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# *Lyrical Ballads*

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**by William Wordsworth &  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

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# ADVERTISEMENT

IT is the honourable characteristic of Poetry that its materials are to be found in every subject which can interest the human mind. The evidence of this fact is to be sought, not in the writings of Critics, but in those of Poets themselves.

The majority of the following poems are to be considered as experiments. They were written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure. Readers accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will perhaps frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to enquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. It is desirable that such readers, for their own sakes, should not suffer the solitary word Poetry, a word of very disputed meaning, to stand in the way of their gratification; but that, while they are perusing this book, they should ask themselves if it contains a natural delineation of human passions, human characters, and human incidents; and if the answer be favourable to the author's wishes, that they should consent to be pleased in spite of that most dreadful enemy to our pleasures, our own pre-established codes of decision.

Readers of superior judgment may disapprove of the

style in which many of these pieces are executed it must be expected that many lines and phrases will not exactly suit their taste. It will perhaps appear to them, that wishing to avoid the prevalent fault of the day, the author

has sometimes descended too low, and that many of his expressions are too familiar, and not of sufficient dignity. It is apprehended, that the more conversant the reader is with our elder writers, and with those in modern times who have been the most successful in painting manners and passions, the fewer complaints of this kind will he have to make.

An accurate taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an acquired talent, which can only be produced by severe thought, and a long continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced reader from judging for himself; but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest that if poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous, and that in many cases it necessarily will be so.

The tale of Goody Blake and Harry Gill is founded on a well-authenticated fact which happened in Warwickshire. Of the other poems in the collection, it may be proper to say that they are either absolute inventions of the author, or facts which took place within his personal observation or that of his friends. The poem of the Thorn, as the reader will soon discover, is not supposed to be spoken in the author's own person: the character of the loquacious narrator will sufficiently shew itself in the course of the story. The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere was professedly written in imitation of the *style*, as well as of the spirit of the elder poets; but with a few exceptions, the Author believes that the language adopted in it has been equally intelligible for these three last centuries. The lines entitled Expostulation and Reply, and those which follow, arose out of conversation with a friend who was somewhat unreasonably attached to modern books of moral philosophy.

# THE RIME OF THE ANCYENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN PARTS

## ARGUMENT

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by Storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

### I.

It is an ancyent Marinere,  
And he stoppeth one of three:  
"By thy long grey beard and thy glittering eye  
"Now wherefore stoppest me?  
"The Bridegroom's doors are open'd wide  
"And I am next of kin;  
"The Guests are met, the Feast is set,—

THE RIME OF THE ANCYENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN  
PARTS

---

"May'st hear the merry din.—  
But still he holds the wedding-  
guest—  
There was a Ship, quoth he—  
"Nay, if thou'st got a laughsome  
tale,  
"Marinere! come with me."  
He holds him with his skinny hand,  
Quoth he, there was a Ship—  
"Now get thee hence, thou grey-  
beard Loon!  
"Or my Staff shall make thee skip."  
He holds him with his glittering  
eye—  
The wedding guest stood still  
And listens like a three year's child;  
The Marinere hath his will.  
The wedding-guest sate on a stone,  
He cannot chuse but hear:  
And thus spake on that ancyent  
man,  
The bright-eyed Marinere.  
The Ship was cheer'd, the Harbour  
clear'd—  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the Kirk, below the Hill,  
Below the Light-house top.  
The Sun came up upon the left,  
Out of the Sea came he:  
And he shone bright, and on the  
right  
Went down into the Sea.  
Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon—  
The wedding-guest here beat his  
breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon.

THE RIME OF THE ANCYENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN  
PARTS

---

The Bride hath pac'd into the Hall,  
Red as a rose is she;  
Nodding their heads before her  
goes  
The merry Minstralsy.  
The wedding-guest he beat his  
breast,  
Yet he cannot chuse but hear:  
And thus spake on that ancyent  
Man,  
The bright-eyed Marinere.  
Listen, Stranger! Storm and Wind,  
A Wind and Tempest strong!  
For days and weeks it play'd us  
freaks—  
Like Chaff we drove along.  
Listen, Stranger! Mist and Snow,  
And it grew wond'rous cauld:  
And Ice mast-high came floating by  
As green as Emerald.  
And thro' the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen;  
Ne shapes of men ne beasts we ken—  
The Ice was all between.  
The Ice was here, the Ice was there,  
The Ice was all around:  
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd  
and howl'd—  
Like noises of a swound.  
At length did cross an Albatross,  
Thorough the Fog it came;  
And an it were a Christian Soul,  
We hail'd it in God's name.  
The Mariners gave it biscuit-  
worms,  
And round and round it flew:  
The Ice did split with a Thunder-fit;

THE RIME OF THE ANCYENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN  
PARTS

---

The Helmsman steer'd us thro'.  
And a good south wind sprung up  
  behind,  
The Albatross did follow;  
And every day for food or play  
Came to the Marinere's hollo!  
In mist or cloud on mast or shroud  
It perch'd for vespers nine,  
Whiles all the night thro' fog-smoke  
  white  
Glimmer'd the white moon-shine.  
"God save thee, ancyent Marinere!  
"From the fiends that plague thee  
  thus—  
"Why look'st thou so?"—with my  
  cross bow  
I shot the Albatross.

II.

The Sun came up upon the right,  
  Out of the Sea came he;  
And broad as a weft upon the left  
  Went down into the Sea.  
And the good south wind still blew  
  behind,  
But no sweet Bird did follow  
Ne any day for food or play  
Came to the Marinere's hollo!  
And I had done an hellish thing  
  And it would work 'em woe:  
For all averr'd, I had kill'd the Bird  
  That made the Breeze to blow.  
Ne dim ne red, like God's own  
  head,  
The glorious Sun uprist:  
Then all averr'd, I had kill'd the  
  Bird

THE RIME OF THE ANCYENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN  
PARTS

---

That brought the fog and mist.  
'Twas right, said they, such birds to  
slay  
That bring the fog and mist.  
The breezes blew, the white foam  
flew,  
The furrow follow'd free:  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent Sea.  
Down dropt the breeze, the Sails  
dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the Sea.  
All in a hot and copper sky  
The bloody sun at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the moon.  
Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, ne breath ne motion,  
As idle as a painted Ship  
Upon a painted Ocean.  
Water, water, every where  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, every where,  
Ne any drop to drink.  
The very deeps did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with  
legs  
Upon the slimy Sea.  
About, about, in reel and rout  
The Death-fires danc'd at night;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green and blue and white.  
And some in dreams assured were

Of the Spirit that plagued us so:  
Nine fathom deep he had follow'd  
us  
From the Land of Mist and Snow.  
And every tongue thro' utter drouth  
Was wither'd at the root;  
We could not speak no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.  
Ah wel-a-day! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young;  
Instead of the Cross the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.

III.

I saw a something in the Sky  
No bigger than my fist;  
At first it seem'd a little speck  
And then it seem'd a mist:  
It mov'd and mov'd, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.  
A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!  
And still it ner'd and ner'd;  
And, an it dodg'd a water-sprite,  
It plung'd and tack'd and veer'd.  
With throat unslack'd, with black  
lips bak'd  
Ne could we laugh, ne wail:  
Then while thro' drouth all dumb  
they stood  
I bit my arm and suck'd the blood  
And cry'd, A sail! a sail!  
With throat unslack'd, with black  
lips bak'd  
Agape they hear'd me call:  
Gramercy! they for joy did grin  
And all at once their breath drew in  
As they were drinking all.

She doth not tack from side to side—  
Hither to work us weal  
Withouten wind, withouten tide  
She steddies with upright keel.  
The western wave was all a flame,  
The day was well nigh done!  
Almost upon the western wave  
Rested the broad bright Sun;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the Sun.  
And strait the Sun was fleck'd with  
bars  
(Heaven's mother send us grace)  
As if thro' a dungeon grate he  
peer'd  
With broad and burning face.  
Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat  
loud)  
How fast she neres and neres!  
Are those *her* Sails that glance in the  
Sun  
Like restless gossameres?  
Are these *her* naked ribs, which  
fleck'd  
The sun that did behind them peer?  
And are these two all, all the crew,  
That woman and her fleshless  
Pheere?  
*His* bones were black with many a  
crack,  
All black and bare, I ween;  
Jet-black and bare, save where with  
rust  
Of mouldy damp and charnel crust  
They're patch'd with purple and  
green.

*Her* lips are red, *her* looks are free,  
*Her* locks are yellow as gold:  
Her skin is as white as leprosy,  
And she is far liker Death than he;  
Her flesh makes the still air cold.  
The naked Hulk alongside came  
And the Twain were playing dice;  
"The Game is done! I've won, I've  
won!"  
Quoth she, and whistled thrice.  
A gust of wind sterte up behind  
And whistled thro' his bones;  
Thro' the holes of his eyes and the  
hole of his mouth  
Half-whistles and half-groans.  
With never a whisper in the Sea  
Off darts the Spectre-ship;  
While clombe above the Eastern bar  
The horned Moon, with one bright  
Star  
Almost atween the tips.  
One after one by the horned Moon  
(Listen, O Stranger! to me)  
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly  
pang  
And curs'd me with his ee.  
Four times fifty living men,  
With never a sigh or groan,  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump  
They dropp'd down one by one.  
Their souls did from their bodies  
fly,—  
They fled to bliss or woe;  
And every soul it pass'd me by,  
Like the whiz of my Cross-bow.

IV.

THE RIME OF THE ANCYENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN  
PARTS

---

"I fear thee, ancyent Marinere!  
"I fear thy skinny hand;  
"And thou art long and lank and  
brown  
"As is the ribb'd Sea-sand.

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye  
"And thy skinny hand so brown"—  
Fear not, fear not, thou wedding  
guest!  
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all all alone  
Alone on the wide wide Sea;  
And Christ would take no pity on  
My soul in agony.

The many men so beautiful,  
And they all dead did lie!  
And a million million slimy things  
Liv'd on—and so did I.

I look'd upon the rotting Sea,  
And drew my eyes away;  
I look'd upon the eldritch deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

I look'd to Heaven, and try'd to  
pray;  
But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
A wicked whisper came and made  
My heart as dry as dust.

I clos'd my lids and kept them close,  
Till the balls like pulses beat;  
For the sky and the sea, and the sea  
and the sky  
Lay like a load on my weary eye,  
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their  
limbs,  
Ne rot, ne reek did they;

THE RIME OF THE ANCYENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN  
PARTS

---

The look with which they look'd on  
me,  
Had never pass'd away.  
An orphan's curse would drag to  
Hell  
A spirit from on high:  
But O! more horrible than that  
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!  
Seven days, seven nights I saw that  
curse  
And yet I could not die.  
The moving Moon went up the sky  
And no where did abide:  
Softly she was going up  
And a star or two beside—  
Her beams bemock'd the sultry  
main  
Like morning frosts yspread;  
But where the ship's huge shadow  
lay,  
The charmed water burnt alway  
A still and awful red.  
Beyond the shadow of the ship  
I watch'd the water-snakes:  
They mov'd in tracks of shining  
white;  
And when they rear'd, the elfish  
light  
Fell off in hoary flakes.  
Within the shadow of the ship  
I watch'd their rich attire:  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black  
They coil'd and swam; and every  
track  
Was a flash of golden fire.  
O happy living things! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare:

A spring of love gusht from my  
heart,  
And I bless'd them unaware!  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I bless'd them unaware.  
The self-same moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea.

V.

