

WORDSWORTH

A COLLECTION

POEMS BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

ALFRED SCHNEIDER

BOOK DESIGNER • TYPESETTER

www.alfredschneider.co.uk

Copyright of the text has expired.

This reprint, curation, artwork, and design is copyright 2024 Alfred Schneider.

ISBN 979-88837-676-46 (Paperback)

CONTENTS

Poems

To the Daisy	3
Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey	7
I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud (Daffodils)	15
Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood	17
My Heart Leaps Up (The Rainbow)	27
Strange fits of Passion I Have Known	29
Resolution and Independence	31
Three years she grew in sun and shower	37
Lines Written in Early Spring	39
The Tables Turned	41
She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways	43

Sonnets

The World is Too Much With Us	47
Composed Upon Westminster Bridge	48
It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free	51

Lyrical Ballads

The Solitary Reaper	55
Lucy Gray	57
We Are Seven	61



POEMS





TO THE DAISY

1802

1 In youth from rock to rock I went
From hill to hill, in discontent
Of pleasure high and turbulent,
Most pleas'd when most uneasy;
But now my own delights I make,
My thirst at every rill can slake,
And gladly Nature's love partake
Of thee, sweet Daisy!
When soothed a while by milder airs,
10 Thee Winter in the garland wears
That thinly shades his few grey hairs;
Spring cannot shun thee;
Whole summer fields are thine by right;
And Autumn, melancholy Wight!
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.
In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
Thou greet'st the Traveller in the lane;
If welcome once thou count'st it gain;
20 Thou art not daunted,
Nor car'st if thou be set at naught;

And oft alone in nooks remote
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.
Be Violets in their secret mews
The flowers the wanton Zephyrs chuse;
Proud be the Rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling;
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
30 Yet hast not gone without thy fame;
Thou art indeed by many a claim
 The Poet's darling.
If to a rock from rains he fly,
Or, some bright day of April sky,
Imprison'd by hot sunshine lie
 Near the green holly,
And wearily at length should fare;
He need but look about, and there
Thou art! a Friend at hand, to scare
40 His melancholy.
A hundred times, by rock or bower,
Ere thus I have lain couch'd an hour,
Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension;
Some steady love; some brief delight;
Some memory that had taken flight;
Some chime of fancy wrong or right;
 Or stray invention.
If stately passions in me burn,
50 And one chance look to Thee should turn,
I drink out of an humbler urn

A lowlier pleasure;
The homely sympathy that heeds
The common life, our nature breeds;
A wisdom fitted to the needs
Of hearts at leisure.
When, smitten by the morning ray,
I see thee rise alert and gay,
Then, chearful Flower! my spirits play
60 With kindred motion:
At dusk, I've seldom mark'd thee press
The ground, as if in thankfulness,
Without some feeling, more or less,
Of true devotion.
And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt,
Which I wherever thou art met,
To thee am owing;
An instinct call it, a blind sense;
70 A happy, genial influence,
Coming one knows not how nor whence,
Nor whither going.
Child of the Year! that round dost run
Thy course, bold lover of the sun,
And chearful when the day's begun
As morning Leveret,
Thou long the Poet's praise shalt gain;
Thou wilt be more belov'd by men
In times to come; thou not in vain
80 Art Nature's Favorite.



LINES WRITTEN A
FEW MILES ABOVE
TINTERN ABBEY

JULY 13, 1798

1 Five years have passed; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
Which on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect

The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
10 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Among the woods and copses lose themselves,
Nor, with their green and simple hue, disturb
The wild green landscape. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms

Green to the very door; and wreathes of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees
20 With some uncertain notice, as might seem,
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.

