



# Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 – 1832)

*The Sorrows of Young Werther*

Th Curran  
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# Rousseau: *La nouvelle Héloïse* (1761)

*Si c'est la raison, qui fait l'homme,  
c'est le sentiment, qui le conduit.*



# *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* 1774



- We read a translation of the heavily revised final edition of 1787.
- Werther (best transliterated as Ver - tear, as in “to tear a strip off”).



# Vade Mecum:

*Go with Me*

- “a handbook ... carried on the person for immediate use when needed...”
  - Collins
- “a handbook or guide that is kept constantly at hand for consultation...:
  - Oxford

# Goethe's Werther (1774 & 1787)

- This is an epistolary novel in 2 parts in 2 editions with 2 admirers, supported by 2 defining works of epic literature – one ancient and classical, the second modern and romantic. However both major poets (Homer and Ossian), beloved by Werther, are elaborated by the literature also particular to the age, viz. Goldsmith, Klopstock, Lessing. By these poetic engagements we affirm the utility of Schiller's 1795 contrast between the naïve and sentimental – as they are present to us in this novel. The Wahlheim episodes of 1787 convincingly bring out the tensions within Werther himself, as does also the quarrel between Werther and Albert. The Biblical identity that Werther increasingly adopts is another way in which Goethe both embraces and distances himself from the German-language literary genre of the 1770s known as *Sturm und Drang* ["Storm and Stress"]. This masterpiece begins with *Drang* and ends in *Sturm*.



## *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*

- *Die Leiden* [Plural] = Suffering(s)
- *Leidenschaften* = Passions
- *leidenschaftlich* = passionate

# Benedict Cumberbatch

- Who campaigned for the Remainers
- Appears as Dominic Cummings
- (Director of the Leave Campaign)
- in *Brexit: The Uncivil War* (Channel 4)
- BC: “I took the role because of the script... I realized this is what drama can do at its best.”
- “... it’s really about listening to each other, all of us. And to inhabit someone else’s point of view ...”
- *Frankenstein* 2011: Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller alternated the roles of Victor Frankenstein and the Creature and audiences in cinemas had the chance to see both combinations.

# Caspar David Friedrich

## 1774-1840



- c. 1821/22: Morning, Noon, Afternoon and Evening

*(Der Abend; Hannover, Lower Saxony)*

- Oil on Canvas; 22x31cm; approximately two Penguin copies side by side



# Caspar David Friedrich

1774-1840



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# Pilgrimage

- Pilgrim / Pilgrimage:
  - 85, 86, 87, 103
- Pharisee: 61
- Philistine: 33 (61)



# Arboreal



- The (two) Linden Trees:
  - pp. 32, 35, 72, 85, 89, 108\*\*, 132
  - Wahlheim  
pp. 32, 35, 44, 51, 56, 90, 108, 111
  - Walnut  
pp. 46, 93, 94
- Chestnut p. 70
- Willows p. 98

## 2 Editions

- Major Additions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of 1787:  
According to the Penguin / Hulse translation.
  - Entry for 30<sup>th</sup> May: pp. 34-36
  - 1<sup>st</sup> entry for 26<sup>th</sup> July: pp. 55-56
  - Entry for 8<sup>th</sup> August: “The same evening”: p. 58

# 1787 ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

- Book Two:
  - 20<sup>th</sup> January: “In the evenings I resolve... mornings are gone”: p. 78
  - 8<sup>th</sup> February: p. 79
  - [9<sup>th</sup> May Excerpts, p. 86]

## 1787 ~ ii

- Book Two:
  - 16<sup>th</sup> June (Year ii): p. 87
  - 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> September: pp. 90-92
  - 12<sup>th</sup> September: p. 93
  - 27<sup>th</sup> October: “The same evening”: p. 97
  - 22<sup>nd</sup> November: p. 100
  - 26<sup>th</sup> November: p. 101
  - p. 108: “Repeatedly...” to the conclusion of December 14<sup>th</sup> on p. 113
  - p. 114: December 20<sup>th</sup>: “We scarcely...” to “her husband's respect”



# The Modern Prometheus

- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus* 1818
- Oxford, p. 103: “But I thought Werter himself a more divine being than I had ever beheld or imagined; his character contained no pretension, but it sunk deep.”



## *Napoleon the Great*

.. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, which Napoleon read no fewer than six times during the Egyptian campaign, and probably first when he was eighteen.





## Andrew Roberts:

Napoleon ... idolized Rousseau ... *La Nouvelle Héloïse* ... argued that one should follow one's authentic feelings rather society's norms... [Napoleon's] favourite poet was Ossian ... He took the Ossian poem *Fingal* on his campaigns...



# Sunday before Christmas

- Sunday before Christmas, 1772; Penguin, p. 115: “Seyn Sie ein Mann!”
- *Freitod / Selbstmord*



# Seyn Sie ein Mann!

- p. 115:
- “Think of the many joys your spirit, your knowledge and your gifts afford you! Be a man. Put an end to this dismal attachment to a creature who can do nothing but pity you.”
- *Seyn Sie ein Mann!*



## 12 Midday

- “It was twelve midday when he died. The presence of the officer, and the precautions he took, prevented any disturbance. About eleven that night he had him buried at the place he had chosen for himself. The old gentleman and his sons followed the corpse, but Albert was unable to. There were fears for Lotte’s life. Guildsmen bore the body. No priest attended him.”
- *Der Alte folgte der Leiche und die Söhne, Albert vermocht’s nicht. Man fürchtete für Lottes Leben. Handwerker trugen ihn. Kein Geistlicher hat ihn begleitet.*

# PB Shelley

- *Ode to the West Wind*

“Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth

Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!”