O sleep, it is a gentle thing  
Belov'd from pole to pole!  
To Mary-queen the praise be yeven  
She sent the gentle sleep from  
heaven  
That slid into my soul.  
The silly buckets on the deck  
That had so long remain'd,  
I dreamt that they were fill'd with  
dew  
And when I awoke it rain'd.  
My lips were wet, my throat was  
cold,  
My garments all were dank;  
Sure I had drunken in my dreams  
And still my body drank.  
I mov'd and could not feel my  
limbs,  
I was so light, almost  
I thought that I had died in sleep,  
And was a blessed Ghost.  
The roaring wind! it roar'd far off,  
It did not come anear;  
But with its sound it shook the sails  
That were so thin and sere.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINERE, IN SEVEN  
PARTS

---

The upper air bursts into life,  
And a hundred fire-flags sheen  
To and fro they are hurried about;  
And to and fro, and in and out  
The stars dance on between.  
The coming wind doth roar more  
loud;  
The sails do sigh, like sedge:  
The rain pours down from one  
black cloud  
And the Moon is at its edge.  
Hark! hark! the thick black cloud is  
cleft,  
And the Moon is at its side:  
Like waters shot from some high  
crag,  
The lightning falls with never a jag  
A river steep and wide.  
The strong wind reach'd the ship: it  
roar'd  
And dropp'd down, like a stone!  
Beneath the lightning and the moon  
The dead men gave a groan.  
They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all  
uprose,  
Ne spake, ne mov'd their eyes:  
It had been strange, even in a dream  
To have seen those dead men rise.  
The helmsman steer'd, the ship  
mov'd on;  
Yet never a breeze up-blew;  
The Mariners all 'gan work the  
ropes,  
Where they were wont to do:  
They rais'd their limbs like lifeless  
tools—  
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son  
Stood by me knee to knee:  
The body and I pull'd at one rope,  
But he said nought to me—  
And I quak'd to think of my own  
voice  
How frightful it would be!  
The day-light dawn'd—they dropp'd  
their arms,  
And cluster'd round the mast:  
Sweet sounds rose slowly thro' their  
mouths  
And from their bodies pass'd.  
Around, around, flew each sweet  
sound,  
Then darted to the sun:  
Slowly the sounds came back again  
Now mix'd, now one by one.  
Sometimes a dropping from the sky  
I heard the Lavrock sing;  
Sometimes all little birds that are  
How they seem'd to fill the sea and  
air  
With their sweet jargoning,  
And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute;  
And now it is an angel's song  
That makes the heavens be mute.  
It ceas'd: yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.  
Listen, O listen, thou Wedding-  
guest!  
"Marinere! thou hast thy will:

"For that, which comes out of thine  
eye, doth make  
"My body and soul to be still."  
Never sadder tale was told  
To a man of woman born:  
Sadder and wiser thou wedding-  
guest!  
Thou'lt rise to morrow morn.  
Never sadder tale was heard  
By a man of woman born:  
The Mariners all return'd to work  
As silent as before.  
The Mariners all 'gan pull the  
ropes,  
But look at me they n'old:  
Thought I, I am as thin as air-  
They cannot me behold.  
Till moon we silently sail'd on  
Yet never a breeze did breathe:  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship  
Mov'd onward from beneath.  
Under the keel nine fathom deep  
From the land of mist and snow  
The spirit slid: and it was He  
That made the Ship to go.  
The sails at noon left off their tune  
And the Ship stood still also.  
The sun right up above the mast  
Had fix'd her to the ocean:  
But in a minute she 'gan stir  
With a short uneasy motion-  
Backwards and forwards half her  
length  
With a short uneasy motion.  
Then, like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound:  
It flung the blood into my head,

And I fell into a swoond.  
How long in that same fit I lay,  
I have not to declare;  
But ere my living life return'd,  
I heard and in my soul discern'd  
Two voices in the air,  
"Is it he?" quoth one, "Is this the  
man?  
"By him who died on cross,  
"With his cruel bow he lay'd full low  
"The harmless Albatross.  
"The spirit who 'bideth by himself  
"In the land of mist and snow,  
"He lov'd the bird that lov'd the  
man  
"Who shot him with his bow."  
The other was a softer voice,  
As soft as honey-dew:  
Quoth he the man hath penance  
done,  
And penance more will do.

VI.

FIRST VOICE.

"But tell me, tell me! speak again,  
"Thy soft response renewing—  
"What makes that ship drive on so  
fast?  
"What is the Ocean doing?"

SECOND VOICE.

"Still as a Slave before his Lord,  
"The Ocean hath no blast:  
"His great bright eye most silently  
"Up to the moon is cast—  
"If he may know which way to go,  
"For she guides him smooth or  
grim.

"See, brother, see! how graciously  
"She looketh down on him."

FIRST VOICE.

"But why drives on that ship so fast  
"Withouten wave or wind?"

SECOND VOICE.

"The air is cut away before,  
"And closes from behind.

"Fly, brother, fly! more high, more  
high,

"Or we shall be belated:

"For slow and slow that ship will go,  
"When the Marinere's trance is  
abated."

I woke, and we were sailing on  
As in a gentle weather:

'Twas night, calm night, the moon  
was high;

The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:

All fix'd on me their stony eyes  
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which  
they died,

Had never pass'd away:

I could not draw my een from theirs  
Ne turn them up to pray.

And in its time the spell was snapt,  
And I could move my een:

I look'd far-forth, but little saw  
Of what might else be seen.

Like one, that on a lonely road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,

And having once turn'd round,  
walks on

And turns no more his head:

Because he knows, a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.  
But soon there breath'd a wind on  
me,  
Ne sound ne motion made:  
Its path was not upon the sea  
In ripple or in shade.  
It rais'd my hair, it fann'd my cheek,  
Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.  
Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
Yet she sail'd softly too:  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
On me alone it blew.  
O dream of joy! is this indeed  
The light-house top I see?  
Is this the Hill? Is this the Kirk?  
Is this mine own countree?  
We drifted o'er the Harbour-bar,  
And I with sobs did pray—  
"O let me be awake, my God!  
"Or let me sleep away!"  
The harbour-bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly it was strewn!  
And on the bay the moon light lay,  
And the shadow of the moon.  
The moonlight bay was white all  
o'er,  
Till rising from the same,  
Full many shapes, that shadows  
were,  
Like as of torches came.  
A little distance from the prow  
Those dark-red shadows were;  
But soon I saw that my own flesh

Was red as in a glare.  
I turn'd my head in fear and dread,  
And by the holy rood,  
The bodies had advanc'd, and now  
Before the mast they stood.  
They lifted up their stiff right arms,  
They held them strait and tight;  
And each right-arm burnt like a  
torch,  
A torch that's borne upright.  
Their stony eye-balls glitter'd on  
In the red and smoky light.  
I pray'd and turn'd my head away  
Forth looking as before.  
There was no breeze upon the bay,  
No wave against the shore.  
The rock shone bright, the kirk no  
less  
That stands above the rock:  
The moonlight steep'd in silentness  
The steady weathercock.  
And the bay was white with silent  
light,  
Till rising from the same  
Full many shapes, that shadows  
were,  
In crimson colours came.  
A little distance from the prow  
Those crimson shadows were:  
I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—  
O Christ! what saw I there?  
Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat;  
And by the Holy rood  
A man all light, a seraph-man,  
On every corse there stood.  
This seraph-band, each wav'd his  
hand:

It was a heavenly sight:  
They stood as signals to the land,  
Each one a lovely light:  
This seraph-band, each wav'd his  
hand,  
No voice did they impart—  
No voice; but O! the silence sank,  
Like music on my heart.  
Eftsones I heard the dash of oars,  
I heard the pilot's cheer:  
My head was turn'd perforce away  
And I saw a boat appear.  
Then vanish'd all the lovely lights;  
The bodies rose anew:  
With silent pace, each to his place,  
Came back the ghastly crew.  
The wind, that shade nor motion  
made,  
On me alone it blew.  
The pilot, and the pilot's boy  
I heard them coming fast:  
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy,  
The dead men could not blast.  
I saw a third—I heard his voice:  
It is the Hermit good!  
He singeth loud his godly hymns  
That he makes in the wood.  
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash  
away  
The Albatross's blood.

VII.

This Hermit good lives in that wood  
Which slopes down to the Sea.  
How loudly his sweet voice he  
rears!  
He loves to talk with Mariners

That come from a far Contrée.  
He kneels at morn and noon and  
eve—  
He hath a cushion plump:  
It is the moss, that wholly hides  
The rotted old Oak-stump.  
The Skiff-boat ne'rd: I heard them  
talk,  
"Why, this is strange, I trow!  
"Where are those lights so many  
and fair  
"That signal made but now?  
"Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit  
said—  
"And they answer'd not our cheer.  
"The planks look warp'd, and see  
those sails  
"How thin they are and sere!  
"I never saw aught like to them  
"Unless perchance it were  
"The skeletons of leaves that lag  
"My forest brook along:  
"When the Ivy-tod is heavy with  
snow,  
"And the Owlet whoops to the wolf  
below  
"That eats the she-wolf's young.  
"Dear Lord! it has a fiendish look"—  
(The Pilot made reply)  
"I am a-fear'd.—"Push on, push on!"  
Said the Hermit cheerily.  
The Boat came closer to the Ship,  
But I ne spake ne stirr'd!  
The Boat came close beneath the  
Ship,  
And strait a sound was heard!  
Under the water it rumbled on,

Still louder and more dread:  
It reach'd the Ship, it split the bay;  
The Ship went down like lead.  
Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful  
sound,  
Which sky and ocean smote:  
Like one that hath been seven days  
drown'd  
My body lay afloat:  
But, swift as dreams, myself I found  
Within the Pilot's boat.  
Upon the whirl, where sank the  
Ship,  
The boat spun round and round:  
And all was still, save that the hill  
Was telling of the sound.  
I mov'd my lips: the Pilot shriek'd  
And fell down in a fit.  
The Holy Hermit rais'd his eyes  
And pray'd where he did sit.  
I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,  
Who now doth crazy go,  
Laugh'd loud and long, and all the  
while  
His eyes went to and fro,  
"Ha! ha!" quoth he—"full plain I see,  
"The devil knows how to row."  
And now all in mine own Countrée  
I stood on the firm land!  
The Hermit stepp'd forth from the  
boat,  
And scarcely he could stand.  
"O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy  
Man!"  
The Hermit cross'd his brow—  
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee  
say

"What manner man art thou?"  
Forthwith this frame of mine was  
wrench'd  
With a woeful agony,  
Which forc'd me to begin my tale  
And then it left me free.  
Since then at an uncertain hour,  
Now oftimes and now fewer,  
That anguish comes and makes me  
tell  
My ghastly aventure.  
I pass, like night, from land to land;  
I have strange power of speech;  
The moment that his face I see  
I know the man that must hear me;  
To him my tale I teach.  
What loud uproar bursts from that  
door!  
The Wedding-guests are there;  
But in the Garden-bower the Bride  
And Bride-maids singing are:  
And hark the little Vesper-bell  
Which biddeth me to prayer.  
O Wedding-guest! this soul hath  
been  
Alone on a wide wide sea:  
So lonely 'twas, that God himself  
Scarce seemed there to be.  
O sweeter than the Marriage-feast,  
'Tis sweeter far to me  
To walk together to the Kirk  
With a goodly company.  
To walk together to the Kirk  
And all together pray,  
While each to his great father bends,  
Old men, and babes, and loving  
friends,

And Youths, and Maidens gay.  
Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
To thee, thou wedding-guest!  
He prayeth well who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.  
He prayeth best who loveth best,  
All things both great and small:  
For the dear God, who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.  
The Marinere, whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone; and now the wedding-  
guest  
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.  
He went, like one that hath been  
stunn'd  
And is of sense forlorn:  
A sadder and a wiser man  
He rose the morrow morn.

# THE FOSTER-MOTHER'S TALE,

## A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT

FOSTER-MOTHER.

