

When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wandered off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

WALT WHITMAN

The poem by W. Whitman goes back to the 18th century, when astronomy was a very important ~~matter~~/subject. The study of astronomy **gave you good image**. The "learn'd" astronomer is a well-read person who knows a lot; probably he is an intelligent person. He ~~suggests~~ he can explain everything with science and is free from the sense of real life.

The poem is made of two parts but all ~~the~~ thoughts are expressed in one ~~sentence~~ verse (the poem is written in free verse), although every line starts with a capital letter. There is no rhyme in the poem but ~~the~~ **it relies on**-repetition. **You can see it in** "When, when,.. " and the alliteration (mystical moist) **that** make the poem sound like a melody, a slow melody ~~to underline~~ **underlying** the boredom and tiredness of **the poet's** boredom and tiredness.

Let us ~~see~~/examine the first part, the scientific part and then the second part, the emotional ~~part~~**ONE**.

The student is ~~having~~ **following** an astronomy ~~lesson~~ **lecture** but he is not interested in **it** while the other ones are delighted by ~~the~~ **HIS** knowledge ~~of the astronomer~~. They enjoy the lesson and applaud **HIM**.

The astronomer is really good in the matter and delights the ~~students~~ **listeners** with figures, proves and charts, additions, divisions and measuring, but not the ~~writer~~ **speaker**. He does not applaud, he feels tired, even sick. Indeed, he needs to go ~~off~~ **out**. Outside, in the silent nature he immediately feels better.

There are no more figures and diagrams, no more people, no more voices but ~~only~~ he is ~~and~~ **ALONE WITH** himself, the silence and the stars.

That is what astronomy means to ~~the poet~~ **HIM**. He understands and appreciate**S** astronomy **SIMPLY** by watching the stars in the night. ~~That is~~ **THEY ARE** real, that is what he needs.

Understand everything It is not important to understand everything, to explain everything. **ALL AROUND YOU**

Sometimes it is enough to contemplate and to FEEL.