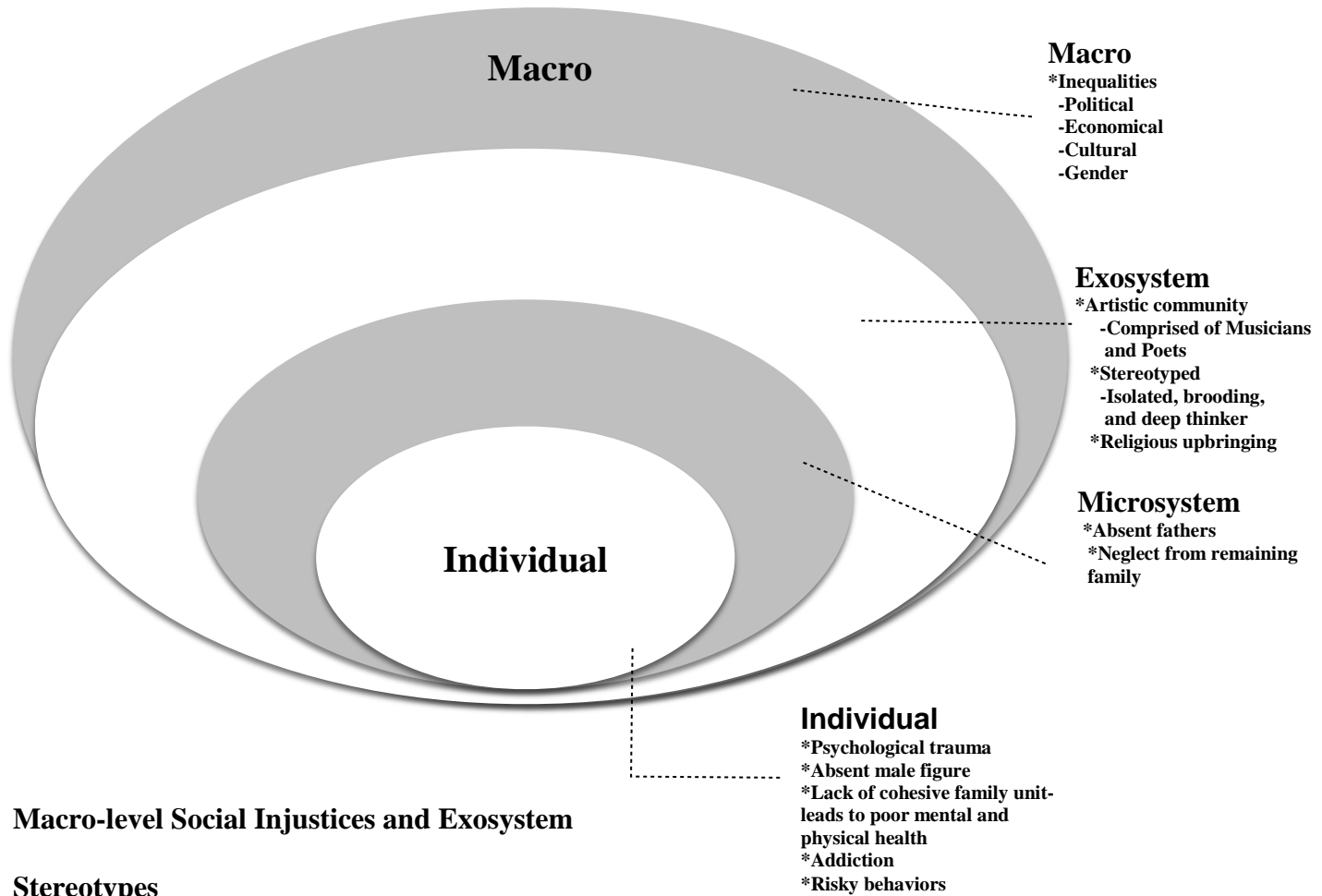
This comparative analysis led me to find that while the artists are years apart, we, as artists and humans, are challenged with similar issues that drive us to addiction.

Results

Overview

Figure 1 shows the pattern that emerged: At the interpersonal -level, each lacked paternal interaction, had an overbearing maternal figure, experienced trauma in their homes (e.g., physical abuse, neglect), at the exosystem or community level they all experienced the norms and expectations around being artists, and at the macro-level, they all experienced inequalities in their historical and cultural contexts. My analysis shows that both the psychological impacts of trauma within their interpersonal and family relationships and the inequalities they faced in the macrosystem (e.g., social injustices of sexism, racism, and poverty and privilege) set them up for addiction. Also, all suffered from physical ailments, leading to deeper addictions. As part of the artistic community, poetry and music became creative ways to express their pain and suffering at an individual and societal level.

Social Ecological Model



Through my research, I have established themes that link Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Layne Staley, and myself that led us to addiction. First, all of the aforementioned are members of an artistic community, therefore there is a certain type of pressure to maintain a sort of stereotype. Poets, for example, are imagined as isolated, brooding, and deep thinkers that seclude themselves from everybody. Musicians, particularly those associated with Rock and Roll, are prone to sex and drugs. Oftentimes, people with labels do

succumb to the stereotype that has been created by society. Each of the individuals in this research did fall into their retrospective stereotype. For example, consider the following texts:

Coleridge: “Father and God ! O ! spare us yet awhile !
Oh ! let not English women drag their flight
Fainting beneath the burthen of their babes,
Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
Laughed at the breast ! Sons, brothers, husbands, all
Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
Which grew up with you round the same fire-side,
And all who ever heard the sabbath-bells
Without the infidel's scorn, make yourselves pure!” From “Fears in Solitude”

Shelley: “Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought his food,
Her daily portion, from her father's tent,
And spread her matting for his couch, and stole
From duties and repose to tend his steps:—
Enamoured, yet not daring for deep awe
To speak her love:—and watched his nightly sleep,
Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips
Parted in slumber, whence the regular breath
Of innocent dreams arose: then, when red morn
Made paler the pale moon, to her cold home
Wildered, and wan, and panting, she returned.”