I never saw the man whom you describe.

MARIA.

'Tis strange! he spake of you familiarly

As mine and Albert's common Foster-mother.

FOSTER-MOTHER.

Now blessings on the man, whoe'er he be,

That joined your names with mine!

O my sweet lady,

As often as I think of those dear times

When you two little ones would stand at eve

On each side of my chair, and make me learn

All you had learnt in the day; and how to talk

In gentle phrase, then bid me sing  
to you—  
'Tis more like heaven to come than  
what *has* been.

MARIA.

O my dear Mother! this strange  
man has left me  
Troubled with wilder fancies, than  
the moon  
Breeds in the love-sick maid who  
gazes at it,  
Till lost in inward vision, with wet  
eye  
She gazes idly!—But that entrance,  
Mother!

FOSTER-MOTHER.

Can no one hear? It is a perilous  
tale!

MARIA.

No one.

FOSTER-MOTHER

My husband's father told it me,  
Poor old Leoni!—Angels rest his  
soul!  
He was a woodman, and could fell  
and saw  
With lusty arm. You know that  
huge round beam  
Which props the hanging wall of  
the old chapel?  
Beneath that tree, while yet it was a  
tree  
He found a baby wrapt in mosses,  
lined  
With thistle-beards, and such small  
locks of wool  
As hang on brambles. Well, he

brought him home,  
And reared him at the then Lord  
Velez' cost.  
And so the babe grew up a pretty  
boy,  
A pretty boy, but most unteachable—  
And never learnt a prayer, nor told  
a bead,  
But knew the names of birds, and  
mocked their notes,  
And whistled, as he were a bird  
himself:  
And all the autumn 'twas his only  
play  
To get the seeds of wild flowers, and  
to plant them  
With earth and water, on the stumps  
of trees.  
A Friar, who gathered simples in the  
wood,  
A grey-haired man—he loved this lit-  
tle boy,  
The boy loved him—and, when the  
Friar taught him,  
He soon could write with the pen:  
and from that time,  
Lived chiefly at the Convent or the  
Castle.  
So he became a very learned youth.  
But Oh! poor wretch!—he read, and  
read, and read,  
'Till his brain turned—and ere his  
twentieth year,  
He had unlawful thoughts of many  
things:  
And though he prayed, he never  
loved to pray

With holy men, nor in a holy place—  
But yet his speech, it was so soft and  
sweet,  
The late Lord Velez ne'er was wearied with him.  
And once, as by the north side of the  
Chapel  
They stood together, chained in  
deep discourse,  
The earth heaved under them with  
such a groan,  
That the wall tottered, and had  
well-nigh fallen  
Right on their heads. My Lord was  
sorely frightened;  
A fever seized him, and he made  
confession  
Of all the heretical and lawless talk  
Which brought this judgment: so  
the youth was seized  
And cast into that hole. My husband's father  
Sobbed like a child—it almost broke  
his heart:  
And once as he was working in the  
cellar,  
He heard a voice distinctly; 'twas  
the youth's,  
Who sung a doleful song about  
green fields,  
How sweet it were on lake or wild  
savannah,  
To hunt for food, and be a naked  
man,  
And wander up and down at liberty.  
He always doted on the youth, and

now  
His love grew desperate; and defy-  
ing death,  
He made that cunning entrance I  
described:  
And the young man escaped.

MARIA.

'Tis a sweet tale:  
Such as would lull a listening child  
to sleep,  
His rosy face besoiled with un-  
wiped tears.—  
And what became of him?

FOSTER-MOTHER.

He went on ship-board  
With those bold voyagers, who  
made discovery  
Of golden lands. Leoni's younger  
brother  
Went likewise, and when he re-  
turned to Spain,  
He told Leoni, that the poor mad  
youth,  
Soon after they arrived in that new  
world,  
In spite of his dissuasion, seized a  
boat,  
And all alone, set sail by silent  
moonlight  
Up a great river, great as any sea,  
And ne'er was heard of more: but  
'tis supposed,  
He lived and died among the sav-  
age men.

# LINES LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE

WHICH STANDS NEAR THE LAKE OF ESTHWAITE,  
ON A DESOLATE PART OF THE SHORE, YET  
COMMANDING A BEAUTIFUL PROSPECT

-Nay, Traveller! rest. This lonely  
yew-tree stands  
Far from all human dwelling: what  
if here  
No sparkling rivulet spread the ver-  
dant herb;  
What if these barren boughs the bee  
not loves;  
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the  
curling waves,  
That break against the shore, shall  
lull thy mind  
By one soft impulse saved from va-  
cancy.

-Who he was  
That piled these stones, and with  
the mossy sod  
First covered o'er, and taught this  
aged tree,

Now wild, to bend its arms in cir-  
 cling shade,  
 I well remember.—He was one who  
 own'd  
 No common soul. In youth, by ge-  
 nius nurs'd,  
 And big with lofty views, he to the  
 world  
 Went forth, pure in his heart,  
 against the taint  
 Of dissolute tongues, 'gainst jeal-  
 ously, and hate,  
 And scorn, against all enemies pre-  
 pared,  
 All but neglect: and so, his spirit  
 damped  
 At once, with rash disdain he  
 turned away,  
 And with the food of pride sus-  
 tained his soul  
 In solitude.—Stranger! these gloomy  
 boughs  
 Had charms for him; and here he  
 loved to sit,  
 His only visitants a straggling  
 sheep,  
 The stone-chat, or the glancing  
 sand-piper;  
 And on these barren rocks, with ju-  
 niper,  
 And heath, and thistle, thinly sprin-  
 kled o'er,  
 Fixing his downward eye, he many  
 an hour  
 A morbid pleasure nourished, trac-  
 ing here  
 An emblem of his own unfruitful

life:  
And lifting up his head, he then  
would gaze  
On the more distant scene; how  
lovely 'tis  
Thou seest, and he would gaze till it  
became  
Far lovelier, and his heart could not  
sustain  
The beauty still more beauteous.  
Nor, that time,  
Would he forget those beings, to  
whose minds,  
Warm from the labours of benevo-  
lence,  
The world, and man himself, ap-  
peared a scene  
Of kindred loveliness: then he  
would sigh  
With mournful joy, to think that oth-  
ers felt  
What he must never feel: and so,  
lost man!  
On visionary views would fancy  
feed,  
Till his eye streamed with tears. In  
this deep vale  
He died, this seat his only monu-  
ment.

If thou be one whose heart the holy  
forms  
Of young imagination have kept  
pure,  
Stranger! henceforth be warned;  
and know, that pride,  
Howe'er disguised in its own  
majesty,

Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; that  
thought with him  
Is in its infancy. The man, whose  
eye  
Is ever on himself, doth look on one,  
The least of nature's works, one  
who might move  
The wise man to that scorn which  
wisdom holds  
Unlawful, ever. O, be wiser thou!  
Instructed that true knowledge  
leads to love,  
True dignity abides with him alone  
Who, in the silent hour of inward  
thought,  
Can still suspect, and still revere  
himself,  
In lowliness of heart.

# THE NIGHTINGALE

A CONVERSATIONAL POEM, WRITTEN IN APRIL,  
1798

No cloud, no relique of the sunken  
day  
Distinguishes the West, no long thin  
slip  
Of sullen Light, no obscure trem-  
bling hues.  
Come, we will rest on this old  
mossy Bridge!  
You see the glimmer of the stream  
beneath,  
But hear no murmuring: it flows  
silently  
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is  
still,  
A balmy night! and tho' the stars be  
dim,  
Yet let us think upon the vernal  
showers  
That gladden the green earth, and  
we shall find  
A pleasure in the dimness of the  
stars.

And hark! the Nightingale begins  
 its song,  
 "Most musical, most melancholy"<sup>1</sup>  
 Bird!  
 A melancholy Bird? O idle thought!  
 In nature there is nothing melan-  
 choly.  
 –But some night-wandering Man,  
 whose heart was pierc'd  
 With the remembrance of a grievous  
 wrong,  
 Or slow distemper or neglected  
 love,  
 (And so, poor Wretch! fill'd all  
 things with himself  
 And made all gentle sounds tell  
 back the tale  
 Of his own sorrows) he and such as  
 he  
 First nam'd these notes a melan-  
 choly strain;  
 And many a poet echoes the con-  
 ceit,  
 Poet, who hath been building up the  
 rhyme  
 When he had better far have  
 stretch'd his limbs  
 Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell  
 By sun or moonlight, to the influxes  
 Of shapes and sounds and shifting  
 elements

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<sup>1</sup>"*Most musical, most melancholy.*" This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description: it is spoken in the character of the melancholy Man, and has therefore a *dramatic* propriety. The Author makes this remark, to rescue himself from the charge of having alluded with levity to a line in Milton: a charge than which none could be more painful to him, except perhaps that of having ridiculed his Bible.

Surrendering his whole spirit, of his  
 song  
 And of his fame forgetful! so his  
 fame  
 Should share in nature's immortal-  
 ity,  
 A venerable thing! and so his song  
 Should make all nature lovelier, and  
 itself  
 Be lov'd, like nature!—But 'twill not  
 be so;  
 And youths and maidens most po-  
 etical  
 Who lose the deep'ning twilights of  
 the spring  
 In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they  
 still  
 Full of meek sympathy must heave  
 their sighs  
 O'er Philomela's pity-pleading  
 strains.  
 My Friend, and my Friend's Sister!  
 we have learnt  
 A different lore: we may not thus  
 profane  
 Nature's sweet voices always full of  
 love  
 And joyance! 'Tis the merry  
 Nightingale  
 That crowds, and hurries, and pre-  
 cipitates  
 With fast thick warble his delicious  
 notes,  
 As he were fearful, that an April  
 night  
 Would be too short for him to utter  
 forth

His love-chant, and disburthen his  
full soul  
Of all its music! And I know a grove  
Of large extent, hard by a castle  
huge  
Which the great lord inhabits not:  
and so

This grove is wild with tangling un-  
derwood,  
And the trim walks are broken up,  
and grass,  
Thin grass and king-cups grow  
within the paths.  
But never elsewhere in one place I  
knew  
So many Nightingales: and far and  
near  
In wood and thicket over the wide  
grove  
They answer and provoke each  
other's songs—  
With skirmish and capricious pas-  
sagings,  
And murmurs musical and swift  
jug jug  
And one low piping sound more  
sweet than all—  
Stirring the air with such an har-  
mony,  
That should you close your eyes,  
you might almost  
Forget it was not day! On moon-  
light bushes,  
Whose dewy leafits are but half dis-  
clos'd,  
You may perchance behold them on  
the twigs,

Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes  
both bright and full,  
Glistening, while many a glow-  
worm in the shade  
Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle maid  
Who dwelleth in her hospitable  
home  
Hard by the Castle, and at latest eve,  
(Even like a Lady vow'd and dedi-  
cate  
To something more than nature in  
the grove)  
Glides thro' the pathways; she  
knows all their notes,  
That gentle Maid! and oft, a mo-  
ment's space,  
What time the moon was lost be-  
hind a cloud,  
Hath heard a pause of silence: till  
the Moon  
Emerging, hath awaken'd earth and  
sky  
With one sensation, and those  
wakeful Birds  
Have all burst forth in choral min-  
strelsy,  
As if one quick and sudden Gale  
had swept  
An hundred airy harps! And she  
hath watch'd  
Many a Nightingale perch giddily  
On blosmy twig still swinging from  
the breeze,  
And to that motion tune his wanton  
song,  
Like tipsy Joy that reels with tossing

head.

