

PROSE STYLES

I.

As therefore the sweetest rose hath his prickle, the finest velvet his brack, the fairest flour his bran, so the sharpest wit hath his wanton will, and the holiest head his wicked way. And true it is that some men write and most men believe that in all perfect shapes a blemish bringeth rather a liking every way to the eyes than a loathing any way to the mind. Venus had her mole on her cheek which made her more amiable; Helen her scar on her chin which Paris called *venus amoris*, the whetstone of love, Aristippus his wart, Lycurgus his wen.

Lyly, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578)

II.

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Isaiah, King James Version (1611)

III.

...[man] drinks misery, and he tastes happiness; he mows misery, and he gleans happiness; he journeys in misery, he does but walk in happiness; and which is worst, his misery is positive, and dogmatical, his happiness is but disputable, and problematical; All men call Misery, Misery, but Happiness changes the name, by the tastes of man.

Donne, *Sermons* (1624)

IV.

To begin, then, with Shakespeare. He was the man who of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them, not laboriously, but luckily; when he describes anything, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation; he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there.

Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668)

V.

Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Johnson, Letter to Earl of Chesterfield (Feb. 1755)

VI.

Let conflagration rage; of whatsoever is combustible! Guardrooms are burned, Invalides messrooms. A distracted "Peruke-maker with two fiery torches" is for burning "the saltpeters of the Arsenal"—had not a woman run screaming; had not a Patriot, with some tincture of Natural Philosophy, instantly struck the wine out of him (butt of musket on pit of stomach), overturned barrels, and stayed the devouring element. A young beautiful lady, seized, escaping, in these Outer Courts, and thought falsely to be De Launay's daughter, shall be burned in De Launay's sight; she lies swooned on a paillasse; but again a Patriot—it is brave Aubin Bonnemere the old soldier—dashes in, and rescues her. Straw is burned; three cart loads of it, hauled thither, to up in white smoke—almost to the choking of patriotism itself...

Carlyle, *The French Revolution* (1837)

VII.

...and about ten o'clock it come on to rain and blow and thunder and lighten like everything; so the king told us to both stay on watch till the weather got better; then him and the duke crawled into the wigwam and turned for the night. It was my watch below, till twelve, but I wouldn't a turned in, anyway, if I'd had a bed; because a body don't see such a storm as that every day in the week, not by a long sight. My souls, how the wind did scream along! And every second or two there'd come a glare that lit up the white-caps for half a mile around, and you'd see the islands, looking dusty through the rain, and the trees thrashing around in the wind; then comes h-wack-bum! bum! bumble-umble-um-bum-um-bum-bum--and the thunder would go rumbling and grumbling away, and quit--and then *rip* comes another flash and another sockdolager.

Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1855)

VIII.

In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the run, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees too were dusty and the leaves fell early that year, and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling and the soldiers marching and afterward the road bare and white except for the leaves.

Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929)

IX.

Then he would see her; the bright thin horns of morning, of sun, would blow the mist away and reveal her, planted, blond, dew-pearled, standing in the parted water of the ford, blowing into the water the thick, warm, heavy, milk-laden breath; and lying in the drenched grasses, his eyes now blind with sun, he would wallow faintly from thigh to thigh to making a faint, thick hoarse moaning sound. Because he cannot make one with her through the day's morning and noon and evening.

Faulkner, *The Hamlet* (1931)

X.

In fact the trip was a psychic Cadillac, a creamy groove machine, and they soon found selves grooving in a group mind. Now they could leave behind all the mind-blown freaky binds and just keep going Further! on the bus. For example, Zonker meant to stay in New York but he went back with them. He couldn't break off from the group mind takeoff that had begun, the Unspoken Thing, the all-in-one...He brought with him his gorgeous blond telepathic girlfriend Kathy, who felt at once the careening, crazydreaming, creamy bobbing rhythm of the bus and became at once recklessly and infectiously and insensibly and ultra-infra-sexily one of them; most sinuous Prankstress in their ranks. The Pranksters name her Sensuous X, glowing girlfriend resolute1y going...Further...Keeseey laid eyes on the Sensuous horizon--loved it! On the bus. Next she became Zonker's sensuous ex--lost her! On the bus. At first Zonker's mad, feels he's been had--affront! But then thanks to his feelings for the Prankster, he sees nothing to resent. There can be no hard feelings when one is dealing totally out front on the bus.

Wolfe, *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968)