

What's in a Word?
HMXP102
Winthrop University
Prof. Oakes

As an example of the overall intent of this course, consider the difference between the expressions of lunar beauty in the following excerpt from Gary Trudeau's *Doonesbury* comic (5/16/1979):¹



Well-educated, mature human adults are capable of fuller expression, fuller understanding, fuller appreciation of life – and, consequently, fuller experience of life.

Here is the full text of the poem:

William Blake. 1757–1827

Night

THE sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine;
The birds are silent in their nest.
And I must seek for mine.
The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight
Sits and smiles on the night.

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Farewell, green fields and happy grove,
Where flocks have took delight: 10
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing
And joy without ceasing
On each bud and blossom, 15
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest
Where birds are cover'd warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm: 20
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey, 25
They pitying stand and weep,
Seeking to drive their thirst away
And keep them from the sheep.
But, if they rush dreadful,
The angels, most heedful, 30
Receive each mild spirit,
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold:
And pitying the tender cries, 35
And walking round the fold:
Saying, 'Wrath, by His meekness,
And, by His health, sickness,
Are driven away
From our immortal day. 40

'And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep,
Or think on Him who bore thy name,
Graze after thee, and weep.
For, wash'd in life's river, 45
My bright mane for ever
Shall shine like the gold
As I guard o'er the fold.'