Farewell, O Warbler! till to-morrow  
 eve,  
 And you, my friends! farewell, a  
 short farewell!  
 We have been loitering long and  
 pleasantly,  
 And now for our dear homes.—That  
 strain again!  
 Full fain it would delay me!—My  
 dear Babe,  
 Who, capable of no articulate  
 sound,  
 Mars all things with his imitative  
 lisp,  
 How he would place his hand be-  
 side his ear,  
 His little hand, the small forefinger  
 up,  
 And bid us listen! And I deem it  
 wise  
 To make him Nature's playmate.  
 He knows well  
 The evening star: and once when he  
 awoke  
 In most distressful mood (some in-  
 ward pain  
 Had made up that strange thing, an  
 infant's dream)  
 I hurried with him to our orchard  
 plot,  
 And he beholds the moon, and  
 hush'd at once  
 Suspends his sobs, and laughs most  
 silently,  
 While his fair eyes that swam with  
 undropt tears

Did glitter in the yellow moon-  
beam! Well—  
It is a father's tale. But if that  
Heaven  
Should give me life, his childhood  
shall grow up  
Familiar with these songs, that with  
the night  
He may associate Joy! Once more  
farewell,  
Sweet Nightingale! once more, my  
friends! farewell.

# THE FEMALE VAGRANT

By Derwent's side my Father's cot-  
tage stood,  
(The Woman thus her artless story  
told)  
One field, a flock, and what the  
neighbouring flood  
Supplied, to him were more than  
mines of gold.  
Light was my sleep; my days in  
transport roll'd:  
With thoughtless joy I stretch'd  
along the shore  
My father's nets, or watched, when  
from the fold  
High o'er the cliffs I led my fleecy  
store,  
A dizzy depth below! his boat and  
twinkling oar.  
My father was a good and pious  
man,  
An honest man by honest parents  
bred,  
And I believe that, soon as I began  
To lisp, he made me kneel beside  
my bed,

And in his hearing there my prayers  
I said:  
And afterwards, by my good father  
taught,  
I read, and loved the books in which  
I read;  
For books in every neighbouring  
house I sought,  
And nothing to my mind a sweeter  
pleasure brought.

Can I forget what charms did once  
adorn  
My garden, stored with pease, and  
mint, and thyme,  
And rose and lilly for the sabbath  
morn?

The sabbath bells, and their delight-  
ful chime;  
The gambols and wild freaks at  
shearing time;  
My hen's rich nest through long  
grass scarce espied;  
The cowslip-gathering at May's  
dewy prime;  
The swans, that, when I sought the  
water-side,  
From far to meet me came, spread-  
ing their snowy pride.

The staff I yet remember which up-  
bore  
The bending body of my active sire;  
His seat beneath the honeyed  
sycamore  
When the bees hummed, and chair  
by winter fire;  
When market-morning came, the  
neat attire

With which, though bent on haste,  
myself I deck'd;  
My watchful dog, whose starts of  
furious ire,  
When stranger passed, so often I  
have check'd;  
The red-breast known for years,  
which at my casement peck'd.  
The suns of twenty summers  
danced along,—  
Ah! little marked, how fast they  
rolled away:  
Then rose a mansion proud our  
woods among,  
And cottage after cottage owned its  
sway,  
No joy to see a neighbouring house,  
or stray  
Through pastures not his own, the  
master took;  
My Father dared his greedy wish  
gainsay;  
He loved his old hereditary nook,  
And ill could I the thought of such  
sad parting brook.  
But, when he had refused the prof-  
fered gold,  
To cruel injuries he became a prey,  
Sore traversed in whate'er he  
bought and sold:  
His troubles grew upon him day by  
day,  
Till all his substance fell into decay.  
His little range of water was de-  
nied;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Several of the Lakes in the north of England are let out to different

All but the bed where his old body  
lay,  
All, all was seized, and weeping,  
side by side,  
We sought a home where we unin-  
jured might abide.  
Can I forget that miserable hour,  
When from the last hill-top, my sire  
surveyed,  
Peering above the trees, the steeple  
tower,  
That on his marriage-day sweet mu-  
sic made?  
Till then he hoped his bones might  
there be laid,  
Close by my mother in their native  
bowers:  
Bidding me trust in God, he stood  
and prayed,—  
I could not pray:—through tears that  
fell in showers,  
Glimmer'd our dear-loved home,  
alas! no longer ours!  
There was a youth whom I had  
loved so long,  
That when I loved him not I cannot  
say.  
'Mid the green mountains many  
and many a song  
We two had sung, like little birds in  
May.  
When we began to tire of childish  
play  
We seemed still more and more to  
prize each other:

---

Fishermen, in parcels marked out by imaginary lines drawn from rock to rock.

We talked of marriage and our marriage day;  
And I in truth did love him like a brother,  
For never could I hope to meet with such another.

His father said, that to a distant town  
He must repair, to ply the artist's trade.

What tears of bitter grief till then unknown!

What tender vows our last sad kiss delayed!

To him we turned:—we had no other aid.

Like one revived, upon his neck I wept,

And her whom he had loved in joy, he said

He well could love in grief: his faith he kept;

And in a quiet home once more my father slept.

Four years each day with daily bread was blest,

By constant toil and constant prayer supplied.

Three lovely infants lay upon my breast;

And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I sighed,

And knew not why. My happy father died

When sad distress reduced the children's meal:

Thrice happy! that from him the

grave did hide  
The empty loom, cold hearth, and  
silent wheel,  
And tears that flowed for ills which  
patience could not heal.

'Twas a hard change, an evil time  
was come;

We had no hope, and no relief could  
gain.

But soon, with proud parade, the  
noisy drum

Beat round, to sweep the streets of  
want and pain.

My husband's arms now only  
served to strain

Me and his children hungering in  
his view:

In such dismay my prayers and  
tears were vain:

To join those miserable men he flew;  
And now to the sea-coast, with  
numbers more, we drew.

There foul neglect for months and  
months we bore,

Nor yet the crowded fleet its anchor  
stirred.

Green fields before us and our na-  
tive shore,

By fever, from polluted air incurred,  
Ravage was made, for which no  
knell was heard.

Fondly we wished, and wished  
away, nor knew,

'Mid that long sickness, and those  
hopes deferr'd,

That happier days we never more  
must view:

The parting signal streamed, at last  
the land withdrew,  
But from delay the summer calms  
were past.  
On as we drove, the equinoctial  
deep  
Ran mountains-high before the  
howling blaft.  
We gazed with terror on the gloomy  
sleep  
Of them that perished in the whirl-  
wind's sweep,  
Untaught that soon such anguish  
must ensue,  
Our hopes such harvest of affliction  
reap,  
That we the mercy of the waves  
should rue.  
We reached the western world, a  
poor, devoted crew.  
Oh! dreadful price of being to re-  
sign  
All that is dear *in* being! better far  
In Want's most lonely cave till death  
to pine,  
Unseen, unheard, unwatched by  
any star;  
Or in the streets and walks where  
proud men are,  
Better our dying bodies to obtrude,  
Than dog-like, wading at the heels  
of war,  
Protract a curst existence, with the  
brood  
That lap (their very nourishment!)  
their brother's blood.  
The pains and plagues that on our

heads came down,  
Disease and famine, agony and fear,  
In wood or wilderness, in camp or  
town,  
It would thy brain unsettle even to  
hear.  
All perished—all, in one remorseless  
year,  
Husband and children! one by one,  
by sword  
And ravenous plague, all perished:  
every tear  
Dried up, despairing, desolate, on  
board  
A British ship I waked, as from a  
trance restored.

Peaceful as some immeasurable  
plain  
By the first beams of dawning light  
impress'd,  
In the calm sunshine slept the glit-  
tering main.

The very ocean has its hour of rest,  
That comes not to the human  
mourner's breast.

Remote from man, and storms of  
mortal care,  
A heavenly silence did the waves  
invest;  
I looked and looked along the silent  
air,  
Until it seemed to bring a joy to my  
despair.

Ah! how unlike those late terrific  
sleeps!  
And groans, that rage of racking  
famine spoke,

Where looks inhuman dwelt on festering heaps!  
The breathing pestilence that rose like smoke!  
The shriek that from the distant battle broke!  
The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid host  
Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-stroke  
To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick anguish toss'd,  
Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost!

Yet does that burst of woe congeal my frame,  
When the dark streets appeared to heave and gape,  
While like a sea the storming army came,  
And Fire from Hell reared his gigantic shape,  
And Murder, by the ghastly gleam, and Rape  
Seized their joint prey, the mother and the child!  
But from these crazing thoughts my brain, escape!  
—For weeks the balmy air breathed soft and mild,  
And on the gliding vessel Heaven and Ocean smiled.

Some mighty gulph of separation past,  
I seemed transported to another world:—  
A thought resigned with pain,

when from the mast  
The impatient mariner the sail unfurl'd,  
And whistling, called the wind that  
hardly curled  
The silent sea. From the sweet  
thoughts of home,  
And from all hope I was forever  
hurled.  
For me—farthest from earthly port to  
roam  
Was best, could I but shun the spot  
where man might come.  
And oft, robb'd of my perfect mind,  
I thought  
At last my feet a resting-place had  
found:  
Here will I weep in peace, (so fancy  
wrought,)  
Roaming the illimitable waters  
round;  
Here watch, of every human friend  
disowned,  
All day, my ready tomb the ocean-  
flood—  
To break my dream the vessel  
reached its bound:  
And homeless near a thousand  
homes I stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined,  
and wanted food.  
By grief enfeebled was I turned  
adrift,  
Helpless as sailor cast on desert  
rock;  
Nor morsel to my mouth that day  
did lift,

Nor dared my hand at any door to  
knock.

I lay, where with his drowsy mates,  
the cock

From the cross timber of an out-  
house hung;

How dismal tolled, that night, the  
city clock!

At morn my sick heart hunger  
scarcely stung,

Nor to the beggar's language could  
I frame my tongue.

So passed another day, and so the  
third:

Then did I try, in vain, the crowd's  
resort,

In deep despair by frightful wishes  
stirr'd,

Near the sea-side I reached a ruined  
fort:

There, pains which nature could no  
more support,

With blindness linked, did on my  
vitals fall;

Dizzy my brain, with interruption  
short

Of hideous sense; I sunk, nor step  
could crawl,

And thence was borne away to  
neighbouring hospital.

Recovery came with food: but still,  
my brain

Was weak, nor of the past had mem-  
ory.

I heard my neighbours, in their  
beds, complain

Of many things which never trou-

bled me;  
Of feet still bustling round with  
  busy glee,  
Of looks where common kindness  
  had no part,  
Of service done with careless cru-  
  elty,  
Fretting the fever round the languid  
  heart,  
And groans, which, as they said,  
  would make a dead man start.

These things just served to stir the  
  torpid sense,  
Nor pain nor pity in my bosom  
  raised.

Memory, though slow, returned  
  with strength; and thence  
Dismissed, again on open day I  
  gazed,  
At houses, men, and common light,  
  amazed.

The lanes I sought, and as the sun  
  retired,  
Came, where beneath the trees a  
  faggot blazed;  
The wild brood saw me weep, my  
  fate enquired,  
And gave me food, and rest, more  
  welcome, more desired.

My heart is touched to think that  
  men like these,  
The rude earth's tenants, were my  
  first relief:  
How kindly did they paint their va-  
  grant ease!  
And their long holiday that feared  
  not grief,

For all belonged to all, and each was  
chief.

No plough their sinews strained; on  
grating road

No wain they drove, and yet, the  
yellow sheaf

In every vale for their delight was  
stowed:

For them, in nature's meads, the  
milky udder flowed.

Semblance, with straw and pau-  
nied ass, they made

Of potters wandering on from door  
to door:

But life of happier sort to me pour-  
trayed,

And other joys my fancy to allure;

The bag-pipe dinning on the mid-  
night moor

In barn uplighted, and companions  
boon

Well met from far with revelry se-  
cure,

In depth of forest glade, when jo-  
cund June

Rolled fast along the sky his warm  
and genial moon.