Though absent long,
These forms of beauty have not been to me,

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet.
30 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,
And passing even into my purer mind
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,
As may have had no trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life;
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
40 In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lighten'd:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,

Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
50 While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft,
In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless day-light; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee
O sylvan Wye! Thou wanderer through the woods,
60 How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguish'd thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was, when first
70 I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides

Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led; more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by,
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint

80 What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite: a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
90 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur: other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompence. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,

100 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half-create,

110 And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse.
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor, perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me, here, upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,
120 My dear, dear Friend, and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! And this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray

The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
130 The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our chearful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
140 And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee: and in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place

For all sweet sounds and harmonies; Oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
150 And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance,
If I should be, where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long

A worshipper of Nature, hither came,
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love, oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
160 That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves, and for thy sake.



**I WANDERED LONELY
AS A CLOUD
(DAFFODILS)**

1804 (REVISED)

1 I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils:
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:—
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company;

I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

20

For oft, when on my couch I lie
 In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
 Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

ODE: INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

1802-1807

1 The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
10 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
20 But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath pass'd away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the Birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The Cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep,
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
30 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay,
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday,
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd Boy!

IV

40 Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath it's coronal,
The fullness of your bliss, I feel— I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While the Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are pulling,
50 On every side,
In a thousand vallies far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many one,
A single Field which I have look'd upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
60 Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere it's setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,

And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
70 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
80 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
90 A four year's Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his Mother's kisses,

With light upon him from his Father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shap'd by himself with newly-learned art;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;
 And this hath now his heart,
100 And unto this he frames his song:
 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part,
Filling from time to time his "humourous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her Equipage;
110 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest,
120 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,

Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
To whom the grave
Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
Of day or the warm light,
A place of thought where we in waiting lie;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of untam'd pleasures, on thy Being's height,
130 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The Years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
140 The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether fluttering or at rest,
With new-born hope forever in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings

Of sense and outward things,
150 Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realiz'd,
High instincts, before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surpriz'd:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
160 Uphold us, cherish us, and make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
170 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X

Then, sing ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!

We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
180 Ye that through your hearts today
Feel the gladness of the May!

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,
190 In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering,
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And oh ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquish'd one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
200 Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
210 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.



MY HEART LEAPS UP (THE RAINBOW)

1802

1 My heart leaps up when I behold
 A rainbow in the sky:
 So was it when my life began;
 So is it now I am a man;
 So be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die!
 The Child is father of the Man;
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.



STRANGE FITS OF PASSION I HAVE KNOWN

1799

1 Strange fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.

10 Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eye I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a Lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

1802

1 There was a roaring in the wind all night;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
The birds are singing in the distant woods;
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
10 The grass is bright with rain-drops;—on the moors
The Hare is running races in her mirth;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist; which, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor;
I saw the Hare that raced about with joy;
I heard the woods, and distant waters, roar;
Or heard them not, as happy as a Boy:
The pleasant season did my heart employ:
20 My old remembrances went from me wholly;
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no farther go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low,
To me that morning did it happen so;
And fears, and fancies, thick upon me came;
Dim sadness, and blind thoughts I knew not
nor could name.

I heard the Sky-lark singing in the sky;
30 And I bethought me of the playful Hare:
Even such a happy Child of earth am I;
Even as these blissful Creatures do I fare;
Far from the world I walk, and from all care;
But there may come another day to me—
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood;
As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith, still rich in genial good;
40 But how can He expect that others should
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride;
Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
Behind his plough, upon the mountain-side:
By our own spirits are we deified;
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness.

50 Now whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something given,
Yet it befel, that, in this lonely place,
When up and down my fancy thus was driven,
And I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
I saw a Man before me unawares:
The oldest Man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

My course I stopped as soon as I espied
The Old Man in that naked wilderness:
Close by a Pond, upon the further side,
60 He stood alone: a minute's space I guess
I watched him, he continuing motionless:
To the Pool's further margin then I drew;
He being all the while before me full in view.

As a huge Stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence;
Wonder to all who do the same espy
By what means it could thither come, and whence;
So that it seems a thing endued with sense:
Like a Sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf
70 Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun itself.