From “Alastor; or, the Spirit of Solitude”

In the first text, “fears and solitude” refers to Coleridge being by himself and feeling scared. Second, the fears that overcome Coleridge are the social injustices he is writing about, gender inequalities. He questions why women are being treated like objects. Similarly, Shelley focuses on gender inequality in which women become the objects of desire.

Solitude and isolation continues in the grunge movement as seen in Staley’s case, but within this context the social injustice changes from gender inequality to corporate entities owning persons.

Staley: “Corporate prison, we stay
 I’m a dull boy, work all day
 So I’m strung out anyway
 Loneliness is not a phase
 Field of pain is where I graze
 Serenity is far away” From “Angry Chair”

Within the modern day context, Williams work shows that social injustices are still prominent to the mental state of her being.

Williams: “America, the land of dreams
 Thoughtless dictator, millions of screams
 Racism too, can’t forget that
 Heil Hitler, oops, commanding chief
 Wreckless comments, and you’re a thief
 But let’s be fair, wait, we can’t be
 Excuses, non— an office joke

Not fit to serve, all mirrors, smoke”

From “The Alternative”

Interpersonal Traumas and Individual Addiction

Pertaining to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, his father died when he was young. He had expectations to follow in his father’s footsteps to become a vicar. His mother was domineering and applied a strong religious upbringing on Coleridge. Coleridge also suffered from physical, emotional, and mental pain, which led to his addiction of opiates. Coleridge writes, in “Dejection: an Ode,”

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth!

This stanza pertains to his inner emotions. He is angry at life and his failed marriage. He is lonely and left alone to his thoughts, which consume him, but he explores the darkness of his mind. “Viper thoughts, that coil around in [his] mind” is a crucial line because it illustrates his torment. Here we get a close glimpse into the mind of Coleridge. He realizes that he is tortured, and he tries to shift his focus away from his pain.

Percy Bysshe Shelley was, like most aristocratic members of society, sent away from his home to study at Eaton when he was nine years old. He was displaced from his family, and he did not have a strong relationship with his father before he left. Shelley was constantly bullied by his peers. Shelley rebelled by writing a pamphlet entitled, *The Necessities of Atheism*, which

caused him to be expelled from Oxford University, as well as contributed to the severing of his and his father's relationship. Shelley was also suicidal, and he was deemed a radical for his beliefs. Shelley writes, "I consciously have injured, but still loved/ And cherished these my kindred; then forgive/ This boast, beloved brethren, and withdraw/ No portion of your wonted favour now!" These lines are taken from his poem, *Alastor; or the Spirit of Solitude*. Here he realizes that he has caused harm to those that he is related to, and his behavior towards the people that he knows has become habitual.

When Layne Staley was eight years old, "his mother told him that his father died. In fact, his father did not die, rather, his parents divorced," (*Rolling Stone*) which was uncommon during Staley's youth. When Staley became famous, his father came back to "life" and found him. That moment had a strong and negative impact on Staley's life. He was on the verge of cleaning himself up of his addictions, but his father used him and did drugs with him. His mother also implemented strong religious beliefs into Staley as he grew up. Staley writes, "Burning on the angry chair/ Little boy made a mistake/ Pink clouds have now turned to gray/ All that I want is to play/ Get on your knees time to pray, boy" (*Dirt*). This song shows Staley's anger. His religion, amongst life, has angered him. He has lost all hope while he "burns on his angry chair." He realizes the mistakes that he has made, and he self-punishes himself. This is a common trait in people that suffer from addiction.

Pertaining to Angela Williams, her parents divorced when she was thirteen, her dad committed suicide when she was sixteen, and she suffered with a mother that implemented a strict religious upbringing. The death of her dad left her in deep depression. Her mother called her selfish and told her that she had no reason to feel depressed. Her mother also told her that she should stop thinking about herself and stop feeling sorry for herself. Her mother did not want to

accept the fact that teenagers can feel depression, especially when life as she knew it was in tatters. Williams writes of her anger in her poem, "Drownin' in It." She writes, "That murky sludge that I was stuck in/ Not just my feet, but up to my head/ Eyes veiled by the blackness that filled my heart/ Stoking the fire, building/ Up like a volcanic eruption." Here Williams is in tune with her anger that she felt towards her mother. Her anger has her feeling sick and that she is drowning in her anger. These anger-filled images allow the reader to experience a moment of pure anger that he or she may have never experienced.

These traumas and experiences of neglect led to the desire to feel numb to their emotional pain. Each individual studied suffered from mental and physical health issues either before he or she became addicts or as a result of his or her lifestyle before becoming addicted.

Once becoming an addict, the behavior of each individual could be extreme. For example, in her article "Stoned Shelley: Revolutionary Tactics and Women under the Influence," "Shelley kept a vial of poison around his neck, and he tried to convince Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley to commit suicide because their love was forbidden by William Godwin, Wollstonecraft's father" (*Romantic Studies*). Staley was put on suicide watch after the death of his fiance, and he was in and out of rehabilitation because of his addiction. At his final concert, in 1996, Staley was airlifted to the hospital because of an overdose and almost died. Coleridge lost his longtime friend, William Wordsworth, because of his erratic behavior, and he was released from serving in the military because he was, according to letters written by his brother, "deemed insane" (Bonhams.com). Williams had a violent temper and would physically fight, she would place herself in dangerous situations, and she was often suicidal during her years of addiction.