But ill it suited me, in journey dark  
O'er moor and mountain, midnight  
theft to hatch;

To charm the surly house-dog's  
faithful bark.

Or hang on tiptoe at the lifted latch;  
The gloomy lantern, and the dim  
blue match,

The black disguise, the warning  
whistle shrill,

And ear still busy on its nightly  
watch,  
Were not for me, brought up in  
nothing ill;  
Besides, on griefs so fresh my  
thoughts were brooding still.

What could I do, unaided and un-  
blest?

Poor Father! gone was every friend  
of thine:

And kindred of dead husband are at  
best

Small help, and, after marriage such  
as mine,

With little kindness would to me in-  
cline.

Ill was I then for toil or service fit:

With tears whose course no effort  
could confine,

By high-way side forgetful would I  
sit

Whole hours, my idle arms in mop-  
ping sorrow knit.

I lived upon the mercy of the fields,

And oft of cruelty the sky accused;

On hazard, or what general bounty  
yields,

Now coldly given, now utterly re-  
fused,

The fields I for my bed have often  
used:

But, what afflicts my peace with  
keenest ruth

Is, that I have my inner self abused,

Foregone the home delight of con-  
stant truth,

And clear and open soul, so prized

in fearless youth.  
Three years a wanderer, often have  
I view'd,  
In tears, the sun towards that coun-  
try tend  
Where my poor heart lost all its for-  
titude:  
And now across this moor my steps  
I bend—  
Oh! tell me whither—for no earthly  
friend  
Have I.—She ceased, and weeping  
turned away,  
As if because her tale was at an end  
She wept;—because she had no more  
to say  
Of that perpetual weight which on  
her spirit lay.

# GOODY BLAKE, AND HARRY GILL

## A TRUE STORY

Oh! what's the matter? what's the  
matter?  
What is't that ails young Harry Gill?  
That evermore his teeth they chat-  
ter,  
Chatter, chatter, chatter still.  
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,  
Good duffle grey, and flannel fine;  
He has a blanket on his back,  
And coats enough to smother nine.  
In March, December, and in July,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;  
The neighbours tell, and tell you  
truly,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
At night, at morning, and at noon,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;  
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
Young Harry was a lusty drover,

And who so stout of limb as he?  
 His cheeks were red as ruddy  
 clover,  
 His voice was like the voice of three.  
 Auld Goody Blake was old and  
 poor,  
 Ill fedd she was, and thinly clad;  
 And any man who pass'd her door,  
 Might see how poor a hut she had.  
 All day she spun in her poor  
 dwelling,  
 And then her three hours' work at  
 night!  
 Alas! 'twas hardly worth the telling,  
 It would not pay for candle-light.  
 -This woman dwelt in Dorsetshire,  
 Her hut was on a cold hill-side,  
 And in that country coals are dear,  
 For they come far by wind and tide.  
 By the same fire to boil their pot-  
 tage,  
 Two poor old dames, as I have  
 known,  
 Will often live in one small cottage,  
 But she, poor woman, dwelt alone.  
 'Twas well enough when summer  
 came,  
 The long, warm, lightsome  
 summer-day,  
 Then at her door the *canty* dame  
 Would sit, as any linnet gay.  
 But when the ice our streams did  
 fetter,  
 Oh! then how her old bones would  
 shake!  
 You would have said, if you had  
 met her,

'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.  
 Her evenings then were dull and  
 dead;  
 Sad case it was, as you may think,  
 For very cold to go to bed,  
 And then for cold not sleep a wink.  
 Oh joy for her! when e'er in winter  
 The winds at night had made a rout,  
 And scatter'd many a lusty splinter,  
 And many a rotten bough about.  
 Yet never had she, well or sick,  
 As every man who knew her says,  
 A pile before-hand, wood or stick,  
 Enough to warm her for three days.  
 Now, when the frost was past en-  
 during,  
 And made her poor old bones to  
 ache,  
 Could any thing be more alluring,  
 Than an old hedge to Goody Blake?  
 And now and then, it must be said,  
 When her old bones were cold and  
 chill,  
 She left her fire, or left her bed,  
 To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.  
 Now Harry he had long suspected  
 This trespass of old Goody Blake,  
 And vow'd that she should be de-  
 tected,  
 And he on her would vengeance  
 take.  
 And oft from his warm fire he'd go,  
 And to the fields his road would  
 take,  
 And there, at night, in frost and  
 snow,  
 He watch'd to seize old Goody

Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
 Thus looking out did Harry stand;  
 The moon was full and shining  
 clearly,  
 And crisp with frost the stubble-  
 land.

—He hears a noise—he's all awake—  
 Again?—on tip-toe down the hill  
 He softly creeps—'Tis Goody Blake,  
 She's at the hedge of Harry Gill.

Right glad was he when he beheld  
 her:

Stick after stick did Goody pull,  
 He stood behind a bush of elder,  
 Till she had filled her apron full.  
 When with her load she turned  
 about,  
 The bye-road back again to take,  
 He started forward with a shout,  
 And sprang upon poor Goody  
 Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
 And by the arm he held her fast,  
 And fiercely by the arm he shook  
 her,  
 And cried, "I've caught you then at  
 last!"

Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
 Her bundle from her lap let fall;  
 And kneeling on the sticks, she  
 pray'd

To God that is the judge of all.

She pray'd, her wither'd hand up-  
 rearing,

While Harry held her by the arm—  
 "God! who art never out of hearing,

"O may he never more be warm!"  
 The cold, cold moon above her  
 head,  
 Thus on her knees did Goody pray,  
 Young Harry heard what she had  
 said,  
 And icy-cold he turned away.  
 He went complaining all the mor-  
 row  
 That he was cold and very chill:  
 His face was gloom, his heart was  
 sorrow,  
 Alas! that day for Harry Gill!  
 That day he wore a riding-coat,  
 But not a whit the warmer he:  
 Another was on Thursday brought,  
 And ere the Sabbath he had three.  
 'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,  
 And blankets were about him  
 pinn'd;  
 Yet still his jaws and teeth they clat-  
 ter,  
 Like a loose casement in the wind.  
 And Harry's flesh it fell away;  
 And all who see him say 'tis plain,  
 That, live as long as live he may,  
 He never will be warm again.  
 No word to any man he utters,  
 A-bed or up, to young or old;  
 But ever to himself he mutters,  
 "Poor Harry Gill is very cold."  
 A-bed or up, by night or day;  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
 Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
 Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill.

LINES WRITTEN AT A  
SMALL DISTANCE FROM  
MY HOUSE

AND SENT BY MY LITTLE BOY TO THE PERSON TO  
WHOM THEY ARE ADDRESSED

It is the first mild day of March:  
Each minute sweeter than before,  
The red-breast sings from the tall  
larch  
That stands beside our door.  
There is a blessing in the air,  
Which seems a sense of joy to yield  
To the bare trees, and mountains  
bare,  
And grass in the green field.  
My Sister! ('tis a wish of mine)  
Now that our morning meal is  
done,  
Make haste, your morning task re-  
sign;  
Come forth and feel the sun.  
Edward will come with you, and  
pray,

Put on with speed your woodland  
dress,  
And bring no book, for this one day  
We'll give to idleness.  
No joyless forms shall regulate  
Our living Calendar:  
We from to-day, my friend, will date  
The opening of the year.  
Love, now an universal birth.  
From heart to heart is stealing,  
From earth to man, from man to  
earth,  
—It is the hour of feeling.  
One moment now may give us  
more  
Than fifty years of reason;  
Our minds shall drink at every pore  
The spirit of the season.  
Some silent laws our hearts may  
make,  
Which they shall long obey;  
We for the year to come may take  
Our temper from to-day.  
And from the blessed power that  
rolls  
About, below, above;  
We'll frame the measure of our  
souls,  
They shall be tuned to love.  
Then come, my sister! come, I pray,  
With speed put on your woodland  
dress,  
And bring no book; for this one day  
We'll give to idleness.

# SIMON LEE, THE OLD HUNTSMAN,

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS  
CONCERNED

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,  
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,  
An old man dwells, a little man,  
I've heard he once was tall.  
Of years he has upon his back,  
No doubt, a burthen weighty;  
He says he is three score and ten,  
But others say he's eighty.  
A long blue livery-coat has he,  
That's fair behind, and fair before;  
Yet, meet him where you will, you  
see  
At once that he is poor.  
Full five and twenty years he lived  
A running huntsman merry;  
And, though he has but one eye left,  
His cheek is like a cherry.  
No man like him the horn could  
sound.

And no man was so full of glee;  
To say the least, four counties round  
Had heard of Simon Lee;  
His master's dead, and no one now  
Dwells in the hall of Ivor;  
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;  
He is the sole survivor.

His hunting feats have him bereft  
Of his right eye, as you may see:  
And then, what limbs those feats  
have left

To poor old Simon Lee!  
He has no son, he has no child,  
His wife, an aged woman,  
Lives with him, near the waterfall,  
Upon the village common.

And he is lean and he is sick,  
His little body's half awry  
His ancles they are swoln and thick  
His legs are thin and dry.

When he was young he little knew  
Of husbandry or tillage;  
And now he's forced to work,  
though weak,  
-The weakest in the village.

He all the country could outrun,  
Could leave both man and horse be-  
hind;

And often, ere the race was done,  
He reeled and was stone-blind.

And still there's something in the  
world

At which his heart rejoices;  
For when the chiming hounds are  
out,

He dearly loves their voices!

Old Ruth works out of doors with

him,  
And does what Simon cannot do;  
For she, not over stout of limb,  
Is stouter of the two.  
And though you with your utmost  
skill  
From labour could not wean them,  
Alas! 'tis very little, all  
Which they can do between them.  
Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,  
Not twenty paces from the door,  
A scrap of land they have, but they  
Are poorest of the poor.  
This scrap of land he from the heath  
Enclosed when he was stronger;  
But what avails the land to them,  
Which they can till no longer?  
Few months of life has he in store,  
As he to you will tell,  
For still, the more he works, the  
more  
His poor old ancles swell.  
My gentle reader, I perceive  
How patiently you've waited,  
And I'm afraid that you expect  
Some tale will be related.  
O reader! had you in your mind  
Such stores as silent thought can  
bring,  
O gentle reader! you would find  
A tale in every thing.  
What more I have to say is short,  
I hope you'll kindly take it;  
It is no tale; but should you think,  
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.  
One summer-day I chanced to see  
This old man doing all he could

About the root of an old tree,  
A stump of rotten wood.  
The mattock totter'd in his hand;  
So vain was his endeavour  
That at the root of the old tree  
He might have worked for ever.  
"You're overtasked, good Simon  
Lee,  
Give me your tool" to him I said;  
And at the word right gladly he  
Received my proffer'd aid.  
I struck, and with a single blow  
The tangled root I sever'd,  
At which the poor old man so long  
And vainly had endeavour'd.  
The tears into his eyes were  
brought,  
And thanks and praises seemed to  
run  
So fast out of his heart, I thought  
They never would have done.  
-I've heard of hearts unkind, kind  
deeds  
With coldness still returning.  
Alas! the gratitude of men  
Has oftner left me mourning.

# ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS

## SHEWING HOW THE ART OF LYING MAY BE TAUGHT

I have a boy of five years old,  
His face is fair and fresh to see;  
His limbs are cast in beauty's  
mould,  
And dearly he loves me.  
One morn we stroll'd on our dry  
walk,  
Our quiet house all full in view,  
And held such intermitted talk  
As we are wont to do.  
My thoughts on former pleasures  
ran;  
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,  
My pleasant home, when spring be-  
gan,  
A long, long year before.  
A day it was when I could bear  
To think, and think, and think  
again;

With so much happiness to spare,  
I could not feel a pain.  
My boy was by my side, so slim  
And graceful in his rustic dress!  
And oftentimes I talked to him,  
In very idleness.  
The young lambs ran a pretty race;  
The morning sun shone bright and  
warm;  
"Kilve," said I, "was a pleasant  
place,  
"And so is Liswyn farm.  
"My little boy, which like you  
more,"  
I said and took him by the arm—  
"Our home by Kilve's delightful  
shore,  
"Or here at Liswyn farm?"  
"And tell me, had you rather be,"  
I said and held him by the arm,  
"At Kilve's smooth shore by the  
green sea,  
"Or here at Liswyn farm?"  
In careless mood he looked at me,  
While still I held him by the arm,  
And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be  
"Than here at Liswyn farm."  
"Now, little Edward, say why so;  
My little Edward, tell me why;"  
"I cannot tell, I do not know,"  
"Why this is strange," said I.  
"For, here are woods and green-hills  
warm;  
"There surely must some reason be  
"Why you would change sweet  
Liswyn farm  
"For Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my boy, so fair and slim,  
Hung down his head, nor made re-  
ply;  
And five times did I say to him,  
"Why? Edward, tell me why?"  
His head he raised—there was in  
sight,  
It caught his eye, he saw it plain—  
Upon the house-top, glittering  
bright,  
A broad and gilded vane.  
Then did the boy his tongue unlock,  
And thus to me he made reply;  
"At Kilve there was no weather-  
cock,  
"And that's the reason why."  
Oh dearest, dearest boy! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth  
part  
Of what from thee I learn.

## WE ARE SEVEN

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.

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.

"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?"

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."

"Their graves are green, they may  
be seen,"

The little Maid replied,

"Twelve steps or more from my  
mother's 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.

"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.

"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!"

## LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

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.  
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 THORN

I.

There is a thorn; it looks so old,  
In truth you'd find it hard to say,  
How it could ever have been young,  
It looks so old and grey.  
Not higher than a two-years' child,  
It stands erect this aged thorn;  
No leaves it has, no thorny points;  
It is a mass of knotted joints,  
A wretched thing forlorn.  
It stands erect, and like a stone  
With lichens it is overgrown.

II.

Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown  
With lichens to the very top,  
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,  
A melancholy crop:  
Up from the earth these mosses  
creep,  
And this poor thorn they clasp it  
round  
So close, you'd say that they were  
bent  
With plain and manifest intent,  
To drag it to the ground;

And all had joined in one endeavour  
To bury this poor thorn for ever.

III.

High on a mountain's highest ridge,  
Where oft the stormy winter gale  
Cuts like a scythe, while through  
the clouds  
It sweeps from vale to vale;  
Not five yards from the mountain-  
path,  
This thorn you on your left espy;  
And to the left, three yards beyond,  
You see a little muddy pond  
Of water, never dry;  
I've measured it from side to side:  
'Tis three feet long, and two feet  
wide.

IV.

And close beside this aged thorn,  
There is a fresh and lovely sight,  
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,  
Just half a foot in height.  
All lovely colours there you see,  
All colours that were ever seen,  
And mossy network too is there,  
As if by hand of lady fair  
The work had woven been,  
And cups, the darlings of the eye,  
So deep is their vermilion dye.

V.

Ah me! what lovely tints are there!  
Of olive-green and scarlet bright,  
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,  
Green, red, and pearly white.  
This heap of earth o'ergrown with  
moss

Which close beside the thorn you  
see,  
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,  
Is like an infant's grave in size  
As like as like can be:  
But never, never any where,  
An infant's grave was half so fair.

VI.

Now would you see this aged thorn,  
This pond and beauteous hill of  
moss,  
You must take care and chuse your  
time  
The mountain when to cross.  
For oft there sits, between the heap  
That's like an infant's grave in size,  
And that same pond of which I  
spoke,  
A woman in a scarlet cloak,  
And to herself she cries,  
"Oh misery! oh misery!  
"Oh woe is me! oh misery!"

VII.

At all times of the day and night  
This wretched woman thither goes,  
And she is known to every star,  
And every wind that blows;  
And there beside the thorn she sits  
When the blue day-light's in the  
skies,  
And when the whirlwind's on the  
hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And to herself she cries,  
"Oh misery! oh misery!  
"Oh woe is me! oh misery!"

VIII.

"Now wherefore thus, by day and  
 night,  
 "In rain, in tempest, and in snow,  
 "Thus to the dreary mountain-top  
 "Does this poor woman go?  
 "And why sits she beside the thorn  
 "When the blue day-light's in the  
 sky,  
 "Or when the whirlwind's on the  
 hill,  
 "Or frosty air is keen and still,  
 "And wherefore does she cry?—  
 "Oh wherefore? wherefore? tell me  
 why  
 "Does she repeat that doleful cry?"

IX.

I cannot tell; I wish I could;  
 For the true reason no one knows,  
 But if you'd gladly view the spot,  
 The spot to which she goes;  
 The heap that's like an infant's  
 grave,  
 The pond—and thorn, so old and  
 grey,  
 Pass by her door—'tis seldom shut—  
 And if you see her in her hut,  
 Then to the spot away!—  
 I never heard of such as dare  
 Approach the spot when she is  
 there.

X.

"But wherefore to the mountain-top  
 "Can this unhappy woman go,  
 "Whatever star is in the skies,  
 "Whatever wind may blow?"  
 Nay rack your brain—'tis all in vain,  
 I'll tell you every thing I know;

But to the thorn, and to the pond  
Which is a little step beyond,  
I wish that you would go:  
Perhaps when you are at the place  
You something of her tale may  
trace.

XI.

I'll give you the best help I can:  
Before you up the mountain go,  
Up to the dreary mountain-top,  
I'll tell you all I know.  
Tis now some two and twenty  
years,  
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)  
Gave with a maiden's true good  
will  
Her company to Stephen Hill;  
And she was blithe and gay,  
And she was happy, happy still  
Whene'er she thought of Stephen  
Hill.

XII.

And they had fix'd the wedding-  
day,  
The morning that must wed them  
both;  
But Stephen to another maid  
Had sworn another oath;  
And with this other maid to church  
Unthinking Stephen went—  
Poor Martha! on that woful day  
A cruel, cruel fire, they say,  
Into her bones was sent:  
It dried her body like a cinder,  
And almost turn'd her brain to tin-  
der.

XIII.

They say, full six months after this,  
While yet the summer-leaves were  
green,  
She to the mountain-top would go,  
And there was often seen.  
'Tis said, a child was in her womb,  
As now to any eye was plain;  
She was with child, and she was  
mad,  
Yet often she was sober sad  
From her exceeding pain.  
Oh me! ten thousand times I'd  
rather  
That he had died, that cruel father!

XIV.

Sad case for such a brain to hold  
Communion with a stirring child!  
Sad case, as you may think, for one  
Who had a brain so wild!  
Last Christmas when we talked of  
this,  
Old Farmer Simpson did maintain,  
That in her womb the infant  
wrought  
About its mother's heart, and  
brought  
Her senses back again:  
And when at last her time drew  
near,  
Her looks were calm, her senses  
clear.

XV.

No more I know, I wish I did,  
And I would tell it all to you;  
For what became of this poor child  
There's none that ever knew:  
And if a child was born or no,

There's no one that could ever tell;  
And if 'twas born alive or dead,  
There's no one knows, as I have  
said,  
But some remember well,  
That Martha Ray about this time  
Would up the mountain often  
climb.

XVI.

And all that winter, when at night  
The wind blew from the mountain-  
peak,  
'Twas worth your while, though in  
the dark,  
The church-yard path to seek:  
For many a time and oft were heard  
Cries coming from the mountain-  
head,  
Some plainly living voices were,  
And others, I've heard many swear,  
Were voices of the dead:  
I cannot think, whate'er they say,  
They had to do with Martha Ray.

XVII.

But that she goes to this old thorn,  
The thorn which I've described to  
you,  
And there sits in a scarlet cloak,  
I will be sworn is true.  
For one day with my telescope,  
To view the ocean wide and bright,  
When to this country first I came,  
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,  
I climbed the mountain's height:  
A storm came on, and I could see  
No object higher than my knee.

XVIII.

'Twas mist and rain, and storm and  
rain,  
No screen, no fence could I discover,  
And then the wind! in faith, it was  
A wind full ten times over.  
I looked around, I thought I saw  
A jutting crag, and oft' I ran,  
Head-foremost, through the driving  
rain,  
The shelter of the crag to gain,  
And, as I am a man,  
Instead of jutting crag, I found  
A woman seated on the ground.

XIX.

I did not speak—I saw her face,  
Her face it was enough for me;  
I turned about and heard her cry,  
"O misery! O misery!"  
And there she sits, until the moon  
Through half the clear blue sky will  
go,  
And when the little breezes make  
The waters of the pond to shake,  
As all the country know,  
She shudders and you hear her cry,  
"Oh misery! oh misery!"

XX.

"But what's the thorn? and what's  
the pond?  
"And what's the hill of moss to her?  
"And what's the creeping breeze  
that comes  
"The little pond to stir?"  
I cannot tell; but some will say  
She hanged her baby on the tree,  
Some say she drowned it in the  
pond,

Which is a little step beyond,  
But all and each agree,  
The little babe was buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XXI.

I've heard the scarlet moss is red  
With drops of that poor infant's  
blood;  
But kill a new-born infant thus!  
I do not think she could.  
Some say, if to the pond you go,  
And fix on it a steady view,  
The shadow of a babe you trace,  
A baby and a baby's face,  
And that it looks at you;  
Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain  
The baby looks at you again.

XXII.

And some had sworn an oath that  
she  
Should be to public justice brought;  
And for the little infant's bones  
With spades they would have  
sought.  
But then the beauteous hill of moss  
Before their eyes began to stir;  
And for full fifty yards around,  
The grass it shook upon the ground;  
But all do still aver  
The little babe is buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XXIII.

I cannot tell how this may be,  
But plain it is, the thorn is bound  
With heavy tufts of moss, that strive  
To drag it to the ground.  
And this I know, full many a time,

## THE THORN

---

When she was on the mountain  
high,  
By day, and in the silent night,  
When all the stars shone clear and  
bright,  
That I have heard her cry,  
"Oh misery! oh misery!  
"O woe is me! oh misery!"

## THE LAST OF THE FLOCK

In distant countries I have been,  
And yet I have not often seen  
A healthy man, a man full grown  
Weep in the public roads alone.  
But such a one, on English ground,  
And in the broad high-way, I met;  
Along the broad high-way he came,  
His cheeks with tears were wet.  
Sturdy he seemed, though he was  
sad;  
And in his arms a lamb he had.  
He saw me, and he turned aside,  
As if he wished himself to hide:  
Then with his coat he made essay  
To wipe those briny tears away.  
I follow'd him, and said, "My friend  
"What ails you? wherefore weep  
you so?"  
—"Shame on me, Sir! this lusty lamb,  
He makes my tears to flow.  
To-day I fetched him from the rock;  
He is the last of all my flock.  
When I was young, a single man.  
And after youthful follies ran,

Though little given to care and  
thought,  
Yet, so it was, a ewe I bought;  
And other sheep from her I raised,  
As healthy sheep as you might see,  
And then I married, and was rich  
As I could wish to be;  
Of sheep I number'd a full score,  
And every year encreas'd my store.  
Year after year my stock it grew,  
And from this one, this single ewe,  
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,  
As sweet a flock as ever grazed!  
Upon the mountain did they feed;  
They throve, and we at home did  
thrive.  
-This lusty lamb of all my store  
Is all that is alive:  
And now I care not if we die,  
And perish all of poverty.  
Ten children, Sir! had I to feed,  
Hard labour in a time of need!  
My pride was tamed, and in our  
grief,  
I of the parish ask'd relief.  
They said I was a wealthy man;  
My sheep upon the mountain fed,  
And it was fit that thence I took  
Whereof to buy us bread:"  
"Do this; how can we give to you,"  
They cried, "what to the poor is  
due?"  
I sold a sheep as they had said,  
And bought my little children  
bread,  
And they were healthy with their  
food;

For me it never did me good.  
A woeful time it was for me,  
To see the end of all my gains,  
The pretty flock which I had reared  
With all my care and pains,  
To see it melt like snow away!  
For me it was a woeful day.