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,
Nor all asleep; in his extreme old age:
His body was bent double, feet and head
Coming together in their pilgrimage;
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

Himself he propped, his body, limbs, and face,
Upon a long grey Staff of shaven wood:
80 And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Beside the little pond or moorish flood
Motionless as a Cloud the Old Man stood;
That heareth not the loud winds when they call;
And moveth altogether, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the Pond
Stirred with his Staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he conn'd,
As if he had been reading in a book:
And now such freedom as I could I took;
90 And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
“This morning gives us promise of a glorious day.”

A gentle answer did the Old Man make,
In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew:
And him with further words I thus bespake,
“What kind of work is that which you pursue?
This is a lonesome place for one like you.”
He answered me with pleasure and surprise;
And there was, while he spake, a fire about his eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
100 Yet each in solemn order followed each,
With something of a lofty utterance drest;
Choice word, and measured phrase; above the reach
Of ordinary men; a stately speech;
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and Man their dues.

He told me that he to this pond had come
To gather Leeches, being old and poor:
Employment hazardous and wearisome!
And he had many hardships to endure:
110 From Pond to Pond he roamed, from moor to moor;
Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance:
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The Old Man still stood talking by my side;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;
And the whole Body of the man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
Or like a Man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength, and strong admonishment.

120 My former thoughts returned: the fear that kills;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
But now, perplex'd by what the Old Man had said,
My question eagerly did I renew,
"How is it that you live, and what is it you do?"

He with a smile did then his words repeat;
And said, that, gathering Leeches, far and wide
He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
130 The waters of the Ponds where they abide.
“Once I could meet with them on every side;
But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.”

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The Old Man’s shape, and speech, all troubled me:
In my mind’s eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently.
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
140 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,
But stately in the main; and, when he ended,
I could have laughed myself to scorn, to find
In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
“God,” said I, “be my help and stay secure;
I’ll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor.”

THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND SHOWER

1799

1 Three years she grew in sun and shower,
 Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
 On earth was never sown;
 This Child I to myself will take,
 She shall be mine, and I will make
 A Lady of my own.

 Myself will to my darling be
 Both law and impulse, and with me
 The Girl in rock and plain,
10 In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
 Shall feel an overseeing power
 To kindle or restrain.

 She shall be sportive as the fawn
 That wild with glee across the lawn
 Or up the mountain springs,
 And hers shall be the breathing balm,
 And hers the silence and the calm
 Of mute insensate things.

20 The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her, for her the willow bend,
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
A beauty that shall mould her form
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her, and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
30 Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell,
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died and left to me
40 This heath, this calm and quiet scene,
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

1798

1 I heard a thousand blended notes.
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it griev'd my heart to think
What man has made of man.

10 Through primrose-tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trail'd its wreathes;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd;
Their thoughts I cannot measure,
But the least motion which they made,
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If I these thoughts may not prevent,
If such be of my creed the plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

THE TABLES TURNED

1798

1 Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks,
 Why all this toil and trouble?
 Up! up! my friend, and quit your books,
 Or surely you'll grow double.

 The sun, above the mountain's head,
 A freshening lustre mellow
 Through all the long green fields has spread,
 His first sweet evening yellow.

10 Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife,
 Come, here the woodland linnet,
 How sweet his music; on my life
 There's more of wisdom in it.

 And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
 And he is no mean preacher;
 Come forth into the light of things,
 Let Nature be your teacher.

20

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man;
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mishapes the beauteous forms of things;
—We murder to dissect.

30

Enough of science and of art;
Close up these barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

1799

1 She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A Violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

10 She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her Grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!



SONNETS





THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

1802

1 The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours.
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea, that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers—
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
10 A pagan, suckled in a creed outworn,
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus, rising from the sea,
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

1 Earth has not any thing to shew more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
10 In his first splendor valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

LONDON, 1802

1802

1 Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star and dwelt apart:
10 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea;
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on itself did lay.



IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE

C. 1807

- 1 It is a beauteous Evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
10 If thou appear'st untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest “in Abraham’s bosom” all the year;
And worshipp’st at the Temple’s inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.