Discussion

From the poets of the Romantic Era, spanning from 1750-1837, to the 1990's Grunge movement, social injustices and inequalities have been prominent issues. In the four individuals that have been studied for this project, a missing male presence is also a factor that has led to each person becoming an addict. As an artist or poet, we often fall victim to the stereotype that has been given to us. We brood in isolation. We desire solitude. We want to be left alone in order to appear as though we are deep thinkers. In reality, we seek isolation and solitude because we are in pain. We do not want to put our pain on others because we have a deep understanding of what pain feels like. We have an overabundance of emotions that we are not sure what to do with, so we write.

We write to expel the dirtiness that has consumed us. We write because we think no one else will listen to us. We write because we do not think other people will understand us. We end up understanding ourselves and humanity on deeper levels than those that do not take the time to self-reflect on negative issues that have arisen in one's life. Those moments in which we lock ourselves away are moments when we create beautiful and tragic art that others can relate to. We leave behind clues for future generations to uncover. We give a part of ourselves to assist in the understanding of the human psyche and the individual.

We, as artists and poets, choose to tackle social injustices through our writings. We write about the inequalities that we experience or witness. We write about the pain and chaos that is a result of those injustices and inequalities. In life, there is plenty of tension and oftentimes the resolution is to create.

Implications and Conclusion

My analysis implies that social injustices and trauma have a profound effect on how a person copes with the hardships of life. By implementing a creative outlet, I found that, as a society, we can better understand those that write or sing about the issues that plague them. Whether it be from a physical pain, emotional pain, or psychological pain, humans need to manage that pain. Sometimes, we are unable to manage the pain that devours us, and we turn to substances that help alleviate those pains. Before we realize it, we become addicted to the comforts of those substances. We fail to realize that we are addicted until it is too late. Other times, we turn to substances in order to find inspiration, such as Taylor's "Kubla Khan."

By learning from others experiences, understanding addiction and healing in historical and cultural contexts, we can begin to understand triggers and other factors that lead to addiction and inform healing. In order to move forward and work towards how addiction works for individuals, not all addicts are the same, and by giving them a voice to their own self-expression, perhaps we can combat addiction. In order to understand addiction, one has to experience it, either first hand, live in a family of addicts, or study it. Through art, poetry and music, having a platform to cleanse oneself is crucial to the healing of the addict. When an addict is forced to write the truth of his or her own addiction, the problem becomes clearer to that person.

By using an anthropological approach, I was able to delve into the cultural and historical context of the texts and persons included in my research. English literature in comparison to anthropology does not rely on contextual factors in the understanding of texts. Although my background in English helped me analyze the texts, thematicise the texts, and explicate important images, figures of language, punctuation, and understanding of the texts, anthropology and critical public health provided a way for me to articulate the issues surrounding addiction in a

manner that my background in English would not have allowed. By looking at the historical and cultural contexts of each person and era, I was able to find a pattern that connected these artists experiences across time and highlighted the importance of art in addiction and coping.

This has public health and social benefits--by studying the words and works of those that have been addicted, we can see inside the mind of those afflicted with the disease. This can help us, today, in understanding the mind of an addict so that addicts are treated as an individual, not as a collective. Each individual is different, therefore treatment for addiction should be based on the person. In reading the music, the art, or the poetry that is created by an individual, it is a crucial step to the understanding of addiction from a personal account that someone has experienced.

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Appendix A. Codebook

Instructions: Units for coding include stanza, paragraph, or sentence level. For poetry, code at the stanza level. For articles and essays, code at the paragraph level. For songs, code at the sentence level. Apply as many relevant codes as needed to each unit.

Substance use	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> Use of substances-alcohol and drugs</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i>use of laudanum and opium and opioids</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thoughts:</i> Samuel Taylor Coleridge was forced into addiction by physical pain. His doctor prescribed him laudanum to help ease his ailments. Percy Bysshe Shelley used opium to enhance his creativity as well as for his physical pain and to dull his emotions. Layne Staley started using opioids as a form of recreation and to dull his emotions, and he became addicted. Angela Williams began using opioids as a form of recreation and to dull my emotions.</p>

Isolation	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> Keeping a distance from other humans</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> a conversational poem written at night and in solitude, seeking solitude in the name of poetry, writing a song about anger and being alone to wallow in that anger.</p>

	<p><i>Analytical thoughts:</i></p> <p>Coleridge, Shelley, Staley, and Williams often isolated themselves to create, or because they did not want to be around people. Isolation is a common factor with mental illness as well as creativity. People that create often want to be alone so that they will not be disturbed, nor do they wish to share the work they are creating until it is finished. Another reason people isolate themselves is because they become lost in thought and over analytical, which can lead to further depression or drug use.</p>
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Loneliness	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> The emotion that triggers contemplation about life.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Examples:</i> poem sparks loneliness of the wandering poet. song that sparks loneliness and sadness of having a public life; a poem that invokes loneliness</p> <hr/> <p><i>Analytical thoughts:</i></p> <p>Coleridge, Shelley, Staley, and Williams oftentimes felt loneliness, even if they were surrounded by people. The most common reason of feeling lonely, at least in my experience, is that I often feel that people do not understand me. I also do not partake in much ‘small talk’, so to be alone is better than dealing with something that I choose not to engage with. Coleridge felt lonely because he was in pain. He felt that people would not understand his use of laudanum to deter his pain, so he chose to spend time alone. Shelley was the epitome of the Romantic poet. His loneliness also stemmed from his lack of engaging with small talk or wanting to be around too many people. Staley felt lonely because his fiancé died, and he felt that the people that were around him were not his friends.</p>