Another still! and still another!  
A little lamb, and then its mother!  
It was a vein that never stopp'd,  
Like blood-drops from my heart  
they dropp'd.

Till thirty were not left alive  
They dwindled, dwindled, one by  
one,

And I may say that many a time  
I wished they all were gone:  
They dwindled one by one away;  
For me it was a woeful day.

To wicked deeds I was inclined,  
And wicked fancies cross'd my  
mind,

And every man I chanc'd to see,  
I thought he knew some ill of me  
No peace, no comfort could I find,  
No ease, within doors or without,  
And crazily, and wearily,  
I went my work about.

Oft-times I thought to run away;  
For me it was a woeful day.

Sir! 'twas a precious flock to me,  
As dear as my own children be;  
For daily with my growing store  
I loved my children more and more.

Alas! it was an evil time;  
God cursed me in my sore distress,  
I prayed, yet every day I thought

I loved my children less;  
And every week, and every day,  
My flock, it seemed to melt away.  
They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see!  
From ten to five, from five to three,  
A lamb, a weather, and a ewe;  
And then at last, from three to two;  
And of my fifty, yesterday  
I had but only one,  
And here it lies upon my arm,  
Alas! and I have none;  
To-day I fetched it from the rock;  
It is the last of all my flock."

# THE DUNGEON

And this place our forefathers made  
for man!  
This is the process of our love and  
wisdom,  
To each poor brother who offends  
against us—  
Most innocent, perhaps—and what if  
guilty?  
Is this the only cure? Merciful God?  
Each pore and natural outlet shrivel-  
l'd up  
By ignorance and parching poverty,  
His energies roll back upon his  
heart,  
And stagnate and corrupt; till  
changed to poison,  
They break out on him, like a loath-  
some plague-spot;  
Then we call in our pamper'd  
mountebanks—  
And this is their best cure! uncom-  
forted  
And friendless solitude, groaning  
and tears,  
And savage faces, at the clanking

hour,  
Seen through the steams and  
vapour of his dungeon,  
By the lamp's dismal twilight! So he  
lies  
Circled with evil, till his very soul  
Unmoulds its essence, hopelessly  
deformed  
By sights of ever more deformity!  
With other ministrations thou, O  
nature!  
Healest thy wandering and distem-  
pered child:  
Thou pourest on him thy soft influ-  
ences,  
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and  
breathing sweets,  
Thy melodies of woods, and winds,  
and waters,  
Till he relent, and can no more en-  
dure  
To be a jarring and a dissonant  
thing,  
Amid this general dance and min-  
strelsy;  
But, bursting into tears, wins back  
his way,  
His angry spirit healed and harmo-  
nized  
By the benignant touch of love and  
beauty.

# THE MAD MOTHER

Her eyes are wild, her head is bare,  
The sun has burnt her coal-black  
hair,  
Her eye-brows have a rusty stain,  
And she came far from over the  
main.  
She has a baby on her arm,  
Or else she were alone;  
And underneath the hay-stack  
warm,  
And on the green-wood stone,  
She talked and sung the woods  
among;  
And it was in the English tongue.  
"Sweet babe! they say that I am  
mad,  
But nay, my heart is far too glad;  
And I am happy when I sing  
Full many a sad and doleful thing:  
Then, lovely baby, do not fear!  
I pray thee have no fear of me,  
But, safe as in a cradle, here  
My lovely baby! thou shalt be,  
To thee I know too much I owe;  
I cannot work thee any woe.

A fire was once within my brain;  
And in my head a dull, dull pain;  
And fiendish faces one, two, three,  
Hung at my breasts, and pulled at  
me.

But then there came a sight of joy;  
It came at once to do me good;  
I waked, and saw my little boy,  
My little boy of flesh and blood;  
Oh joy for me that sight to see!  
For he was here, and only he.

Suck, little babe, oh suck again!  
It cools my blood; it cools my brain;  
Thy lips I feel them, baby! they  
Draw from my heart the pain away.  
Oh! press me with thy little hand;  
It loosens something at my chest;  
About that tight and deadly band  
I feel thy little fingers press'd.  
The breeze I see is in the tree;  
It comes to cool my babe and me.

Oh! love me, love me, little boy!  
Thou art thy mother's only joy;  
And do not dread the waves below,  
When o'er the sea-rock's edge we  
go;  
The high crag cannot work me  
harm,  
Nor leaping torrents when they  
howl;  
The babe I carry on my arm,  
He saves for me my precious soul;  
Then happy lie, for blest am I;  
Without me my sweet babe would  
die.

Then do not fear, my boy! for thee  
Bold as a lion I will be;

And I will always be thy guide,  
Through hollow snows and rivers  
wide.

I'll build an Indian bower; I know  
The leaves that make the softest  
bed:

And if from me thou wilt not go,  
But still be true 'till I am dead,  
My pretty thing! then thou shalt  
sing,  
As merry as the birds in spring.

Thy father cares not for my breast,  
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest:  
'Tis all thine own! and if its hue  
Be changed, that was so fair to view,  
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!  
My beauty, little child, is flown;  
But thou wilt live with me in love,  
And what if my poor cheek be  
brown?

'Tis well for me; thou canst not see  
How pale and wan it else would be.

Dread not their taunts, my little life!  
I am thy father's wedded wife;  
And underneath the spreading tree  
We two will live in honesty.

If his sweet boy he could forsake,  
With me he never would have  
stay'd:

From him no harm my babe can  
take,

But he, poor man! is wretched  
made,

And every day we two will pray  
For him that's gone and far away.

I'll teach my boy the sweetest  
things;

I'll teach him how the owlet sings.  
My little babe! thy lips are still,  
And thou hast almost suck'd thy  
fill.

—Where art thou gone my own dear  
child?

What wicked looks are those I see?

Alas! alas! that look so wild,  
It never, never came from me:  
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,  
Then I must be for ever sad.

Oh! smile on me, my little lamb!

For I thy own dear mother am.

My love for thee has well been tried:

I've sought thy father far and wide.

I know the poisons of the shade,

I know the earth-nuts fit for food;

Then, pretty dear, be not afraid;

We'll find thy father in the wood.

Now laugh and be gay, to the  
woods away!

And there, my babe; we'll live for  
aye.

## THE IDIOT BOY

Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March  
night,

The moon is up—the sky is blue,  
The owlet in the moonlight air,  
He shouts from nobody knows  
where;

He lengthens out his lonely shout,  
Halloo! halloo! a long halloo!

—Why bustle thus about your door,  
What means this bustle, Betty Foy?  
Why are you in this mighty fret?  
And why on horseback have you set  
Him whom you love, your idiot  
boy?

Beneath the moon that shines so  
bright,

Till she is tired, let Betty Foy  
With girt and stirrup fiddle-faddle;  
But wherefore set upon a saddle  
Him whom she loves, her idiot boy?  
There's scarce a soul that's out of  
bed;

Good Betty! put him down again;  
His lips with joy they burr at you,  
But, Betty! what has he to do

With stirrup, saddle, or with rein?  
The world will say 'tis very idle,  
Bethink you of the time of night;  
There's not a mother, no not one,  
But when she hears what you have  
done,  
Oh! Betty she'll be in a fright.  
But Betty's bent on her intent,  
For her good neighbour, Susan  
Gale,  
Old Susan, she who dwells alone,  
Is sick, and makes a piteous moan,  
As if her very life would fail.  
There's not a house within a mile.  
No hand to help them in distress:  
Old Susan lies a bed in pain,  
And sorely puzzled are the twain,  
For what she ails they cannot guess.  
And Betty's husband's at the wood,  
Where by the week he doth abide,  
A woodman in the distant vale;  
There's none to help poor Susan  
Gale,  
What must be done? what will be-  
tide?  
And Betty from the lane has fetched  
Her pony, that is mild and good,  
Whether he be in joy or pain,  
Feeding at will along the lane,  
Or bringing faggots from the wood.  
And he is all in travelling trim,  
And by the moonlight, Betty Foy  
Has up upon the saddle set,  
The like was never heard of yet,  
Him whom she loves, her idiot boy.  
And he must post without delay  
Across the bridge that's in the dale,

And by the church, and o'er the  
down,  
To bring a doctor from the town,  
Or she will die, old Susan Gale.  
There is no need of boot or spur,  
There is no need of whip or wand,  
For Johnny has his holly-bough,  
And with a hurly-burly now  
He shakes the green bough in his  
hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told  
The boy who is her best delight,  
Both what to follow, what to shun,  
What do, and what to leave undone,  
How turn to left, and how to right.  
And Betty's most especial charge,  
Was, "Johnny! Johnny! mind that  
you

"Come home again, nor stop at all,  
"Come home again, whate'er befall,  
"My Johnny do, I pray you do."

To this did Johnny answer make,  
Both with his head, and with his  
hand,

And proudly shook the bridle too,  
And then! his words were not a few,  
Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,  
Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,  
She gently pats the pony's side,  
On which her idiot boy must ride,  
And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the pony moved his legs,  
Oh! then for the poor idiot boy!  
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,  
For joy his head and heels are idle,  
He's idle all for very joy.

And while the pony moves his legs,  
In Johnny's left-hand you may see,  
The green bough's motionless and  
    dead;  
The moon that shines above his  
    head  
Is not more still and mute than he.  
His heart it was so full of glee,  
That till full fifty yards were gone,  
He quite forgot his holly whip,  
And all his skill in horsemanship,  
Oh! happy, happy, happy John.  
And Betty's standing at the door,  
And Betty's face with joy o'erflows,  
Proud of herself, and proud of him,  
She sees him in his travelling trim;  
How quietly her Johnny goes.  
The silence of her idiot boy,  
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart!  
He's at the guide-post—he turns  
    right,  
She watches till he's out of sight,  
And Betty will not then depart.  
Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they  
    burr,  
As loud as any mill, or near it,  
Meek as a lamb the pony moves,  
And Johnny makes the noise he  
    loves,  
And Betty listens, glad to hear it.  
Away she hies to Susan Gale:  
And Johnny's in a merry tune,  
The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,  
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr,  
    burr,  
And on he goes beneath the moon.  
His steed and he right well agree,

For of this pony there's a rumour,  
That should he lose his eyes and  
ears,  
And should he live a thousand  
years,  
He never will be out of humour.  
But then he is a horse that thinks!  
And when he thinks his pace is  
slack;  
Now, though he knows poor  
Johnny well,  
Yet for his life he cannot tell  
What he has got upon his back.  
So through the moonlight lanes  
they go,  
And far into the moonlight dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the  
down,  
To bring a doctor from the town,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.  
And Betty, now at Susan's side,  
Is in the middle of her story,  
What comfort Johnny soon will  
bring,  
With many a most diverting thing,  
Of Johnny's wit and Johnny's glory.  
And Betty's still at Susan's side:  
By this time she's not quite so flur-  
ried;  
Demure with porringer and plate  
She sits, as if in Susan's fate  
Her life and soul were buried.  
But Betty, poor good woman! she,  
You plainly in her face may read it,  
Could lend out of that moment's  
store  
Five years of happiness or more,

