


The image is a reproduction of the painting 'The Starry Night' by the Dutch Impressionist painter J.M.W. Turner. It depicts a night scene with a turbulent, swirling sky filled with stars and a bright, glowing moon. In the foreground, a dark, silhouetted cypress tree stands on the left. The middle ground shows a small town with a prominent church spire, and the background features rolling hills under the starry sky. The overall style is characterized by visible, expressive brushstrokes and a rich, vibrant color palette dominated by blues and yellows.

Conferences on the Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena

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*If the stars should appear one
night in a thousand years, how
would men believe and adore! ...*

*But every night come out these envoys
of beauty and light the universe with
their admonishing smile.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1836



Astronomy in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, (c. 1606)

- *These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us ... we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars (I, ii)*
- *It is the stars above that govern us (IV iii)*
- *Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world (III, ii)*

Riddles in King *Lear*

- *The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.*

Because they are not eight?

- *Yes, indeed. (I,v)*



Comets: good, bad?