LYRICAL BALLADS





THE SOLITARY REAPER

1805

1 Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts, and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

10 No Nightingale did ever chaunt
So sweetly to reposing bands
Of Travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian Sands:
No sweeter voice was ever heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,

20

And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

30

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened till I had my fill:
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

LUCY GRAY

1799

1 Oft had I heard of Lucy Gray,
 And when I cross'd the Wild,
 I chanc'd to see at break of day
 The solitary Child.

 No Mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
 She dwelt on a wide Moor,
 The sweetest Thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door!

10 You yet may spy the Fawn at play,
 The Hare upon the Green;
 But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
 Will never more be seen.

 “To-night will be a stormy night,
 You to the Town must go,
 And take a lantern, Child, to light
 Your Mother thro' the snow.”

20 “That, Father! will I gladly do;
 ‘Tis scarcely afternoon—
 The Minster-clock has just struck two,
 And yonder is the Moon.”

 At this the Father rais’d his hook
 And snapp’d a faggot-band;
 He plied his work, and Lucy took
 The lantern in her hand.

 Not blither is the mountain roe,
 With many a wanton stroke
 Her feet disperse the powd’ry snow
 That rises up like smoke.

30 The storm came on before its time,
 She wander’d up and down,
 And many a hill did Lucy climb
 But never reach’d the Town.

 The wretched Parents all that night
 Went shouting far and wide;
 But there was neither sound nor sight
 To serve them for a guide.

40 At day-break on a hill they stood
 That overlook’d the Moor;
 And thence they saw the Bridge of Wood
 A furlong from their door.

And now they homeward turn'd, and cry'd
"In Heaven we all shall meet!
When in the snow the Mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downward from the steep hill's edge
They track'd the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
And by the long stone-wall;

50 And then an open field they cross'd,
The marks were still the same;
They track'd them on, nor ever lost,
And to the Bridge they came.

They follow'd from the snowy bank
The footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank,
And further there were none.

60 Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living Child,
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome Wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.



WE ARE SEVEN

1798

1 A simple child, dear brother Jim,
 That lightly draws its breath,
 And feels its life in every limb,
 What should it know of death?

 I met a little cottage girl,
 She was eight years old, she said;
 Her hair was thick with many a curl
 That cluster'd round her head.

10 She had a rustic, woodland air,
 And she was wildly clad;
 Her eyes were fair, and very fair,
 —Her beauty made me glad.

 “Sisters and brothers, little maid,
 “How many may you be?”
 “How many? seven in all,” she said,
 And wondering looked at me.

20 “And where are they, I pray you tell?”
She answered, “Seven are we,
“And two of us at Conway dwell,
“And two are gone to sea.

“Two of us in the church-yard lie,
“My sister and my brother,
“And in the church-yard cottage, I
“Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,
“And two are gone to sea,
“Yet you are seven; I pray you tell
“Sweet Maid, how this may be?”

30 Then did the little Maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we;
“Two of us in the church-yard lie,
“Beneath the church-yard tree.”

“You run about, my little maid,
“Your limbs they are alive;
“If two are in the church-yard laid,
“Then ye are only five.”

40 “Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little Maid replied,
“Twelve steps or more from my mothers door,
“And they are side by side.

“My stockings there I often knit,
“My ‘kerchief there I hem;
“And there upon the ground I sit—
“I sit and sing to them.

“And often after sunset, Sir,
“When it is light and fair,
“I take my little porringer,
“And eat my supper there.

50

“The first that died was little Jane;
“In bed she moaning lay,
“Till God released her of her pain,
“And then she went away.

“So in the church-yard she was laid,
“And all the summer dry,
“Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

60

“And when the ground was white with snow,
“And I could run and slide,
“My brother John was forced to go,
“And he lies by her side.”

“How many are you then,” said I,
“If they two are in Heaven?”
The little Maiden did reply,
“O Master! we are seven.”

“But they are dead; those two are dead!
“Their spirits are in heaven!”
‘Twas throwing words away; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, “Nay, we are seven!”