

A Romantic and a Realist

What though the radiance
which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass,
of glory in the flower,
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

William Wordsworth
from "Tintern Abbey" (1800)

I, too, felt ready to start life all over again.
It was as if that great rush of anger had washed
me clean, emptied me of hope, and, gazing up
at the dark sky spangled with its signs and stars,
for the first time, the first, I laid my heart open
to the benign indifference of the universe.

Albert Camus
The Stranger (1942)