Mental Illness	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> Words that invoke ‘sorrow’ into the mind of the reader to showcase the mentality of the poet.</p>

	<p><i>Examples:</i> depression, melancholy emotions; lowly, melancholy, sorrow, and deep; anxiety, bi-polar, borderline personality disorder, and schizophrenic tendencies.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thoughts:</i></p> <p>During the Romantic period (Coleridge and Shelley), mental illnesses did not have a name. By the time of Staley and Williams, mental illness became categorized and placed in society. Many scholars believe that Coleridge and Shelley suffered from mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, and anti-social behavior. Staley suffered from manic depression (now bi-polar) and anxiety. At eighteen, Williams was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, manic depressant with schizophrenic tendencies, and anxiety. While there is a negative stigma surrounding persons with mental illnesses, many psychiatrists believe that mental illness and creativity are bound to one another.</p>

<p>Death</p>	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> The end of life, idea, or creativity.</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> Death and ghosts, death of a poet, life vs. death.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thoughts:</i></p> <p>As a living person, it is natural to think about death. Death is a concept that can never be experienced by a living person, so writing about death and thinking about death are common. Sometimes, a person wishes death upon him or her self, which causes one to write about the thoughts that lead to death. The coldness and emptiness of death are quite warming and welcoming when one is so far into depression. Sadly, death is a thought that many people toil with, and some people succumb to death by suicide. Poetry can save a person from committing suicide because the poet is able to rationally think about death from a different perspective. It is not always a fool-proof way to stop a person from committing suicide, but it could be a method that could help with the prevention of it. Coleridge, Shelley, Staley, and Williams have all had people that they were close to die throughout their lives.</p>

Physical Pain	
	<i>Definition:</i> Any physical ailment that causes a person to feel pain.
	<i>Examples:</i> pain from physical ailments, oldness and frailty, incidents that conjure pain such as; bouts of war that take place, which cause physical pain to those in battle. Pain is physical caused by ‘dope’ sickness. *dope sickness is lack of drugs in the body, which causes the user to feel horrible pain if the body does not have drugs in the system.
	<i>Analytical thought:</i> Physical pain is a common side effect of drug use, and pain can cause a person to seek medical help, which then the doctor will prescribe pain medication. Pain medicines are highly addictive, for it is easier to mask the pain than feel it. Coleridge and Shelley both had physical ailments that contributed to their drug use.

Emotional Pain	
	<i>Definition:</i> Any emotional pain that causes a person to feel bad about him or herself and bring forth emotional distress.
	<i>Examples:</i> Sorrow, down, deep, dark, cursed, and so forth elicit the emotional pain in which the writer is feeling.
	<i>Analytical thought:</i> Emotional pain can be as painful as physical pain. Williams suffered emotional, mental, and physical abuse from her mother. Staley endured emotional and mental abuse from his mother. Shelley felt as though his father was overbearing. Coleridge’s father died when Coleridge was young, but his mother was overbearing.

Self Discovery	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> Any moment when the writer discovers a concept about him or herself.</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> Poetry is used to converse with oneself to make some interesting discoveries about one's own mentality. Focus is mostly on the self rather than others.</p> <p>In songs, they are about the writer. Reflections of addiction and how it affects the self's own mind.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i></p> <p>Coleridge, Shelley, Staley, and Williams have all written about themselves and events that have helped them to see deep inside of themselves. Through poetry, each poet has written their fears, hopes, despairs, and experiences. This gives each poet a unique look into themselves that other people cannot see. Self discovery is an important piece to creating poetry and healing oneself from addiction.</p>

Slavery	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> Any type of confinement or using of a person in a manner to which he or she does not permit.</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> poem reflects the regrets of human slavery, the slavery of the poor people as commodities to the rich, the slavery of addiction, music, and fame, slavery of an overbearing parent.</p>

	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i></p> <p>Coleridge and Shelley both wrote about the inequalities of slavery and how humans are commodities rather than human beings. They both felt that slavery was an injustice in order to make the rich, richer. Staley writes about the slavery of fame throughout his novels, which lead to his death. Williams writes about the slavery of her mother, feeling trapped and isolated.</p>
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Abuse (Childhood)	
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	<p><i>Definition:</i> An incident in which abuse or neglect occur during the poet's youth, primarily between the ages of 3-17 years of age.</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> youthful experiences, correspondences with close friends. reflections upon childhood memories. stiff hand of parent, abused as a child, mental anguish.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i> Child abuse is a traumatic experience that haunts a person into adulthood. As an adult, I have had to overcome many of the incidents I have experienced with my mother. I had to endure some deep therapy and life lessons to help me overcome the damage that my mother did to me. Coleridge, Shelley, and Staley all struggled with a form of abuse from their parents as well. During our times, Childhood Protective Services (CPS) did not exist, so we were all denied help or resources. Instead, we turned to writing as a form of healing and expressing our struggles with the abuse.</p>

Neglect	
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	<p><i>Definition:</i> Not providing basic needs to a person. Basic needs include emotional or mental encouragement.</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> Parents sending away their children to boarding schools, away from parents during pre-teen years. Neglected by parents, physically, emotionally, and mentally. Role reversal; child as parent, parent as child.</p>

	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i> Child neglect, in any form, can have detrimental consequences on a child, particularly if the child is not allowed to act as a child, but more like a young adult. This strips the child away from making mistakes and learning from them on their own, which is a crucial step in early childhood development. A child should be allowed to make a mistake, and a child should be allowed to maintain a closeness to a parent.</p>
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Family Dynamics	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> The upbringing and environment of a person.</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> Parent died during childhood,, raised by an overbearing parent, family expectations of what the parent wants for the child, responsibility of siblings placed on child, not on parent; divorce, broken family, addiction in the family.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i> Family dynamics play a crucial role in the way a child, and eventually an adult, sees life. Pressure to carry on the family traditions, pressures of watching out for younger siblings, and lies told by parents can negatively impact a person.</p>

