

Unlock the Depths of W.H. Auden's Masterpiece: A Comprehensive Study Guide for "As Walked Out One Evening"

As I Walked Out One Evening
-W.H. Auden

As I walked out one evening,
Walking down Bristol Street,
The crowds upon the pavement
Were fields of harvest wheat.

And down by the remaining river
I heard a lovet sing
Under an arch of the railway,
'Love has no ending.'

'I'll love you, dear, I'll love you
Till China and Africa meet,
And the river jumps over the mountain
And the salmon sing in the street,

'I'll love you till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry
And the seven stars go squawking
Like geese about the sky.

The years shall run like rabbits,
For in my arms I hold
The Flower of the Ages,
And the first love of the world.'

But all the clocks in the city
Began to whirr and chime:
'O let not Time deceive you,
You cannot conquer Time.

'In the burrows of the Nightmare
Where Justice naked is,
Time watches from the shadow
And coughs when you would kiss.

'In headaches and in worry
Vaguely life leaks away,
And Time will have his fancy
To mottle or to-day.

'Into many a green valley
Drifts the appalling snow,
Time breaks the thread of lives,
And the diver a brilliant bow.

'O plunge your hands in water,
Plunge them in up to the wrist;
Stare, stare in the basin
And wonder what you've missed.

'The glacier knocks in the cupboard,
The desert sighs in the bed,
And the crack in the tea-cup opens
A lane to the land of the dead.

'Where the beggars raffle the banknotes
And the Giant is enchanting to Jack,
And the Lily-white Boy is a Rascal,
And Jill goes down on her back.

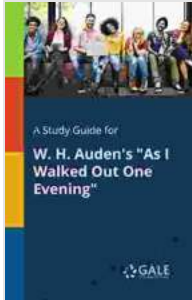
'O look, Jack, in the mirror,
O look in your distress,
Life remains a blessing
Although you cannot bless.

'O stand, stand at the window
As the tears scald and start;
You shall love your crooked neighbour
With your crooked heart.'

It was late, late in the evening
The lovers they were gone;
The clocks had ceased their chiming,
And the deep river ran on.

Embark on a literary adventure as we unravel the complexities of W.H. Auden's haunting poem, "As Walked Out One Evening." This

comprehensive study guide will illuminate the profound themes, evocative symbols, and intricate literary devices that make this poem a timeless masterpiece.



A Study Guide for W. H. Auden's "As I Walked Out One Evening" (Poetry for Students) by Amanda Deibert

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 547 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 18 pages
Screen Reader : Supported



Navigating the Labyrinth of Themes

- **Existential Loneliness:** Auden's wanderer embarks on a solitary journey, adrift in a vast and indifferent universe, grappling with the isolation of human existence.
- **The Search for Meaning:** The poem explores the human desire for purpose and fulfillment in a seemingly meaningless world, questioning the nature of life and our place within it.
- **The Fragility of Life:** The inevitability of death casts a shadow over the wanderer's journey, highlighting the fleeting nature of human existence and the importance of cherishing each moment.

Unveiling the Symbolic Landscape

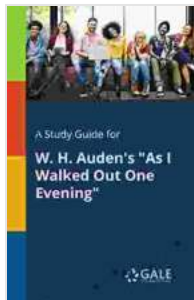
- **The Road:** The path the wanderer traverses symbolizes his journey through life, marked by both joys and sorrows, challenges and triumphs.
- **The Birds:** The flying birds represent the freedom and aspiration that the wanderer seeks, yet their elusive nature also reflects the unattainability of his dreams.
- **The House:** The abandoned house stands as a metaphor for the lost hopes and aspirations that litter the wanderer's path, evoking a sense of longing and regret.

Mastering the Literary Devices

- **Imagery:** Auden's vivid and evocative imagery transports us into the desolate landscape of the poem, creating a haunting and unforgettable atmosphere.
- **Metaphor:** The poem is rich in metaphors that extend beyond the literal meaning, inviting us to explore the deeper implications and connections between the wanderer's journey and our own.
- **Personification:** Auden breathes life into inanimate objects, allowing the road, the birds, and the house to become active participants in the wanderer's experience.

"As Walked Out One Evening" is a multifaceted and thought-provoking poem that continues to resonate with readers today. This study guide has provided a comprehensive overview of its themes, symbols, and literary devices, empowering you to delve deeper into the enigmatic world of W.H. Auden's masterpiece.

May this guide serve as your compass on this literary expedition, unlocking the hidden depths of "As Walked Out One Evening" and enriching your understanding of this seminal work of modern poetry.



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