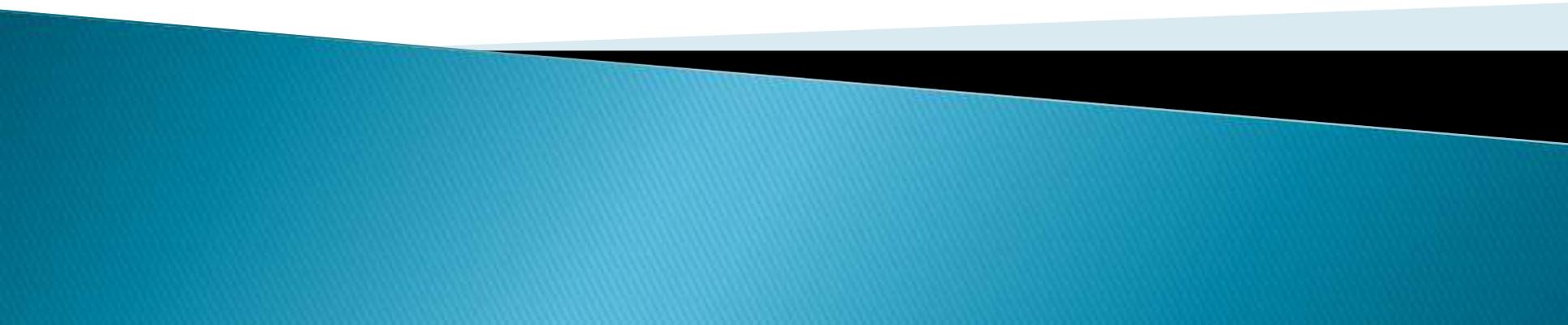


VAISHALI MAHILA MAHAVIDYALAYA HAJIPUR, VAISHALI

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
Takes you to–



EVE OF ST.AGNES

John Keats

Born	31 October 1795, Moorgate, City of London, United Kingdom
Died	23 February 1821, Rome, Italy
Occupation	Poet
Language	English
Nationality	English



484 x 585

Alma mater

King's College London

Period

Literary movement

Romanticism

Notable works

Hyperion.
Ode on a Grecian Urn,
La Belle Dame sans merci,
To Autumn,
On Melancholy,
Ode To Psyche,
Lamia,
Ode to a Nightingale,
On Indolence,
On First Looking into
Chapman's Homer

Publication

- ▶ The **Eve of St. Agnes** is a Romantic narrative poem of 42 Spenserian stanzas set in the Middle Ages. It was written by John Keats in 1819 and **published** in 1820. The poem was considered by many of Keats' contemporaries and the succeeding Victorians to be one of his finest and was influential in 19th-century literature.



JOHN
KEATS

THE EVE OF ST AGNES

Eve of St. Agnes Character

- **Madeline**
- ***Prophyro**
- **Angela**
- ***Baron**
- ***Beadsman**
- **Hildebrad**
- ***Lord Maurice**



Summary

The setting is a medieval castle, the time is January 20, the eve of the Feast of St. Agnes. Madeline, the daughter of the lord of the castle, is looking forward to midnight, for she has been assured by "old dames" that, if she performs certain rites, she will have a magical vision of her lover at midnight in her dreams. Madeline believes in this old superstition and prepares to do all that is required, such as going supperless to bed.

On this same evening, Porphyro, who is in love with Madeline and whom she loves, manages to get into the castle unobserved. Madeline's family regards Porphyro as an enemy whom they are ready to kill on sight. The presence of many guests in the castle helps make it possible for Porphyro to escape notice. By chance he meets Madeline's old nurse, Angela, who is his friend; she tells him of Madeline's quaint superstition. At once the idea of making Madeline's belief become reality by his presence in her bedroom at midnight flashes into his mind. He assures Angela that he means no harm and she reluctantly agrees to help him. She leads him to Madeline's chamber where he hides in a closet.

- ▶ Madeline soon enters and, her mind filled with the thought of the wonderful vision she will soon have, goes to bed and falls asleep. The ritual she has performed produces the expected result; her sleep becomes the sleep of enchantment and Porphyro, looking as if immortalized, fills her dreams.
- ▶ After Madeline falls asleep, Porphyro leaves the closet and approaches her bed in order to awaken her. His whispering does not stir her; her sleep is "a midnight charm / Impossible to melt as iced stream." He picks up her lute and plays it close to her ear.

- ▶ Suddenly her eyes open wide but she remains in the grip of the magic spell. Then "there was a painful change, that night expell'd / The blisses of her dream so pure and deep." She now sees Porphyro, not immortal as in her dream, but in his ordinary mortality. The contrast is so great that Madeline even thinks that the human Porphyro is on the point of death. She wants her visionary Porphyro back again. Her wish is granted; the operations of magic are powerful enough to enable Porphyro, "beyond a mortal man impassion'd far," to enter her dream vision and there they are united in a mystic marriage.

- ▶ When the magic visionary state comes to an end, Madeline expresses her fear that Porphyro will abandon her, "a deceived thing; — / A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing." Porphyro, who now addresses her as his bride, urges her to leave the castle with him. "Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be, / For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

The two leave the castle undetected and go out into the storm. That night the baron and all his guests have bad dreams, and Angela and the old Beadsman both die.

Some Quotes from the Poem

- ▶ *Upon St. Agnes' Eve, / Young virgins might have visions of delight, / And soft adorings from their loves receive.*
- ▶ *In vain / Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier, / ... But she saw not: her heart was elsewhere.*
- ▶ *Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores / All saints to give him sight of Madeline.*
- ▶ *Hie thee from this place; / They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!*
- ▶ *Thou must needs the lady wed, / Or may I never leave my grave among the dead.*

**HOPE YOU
UNDERSTOOD AND
ENJOYED**

THANK YOU