Rigorous religious upbringing	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> Not sure how to define this. It's in the text, but I'm not sure what words to use in order to explain the definition.</p>

	<p><i>Examples:</i></p> <p>Forced into a life of religion by parents. Parents ruled according to religious beliefs; ruled with fury, fire, and brimstone. Religion ingrained into the mind of a child as a form of punishment and cause for guilt.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i></p> <p>Coleridge, Shelley, Staley, and Williams were brought up in rigorous religious families. This had both positive and negative consequences for each writer. Because of certain religious beliefs, the parents would try to mold the child accordingly.</p>

<p>Status</p>	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> The role in which a person sees him or herself in social status as well as the level of success or failure in society from a monetary or cultural level.</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> conquest, jobs bountiful, slave trade, middle class, poverty, institutions of marriage, wealth, radical lifestyle prevented many advantages, lower middle class, divorce, censorship, war, inequality, addiction, and lack of opportunities contribute to a person's viewpoints on life.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i> Economy has the ability to break down society and cause tension between the various classes, races, and genders. Racism tends to flourish when the economy is low, especially since people are vying for employment to keep their families fed and sheltered.</p>

<p>Politics:</p>	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> A social issue that influences the writer to call for action.</p>

	<p><i>Examples:</i> Slavery and social injustices drive politics into art, particularly poetry. Social injustices and war contribute to the division of society. All of the poems chosen factor into politics in the manner of war, gender inequality, salary inequality, and the division of classes that drive more people into poverty.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i> Politics are driving forces that cause a person to contemplate the style of life in which he or she lives. Most often, a person will see how politics divide a nation or the person, him or herself, from society. Each poet has been addicted to drugs, which is also a political movement. An addict is often silenced in society, but when that person writes or creates art, the addict is heard. This is seen in the poems that have been chosen. Each poet, aside from Williams, has been lauded a poetical genius. Had they been a normal person, would they still be genius?</p>

Gender	
	<p><i>Definition:</i> A man or a woman (only these two genders are used because they were the ones used during the time of the writers to denote the dissatisfaction with marriage).</p>
	<p><i>Examples:</i> Marriage: the woman's rights were stripped away from her, and her belongings became the man's belongings. Free love; people should love whom they want to love and not be tied down to a single person, experimentation with bisexuality, women musicians were treated differently in the music industry, exploited, forced to be sexual objects, lack of equal pay.</p>
	<p><i>Analytical thought:</i> Gender has a major influence on the success or expectation of a person. Women were not taken as seriously, especially as writers or poets, whereas men dominated the literary canon. There are also certain 'expectations' that women were forced to adhere to, such as pregnancy or marriage, especially if she was to be taken care of. Women were not expected to be independent.</p>

Escaping Reality

Definition: ways to escape from physical, mental, and emotional abuse, and everyday reality.

Examples: The writing of poetry and lyrics, creating new worlds on paper or new scenes that allow one to experiment with different realities.

Analytical thought: Escaping from reality is often a method in which a creative person takes to displace him or herself from the dissatisfaction of his or her own real surroundings. It is also a way to reenact different outcomes to a scenario that has taken place, especially when one is unsatisfied with the way it was handled. It is also a way to leave behind the physical, emotional, and mental pain that is trapped inside one's head.

Reflect on life

Definition: To think back on various moments and write them from memory but with a different perspective.

Examples: Inspiration drawn from memories, correspondences, impulses, experiences, other people's works, and one's own work.

Analytical thought: One of the most important aspects of poetry or lyrics is to reflect back on certain moments. One draws inspiration from his or her surroundings and manipulates those moments into works of art in order to understand the self. By reflecting on life, one can come to a new understanding or a better perspective of how to cope with the negative, or positive, incidents that have occurred.

Appendix B. Poems

Twisted in the Wind
(Nutshell tribute)

If you see me, say goodbye
I'm left twisted in the wind
I made my choices, had to try
I can't get hurt again
Broken promises and all the lies
I'm walkin away, goodbye

Shufflin' through the deck, needin' aces
Reflectin' back, on all your many faces
Holdin' on to what we used to be
Back when we were young and free
Broken promises and all the lies
Now I'm walkin' away, goodbye

Chorus:

Finally on my own, lookin' back at us
The memories I made were lies of us
I've moved forward from the pain
Distanced myself from what was plain
Distorted thoughts made me see
Now I can move forward and live for me

Now you see me, I've said goodbye
I've been twisted in the wind
I made my choices, I did try
I won't get hurt again
Broken promises and all the lies
I've walked away, goodbye

Drowning in It

Sitting on the porch, in the dark
Reminiscing on the days of yesteryear
The time when I had no worries or cares
When life seemed a little more easy
No bills to pay, no groceries to buy
Just playing video games watching

The time fly by
Listening to music or reading a book
Was not such a chore, back then
Writing poetry about death
And the man in black
Lurking in the shadows, ready
To pounce on me
Mimicking Jim, Edgar, and Mr. King
Horror, the macabre, the gothic tales too
That's the stuff I used to do
Then the day came when life took a turn
My dad died.
No. Not died. He committed suicide.
Such a horrible experience for a teenage
Girl to face
Daddy was gone. Mother hated me.
I wanted to be gone. I hated mother.
I never knew how to cry for him
I never knew how to forgive him
I didn't know how to express my
Emotions. So many of them
Flooded my mind. I drowned in sorrow.
I wallowed in anger. I buried myself in
Sadness. Happiness was merely a concept
That i felt i could never feel again.
I writhed in pity. I wanted attention.
Only, i didn't know how to get it
Aside from paper, my one true friend,
I met another. Though this one was just
A lie. But it lied so i didn't have to feel.
It lied so i didn't have to cry. It lied so i
Didn't have to feel the anger that
Coursed through my body.
The fine, white powder. So fine. I was
Easily seduced, like many more before me.
I succumbed to its mysterious enchantment
For i did not believe in magic until the honey
Dew, milk of paradise intrigued me.
Never did i see the dark caverns nor the
Deep chasms that my mind carved out
For me. Never did I feel the cold, evil, breath
That death blew upon me.
I walked, alone, vastly yearning to be with Daddy
Running away from mother like an antelope evading
The vicious lioness. But there was no plain for me
To frolic. There was no plain for me to seek solace.

Only the catacombs that blistered my thoughts.
But that honey dew, the milk of paradise soothed
The murky sludge that i was stuck in
Not just my feet, but up to my head.
Eyes veiled by the blackness that
Filled my heart, stoking the fire, building
Up, like a volcanic eruption.
Lost was i. Was i coming? Was i going?
Was i stuck in the fiery pits of hell? My hell.
The hell that suffocated me, like a serpent,
Wrapping and coiling around me
Until i couldn't breathe...
Darkness had set in.

The Alternative

America, the land of dreams
Thoughtless dictator, millions of screams
Racism too, can't forget that
Heil hitler oops, commanding chief
Wreckless comments, and you're a thief
But let's be fair, wait, we can't be
Excuses, none- an office joke
Not fit to serve, all mirrors, smoke
It lingers on, suffocating
Broken country, you, degrading
Greedy miser, you are fired
Anger in you, still we hired
America, we made it great
You ruin us, you break us down
Evil is you, in your white mask
Hide your face wretch, behind your lies
Alternative, how pathetic

The Traveler's Tale

There once was a traveler, not too well versed
Took a trek, looking for a new universe
Hiked over mountains, walked across plains
Slept under the stars, had hunger pangs
He made his way to the ocean and walked the shore
Looking and longing for the hidden door

The door, he knew, would take him to a place
Where he could show his face
He would not consider himself a failed disgrace
Solitude was no longer the life for him
He wanted to sparkle, like a rare gem
His face was mark'd by the curse of failure
It wasn't normal, but rather peculiar
Forced into a life of poverty and crime
His soul festered in his guilty slime
Mother and father, Rest In Peace
He was left alone, abandoned, full of disease

On a dark and stormy night; he wielded a knife
Plunged it through husband and wife
Blood splattered; it was on his hands
That's why he searches for new lands
His crime, like he, abandoned and gruesome
He was dark and as vile as they come
Money was not the motive for his dastardly deed
He wanted a life; he wanted to be set free
No more work. No more dirt.
He wanted happiness, not to feel hurt
His father bound him to a prison
The poor son, saw nothing but crimson
Contempt and anger were his only friends
He did not ask for life; he wanted it to end
He did what he felt was right
On that dark and stormy night
He extracted his revenge
1, 2, 3 rest. 4, 5, 6 he began again
Why the mother? Why not just the father?
Mother, his mother dearest, did not intervene
She watched as his father beat him green
Black and blue was his skin
Morning, noon, and night, then again
How could she watch as he wailed out in pain
But to her husband; she would not restrain
Before that dark and stormy night
He ran away and hid in fright
He hid amongst the flea infested rats
He hid, like a frightened scaredy cat
Afraid to come out of the darkened night
His father found him, and beat him just right
Threw some turpentine on his face
Left him looking like a disgrace
Father lit a match and threw it at his son

He laughed as though he was having fun
Son screamed out in agony; "Father, why?
What have I done?" He could only cry
"Pathetic lazy bastard!" his father shouted at the
The son's face burned with agony

Confessions of the Deceited

By: Angela Williams

Ancient Mariner, old and wise
Lend me your ear
You once spoke of a tale
That happen'd to you
A tale of tragedy and despair

Chance arose, the dice were
Strewn across the deck
The lady nightmare and her
Companion of Life-in-Death
I ask you to send me
The thoughts which possessed
You, while you fought to hang
On to your last breath

Old Wise Mariner, your words
Have struck a bell
Deep inside me, I was searching
For what? I shall tell!
Honesty, a truth, straight from my heart
A glimpse of pain has dealt me a blow
Though it was not fatal, it struck me
In a place that I was hallow

The truth was spat in my face
Just as the storm ripped your
Ship apart
It left you isolated and alone
With your thoughts
No one to comfort you
Yet you survived the wreck and made
Amends when you blessed the
Snakes from your love which
Sprung from your heart
For which you blessed them unaware
You felt the lead of the heavy

Burden vanish from your soul

The darkness comforted you in
Your time of need
For the sun did nothing but bring you
Harm! Yet you still hung on
Per chance you would survive
Internal conflict, tossed you
More violently than the waves
Of the storm-blast
Which struck you with its
O'ertaking wings

My heart, oh Wise and
Ancient Mariner, has also been
Through the violent turmoil
Of an unforeseen storm
My internal conflict has risen
From the dead, as the Mariners
Did, when they had once forsaken
You! So, too, have I, been bound
To a constant fight-in which I have
Been, Day after day, day after day
Stuck. No breath of comfort has left
My chest. I struggle, with the burden
Weighing heavy on my heart,
I, too, am idle as a painted ship
Upon the painted ocean.

Tears have fallen, the pain burns
Like a knife dipped in molten lava
And left for weeks, hanging on to the
Dying embers-which flicker to and fro
Holding on to something, which is
Difficult to let go! Until, old Wise and
Ancient Mariner, did the guilt escape my
Grasp. It was delivered, by chance, to
The one that left me rotting on the ocean,
Left for dead, feeling of a hollow log,
Drifting with no direction-being pulled
And tossed upon the waves-crashing!
Thunderous pounding, echoes in my
Mind.

Oh Wise and Ancient Mariner
Your ear you have given lease

For now, I shall confess of my
Sins. Do I, like you, deserve to
Be absolved? Pray, tell!
"I have loved another, which never loved
Me. I have gone through the chasms of hell
For the one, to which, never loved me
I endured the fiendish hellion, for many, many
Years. His hatred caused me countless tears.
He burned me in a pit of fire, strapped me down on
The torture table and pulled, till I
Ripped apart.

Oh! Ancient Mariner, the guilt that plagued
You, has haunted me as well.
Empty was the night in which I let my
Ship set sail. It sailed into
The dark, black night
Not a twinkling in the sky,
Which could give partial light.
Darkness enveloped as I looked
Out over the bow, I could not see
The horizon. Whispers flowed through
The night---they told me of a time when
All was well. I listened to the story, captivated
By the tale. The whisper let out a sigh---for I did not know
That a whisper could cry.
My thoughts were whisked away to a place
That I had forgotten. Where green was the
Brightest it had ever been. Blue was a color of hope
Not sadness. Black was a color of change
Not death. Red was passion, as I ran through
My memories. Red now sparks an anger
Deep inside of me. An anger that grows
And never dies. It courses through my veins
More powerful than sun's eternal flame.
Is it my fault? Am I the one to blame?

Sitting on the ocean, rocking back and
Forth. My legs have not yet stood firm.
Teetering and tottering, I have yet to learn
How to walk on water. When, oh wise Mariner
Will I get my trusty sea legs? Is it a concept for which
I cannot grasp? How long must I suffer before
I, too, am allowed to breathe on my own?
When do I know how to bless the snakes,

With my own heart? How can I admire
The blues and greens that reflect
Their beauty? For now, I only see
The slimy creatures that crawl out of
The sea. When do I get to find my
Horizon? The one that will lead me to
The place that I want to be? Does such
A Place exist?
Is my life nothing but a cruel trick?
I run through the muck, every day of my life
I fall through the mud, from which I cannot
Escape.
The horizon I want, seems beyond my reach
Swirls of vileness poison my vision
I cannot gain a glimpse of myself as I
Trudge on.
Life has weighed heavily upon my heart
It has clouded my soul
It has stripped away my vision---I fear what lies
Before me. For how can I remain hopeful
When I cannot see?

The wind cries in the distance, the
Waves begin to dance---ripples in the
Ocean break my festering trance
The ship begins to rock, to and fro,
Like a sweet, romantic dance, with a lover,
Toe to toe.
The clouds change from pale to dark---as black
As my tarnished soul
Lightening crashes down, and flicker in the moment
Just as my hopes had once done
The thunder rumbles---first like a kitten's purr
To which it morphs into a vicious roar---more loudly
Than I have heard thunder before
I stand in the middle of the deck!
"Take me! I am ready to go!" I still
Teeter and totter as I stand firm
I see the slimy creatures of the sea
Begin to squirm. Just as I have always
Been, they now feel the hopelessness
That I have been forced lug around
For countless years. Pain and humiliation
Have been my friends throughout the years.
Slimy creatures of the depths, I give you my
Burdens to lug 'round.

The ship is tossed to and fro
Yet, I still have the strength to
Stand firm. Oh! Wise and Ancient Mariner,
Redemption is what I seek. A moment of
Clarity for me to think! What is it that I
Have done? To harbor my thoughts of fury?
Fury as bright as the sun? As strong as the
Storm, for which I am in the midst? Many
A night, I shed my silent tears. I wallow in
In my horrid fears. I simmer in my my darkest
Light. My frantic horrors boil over, and the pressure
Of the steam is unleashed. Horrors of death that have been
Constant throughout my life. Demons that have tortured me
Beyond belief. Here I stand, the first time, as a whole.
My head is usually in the clouds
My heart is hidden in the depths of the chasms,
Deep in the black abyss. My legs, far ahead of me.
My arms, way behind. My eyes cannot see what
Is really there, for they deceive me, like a mirage.
For what I thought I saw, was merely a dream.
A dream beyond my reach. When I am struck
Down with from my place, high above the clouds,
I fall...endless screams stuffed further down
Inside of me.

The ground, below me is harder than diamonds
Yet it does not sparkle, nor hold no merit
To my journey through life. Cracks surround
Me. Will I fall through and be forgotten? Will
Someone remember me? Will, Ancient Mariner,
I have a story to tell? I walk, faceless, through
Life, plagued with fear. Nightmares during
The day, uneasy, restless sleep at night.
Tossing and turning, like the ship on the
Ocean. No star telling me which way to go.
My compass was broken long ago. The needle
No longer points to the north, for my senses
Are dizzy, and my footing is once again
Loose. Ice has built itself around me. Protecting
Me from myself. Warmth wrapped around me
From under a frozen blanket. Comfort found
In my dead solitude. Fear. Terror. Sorrow, all
Trapped in my matter. Feeding the demon, which
Resides deep inside. It's lust is never satiated.
Leech! Vermin! Oh! Evil parasite. You suck

Me dry. No longer can my eyes cry. No longer
Does my heart beat. It merely rests cold in
It's chamber, for it can no longer pump
Me full of life. Deceitful Demon! You have
Tricked me, yet again. Your grasp is tighter
Still. But, I cannot feel ill towards you. I
Bear transgressions upon myself. My soul
Does not let me share, For when my
Passion of Fire dies out, my being will
Be extinguished.

Oh, Wise and Ancient Mariner, did you
Enjoy my pains? Were they enough to
Banish me to a place of no return?
Still, I wait for my rescuer to pardon
Me, and give me my moment of
Clarity. Has he scurried away from me
As a rat scurries from its predator? I
Drift! Barely keeping my head peering
Through the surface of my depths, my
Sins. My lies have kept me alive. My
Deceptions have given me life, allowed
Me to survive my vile deeds. Yet, I run.
Fear keeps me from gazing back. Past.
Never in the moment will I find my place.
My place of existence and peace.
Wretched existence of mine! I no
Longer wish to be! Pull me away from
The place in which I have drifted. Protect
Me from myself. My enemy, all along, has
Been Myself. Excruciating voices that fill
My head---I beseech you to deliver me
To a place where I can no longer hear
Your Banshee shrills. Piercing me as
A sharp blade, straight to my heart.
Leaving me breathless and at Death's
Mercy.

Ancient Mariner, my words mean not
A thing, for it's my heart and soul
That need to be cleansed. The damned
And deceitful lies, which tarnished me
Are ever prominent upon my brow. No matter
How long I am stuck at sea, the lighthouse
Never shines for me. Stuck in darkness will
The rest of my days be, for I have to wear the burden

Of the heavy Albatross around my ever growing,
Weak neck. I cannot repent for all I have done.
I cannot deny what I am. I have to suffer in the
Burning fires, for which I have built and fed.
Nothing beyond the stars can save me.
I will forever be lost at sea. Swimming amongst
The creepy, slimy sea creatures, which cultivate
Fear in the perfect beauty. Ah! Wise Mariner, for
Your fate you turned away. You were saved for
Unknown reasons, yet I cannot turn away
From my fate. I shall not want to be rescued.
I shall wish to endure the sufferings in which
I have brought upon myself. The reaches of the
Universe are plenty, for survival of the fittest
Is the key. Not escaping fate's strings, which
Throws off the balance of the Scales. Justice shall
Not be just, but forever blind and oblivious. It will
Always turn the cheek to the corrupt, and come
Bearing down on the innocent, just as I have done
To Myself.

Ancient Mariner, I implore! For I have more to tell!
Monstrous, medieval plague, you have destroyed
Me with your vile perils for years, yet though
You choked me with your venom filled claws,
My immunity towards you has grown! You cannot
Hold me down with your weight on my heart,
For I have the strength to expose your weaknesses!
Just as you have done to mine.
Scandalous, malicious entity--I
Have been made aware, of your
Sickly presence---feeble, unable, and unaware!
Your longing to destroy me has left You
Distraught! My passion for survival
Has taught You naught! Fool! Jester! Trickster
Of the heart! No more can I laugh at your
Wicked, Wicked Ways! No more can your
Boyish charms---oppress my scornful days.
Too much dread have I banged in my head!
Too many tears mine eyes have cried. Not
Once have you owned up to the poisoning
You have injected into me. Wise Mariner, do
You see? Have I, too, been the one forsaken?
Yet, he that has forsaken me, is protected.
Perhaps not by the light, but the veil of evil!
When will his day arrive? Justice is never just

To the one whom has been wronged,
Only just to the one that has wronged all along.

Thank you! Ancient Mariner! For your ears
You have leased to me! I have been through
A perilous journey! I have seen the heavy veil
Lifted from my eyes. The horizon is clear, yet
I still cannot see! What does fate have in store
For me? With the burden that I lugged, undesirably
'Round, upon my weakened shoulders,
My judgment remains as cloudy as
The storm that made you see. When
Will that moment give itself to me?
Will I be destined to wander Earth with
My sorrow-filled heart. Forsaken and lost
At sea. The compass of life, in my own eyes,
Is broken--and will never lead fulfillment to me.
No longer shall I cry to the one that cast
Me aside. No longer shall I hide in my misery.
The days are marked! My time will come.
The compass will point at me.

Still I sit, transparent in my skin. No
Reflection to reflect upon. I cast no shadow
In the vibrant sun. Wallow away in darkness.
Darkness, does not make me a feared! For I can
Hide what I don't want to share. The light is
What haunts me, now. It shows what I care
Not to see. Truths spin around, like a
Violent tornado, ripping apart the structures
That stand. Weakness is in the path of
Righteousness. Righteousness is never
Knowing. For once again, the snakes,
With their blue and green hues, slither
Between my heaven and hell. Never a
Moment goes by that puts my mind at ease.
Violent storms lead me to my destiny. Alone,
The coldness envelops my spark. Fear
Cascades, and I am left vulnerable for all
To see. I quiver like the final leaf---before it
Falls from its tree. I have drifted and been
Carried by the wind, placed in a world of woe.
Never content with my present---always on the go.
Mariner? Were you ever really wise? Ancient as old
Dragons fly, in lands, protecting their gold. Wise?

Who can say. The lessons that we are given.
Make us what we want to be, but never who we
Really are. Reflections in glass, distorted by
Our own deceptions, Deceit will ruin all.

Appendix C. Music

The Traveler's Tale: [https://drive.google.com/open?id=1-](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1-6Td6RjCDjzKQliVEMQMrHqvPl_7VTJ3)

[6Td6RjCDjzKQliVEMQMrHqvPl_7VTJ3](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1-6Td6RjCDjzKQliVEMQMrHqvPl_7VTJ3)

Drowning In It: https://drive.google.com/open?id=11YG8v_147Fh_8vq5mxgchXuD9c3MI_BU

Twisted In the

Wind: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=14VNobYhlPKK7GGXUc8EVum9FpYWTMMUt>