To any that might need it.  
But yet I guess that now and then  
With Betty all was not so well,  
And to the road she turns her ears,  
And thence full many a sound she  
hears,  
Which she to Susan will not tell.  
Poor Susan moans, poor Susan  
groans,  
"As sure as there's a moon in  
heaven,"  
Cries Betty, "he'll be back again;  
"They'll both be here, 'tis almost ten,  
"They'll both be here before eleven."  
Poor Susan moans, poor Susan  
groans,  
The clock gives warning for eleven;  
'Tis on the stroke—"If Johnny's near,"  
Quoth Betty "he will soon be here,  
"As sure as there's a moon in  
heaven."  
The clock is on the stroke of twelve,  
And Johnny is not yet in sight,  
The moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,  
But Betty is not quite at ease;  
And Susan has a dreadful night.  
And Betty, half an hour ago,  
On Johnny vile reflections cast;  
"A little idle sauntering thing!"  
With other names, an endless string,  
But now that time is gone and past.  
And Betty's drooping at the heart,  
That happy time all past and gone,  
"How can it be he is so late?  
"The doctor he has made him wait,  
"Susan! they'll both be here anon."  
And Susan's growing worse and

worse,  
And Betty's in a sad quandary;  
And then there's nobody to say  
If she must go or she must stay:  
-She's in a sad quandary.  
The clock is on the stroke of one;  
But neither Doctor nor his guide  
Appear along the moonlight road,  
There's neither horse nor man  
abroad,  
And Betty's still at Susan's side.  
And Susan she begins to fear  
Of sad mischances not a few,  
That Johnny may perhaps be  
drown'd,  
Or lost perhaps, and never found;  
Which they must both for ever rue.  
She prefaced half a hint of this  
With, "God forbid it should be true!"  
At the first word that Susan said  
Cried Betty, rising from the bed,  
"Susan, I'd gladly stay with you.  
"I must be gone, I must away,  
"Consider, Johnny's but half-wise;  
"Susan, we must take care of him,  
"If he is hurt in life or limb"-  
"Oh God forbid!" poor Susan cries.  
"What can I do?" says Betty, going,  
"What can I do to ease your pain?  
"Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay;  
"I fear you're in a dreadful way,  
"But I shall soon be back again."  
"Good Betty go, good Betty go,  
"There's nothing that can ease my  
pain."  
Then off she hies, but with a prayer  
That God poor Susan's life would

spare,  
Till she comes back again.  
So, through the moonlight lane she  
goes,  
And far into the moonlight dale;  
And how she ran, and how she  
walked,  
And all that to herself she talked,  
Would surely be a tedious tale.  
In high and low, above, below,  
In great and small, in round and  
square,  
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,  
In bush and brake, in black and  
green,  
'Twas Johnny, Johnny, every where.  
She's past the bridge that's in the  
dale,  
And now the thought torments her  
sore,  
Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,  
To hunt the moon that's in the  
brook,  
And never will be heard of more.  
And now she's high upon the  
down,  
Alone amid a prospect wide;  
There's neither Johnny nor his  
horse,  
Among the fern or in the gorse;  
There's neither doctor nor his  
guide.  
"Oh saints! what is become of him?  
"Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,  
"Where he will stay till he is dead;  
"Or sadly he has been misled,  
"And joined the wandering gypsey-

folk.

"Or him that wicked pony's carried  
"To the dark cave, the goblins' hall,  
"Or in the castle he's pursuing,  
"Among the ghosts, his own undo-

ing;  
"Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she railed,  
While to the town she posts away;  
"If Susan had not been so ill,  
"Alas! I should have had him still,  
"My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty! in this sad distemper,  
The doctor's self would hardly  
spare,

Unworthy things she talked and  
wild,

Even he, of cattle the most mild,  
The pony had his share.

And now she's got into the town,  
And to the doctor's door she hies;  
Tis silence all on every side;  
The town so long, the town so wide,  
Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the doctor's door,  
She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap,  
The doctor at the casement shews,  
His glimmering eyes that peep and  
doze;

And one hand rubs his old night-  
cap.

"Oh Doctor! Doctor! where's my  
Johnny?"

"I'm here, what is't you want with  
me?"

"Oh Sir! you know I'm Betty Foy,  
"And I have lost my poor dear boy,

"You know him—him you often see;  
"He's not so wise as some folks be,"  
"The devil take his wisdom!" said  
The Doctor, looking somewhat  
grim,  
"What, woman! should I know of  
him?"  
And, grumbling, he went back to  
bed.

"O woe is me! O woe is me!  
"Here will I die; here will I die;  
"I thought to find my Johnny here,  
"But he is neither far nor near,  
"Oh! what a wretched mother I!"  
She stops, she stands, she looks  
about,  
Which way to turn she cannot tell.  
Poor Betty! it would ease her pain  
If she had heart to knock again;  
—The clock strikes three—a dismal  
knell!

Then up along the town she hies,  
No wonder if her senses fail,  
This piteous news so much it  
shock'd her,  
She quite forgot to send the Doctor,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.  
And now she's high upon the  
down,  
And she can see a mile of road,  
"Oh cruel! I'm almost three-score;  
"Such night as this was ne'er before,  
"There's not a single soul abroad."  
She listens, but she cannot hear  
The foot of horse, the voice of man;  
The streams with softest sound are  
flowing,

The grass you almost hear it grow-  
ing,  
You hear it now if e'er you can.  
The owlets through the long blue  
night  
Are shouting to each other still:  
Fond lovers, yet not quite hob nob,  
They lengthen out the tremulous  
sob,  
That echoes far from hill to hill.  
Poor Betty now has lost all hope,  
Her thoughts are bent on deadly  
sin;  
A green-grown pond she just has  
pass'd,  
And from the brink she hurries fast,  
Lest she should drown herself  
therein.  
And now she sits her down and  
weeps;  
Such tears she never shed before;  
"Oh dear, dear pony! my sweet joy!  
"Oh carry back my idiot boy!  
"And we will ne'er o'erload thee  
more."  
A thought is come into her head;  
"The pony he is mild and good,  
"And we have always used him  
well;  
"Perhaps he's gone along the dell,  
"And carried Johnny to the wood."  
Then up she springs as if on wings;  
She thinks no more of deadly sin;  
If Betty fifty ponds should see,  
The last of all her thoughts would  
be,  
To drown herself therein.

Oh reader! now that I might tell  
What Johnny and his horse are do-  
ing!  
What they've been doing all this  
time,  
Oh could I put it into rhyme,  
A most delightful tale pursuing!  
Perhaps, and no unlikely thought!  
He with his pony now doth roam  
The cliffs and peaks so high that are,  
To lay his hands upon a star,  
And in his pocket bring it home.  
Perhaps he's turned himself about,  
His face unto his horse's tail,  
And still and mute, in wonder lost,  
All like a silent horseman-ghost,  
He travels on along the vale.  
And now, perhaps, he's hunting  
sheep,  
A fierce and dreadful hunter he!  
Yon valley, that's so trim and green,  
In five months' time, should he be  
seen,  
A desert wilderness will be.  
Perhaps, with head and heels on  
fire,  
And like the very soul of evil,  
He's galloping away, away,  
And so he'll gallop on for aye,  
The bane of all that dread the devil.  
I to the muses have been bound,  
These fourteen years, by strong in-  
dentures;  
Oh gentle muses! let me tell  
But half of what to him befel,  
For sure he met with strange adven-  
tures.

Oh gentle muses! is this kind?  
 Why will ye thus my suit repel?  
 Why of your further aid bereave  
 me?  
 And can ye thus unfriended leave  
 me?  
 Ye muses! whom I love so well.  
 Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,  
 Which thunders down with head-  
 long force,  
 Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,  
 As careless as if nothing were,  
 Sits upright on a feeding horse?  
 Unto his horse, that's feeding free,  
 He seems, I think, the rein to give;  
 Of moon or stars he takes no heed;  
 Of such we in romances read,  
 -'Tis Johnny! Johnny! as I live.  
 And that's the very pony too.  
 Where is she, where is Betty Foy?  
 She hardly can sustain her fears;  
 The roaring water-fall she hears,  
 And cannot find her idiot boy.  
 Your pony's worth his weight in  
 gold,  
 Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy!  
 She's coming from among the trees,  
 And now, all full in view, she sees  
 Him whom she loves, her idiot boy.  
 And Betty sees the pony too:  
 Why stand you thus Good Betty  
 Foy?  
 It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,  
 'Tis he whom you so long have lost,  
 He whom you love, your idiot boy.  
 She looks again—her arms are up—  
 She screams—she cannot move for

joy;  
She darts as with a torrent's force,  
She almost has o'erturned the horse,  
And fast she holds her idiot boy.  
And Johnny burrs and laughs  
aloud,  
Whether in cunning or in joy,  
I cannot tell; but while he laughs,  
Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs,  
To hear again her idiot boy.  
And now she's at the pony's tail,  
And now she's at the pony's head,  
On that side now, and now on this,  
And almost stifled with her bliss,  
A few sad tears does Betty shed.  
She kisses o'er and o'er again,  
Him whom she loves, her idiot boy,  
She's happy here, she's happy  
there,  
She is uneasy every where;  
Her limbs are all alive with joy.  
She pats the pony, where or when  
She knows not, happy Betty Foy!  
The little pony glad may be,  
But he is milder far than she,  
You hardly can perceive his joy.  
"Oh! Johnny, never mind the Doc-  
tor;  
"You've done your best, and that is  
all."  
She took the reins, when this was  
said,  
And gently turned the pony's head  
From the loud water-fall.  
By this the stars were almost gone,  
The moon was setting on the hill,  
So pale you scarcely looked at her:

The little birds began to stir,  
Though yet their tongues were still.  
The pony, Betty, and her boy,  
Wind slowly through the woody  
dale:  
And who is she, be-times abroad,  
That hobbles up the steep rough  
road?  
Who is it, but old Susan Gale?  
Long Susan lay deep lost in  
thought,  
And many dreadful fears beset her,  
Both for her messenger and nurse;  
And as her mind grew worse and  
worse,  
Her body it grew better.  
She turned, she toss'd herself in  
bed,  
On all sides doubts and terrors met  
her;  
Point after point did she discuss;  
And while her mind was fighting  
thus,  
Her body still grew better.  
"Alas! what is become of them?  
"These fears can never be endured,  
"I'll to the wood."—The word scarce  
said,  
Did Susan rise up from her bed,  
As if by magic cured.  
Away she posts up hill and down,  
And to the wood at length is come,  
She spies her friends, she shouts a  
greeting;  
Oh me! it is a merry meeting,  
As ever was in Christendom.  
The owls have hardly sung their

last,  
While our four travellers home-  
ward wend;  
The owls have hooted all night long,  
And with the owls began my song,  
And with the owls must end.  
For while they all were travelling  
home,  
Cried Betty, "Tell us Johnny, do,  
"Where all this long night you have  
been,  
"What you have heard, what you  
have seen,  
"And Johnny, mind you tell us true."  
Now Johnny all night long had  
heard  
The owls in tuneful concert strive;  
No doubt too he the moon had seen;  
For in the moonlight he had been  
From eight o'clock till five.  
And thus to Betty's question, he  
Made answer, like a traveller bold,  
(His very words I give to you,)  
"The cocks did crow to-who, to-  
who,  
"And the sun did shine so cold."  
-Thus answered Johnny in his  
glory,  
And that was all his travel's story.

# LINES WRITTEN NEAR RICHMOND,

## UPON THE THAMES, AT EVENING

How rich the wave, in front, imprest  
With evening-twilight's summer  
hues,  
While, facing thus the crimson west,  
The boat her silent path pursues!  
And see how dark the backward  
stream!  
A little moment past, so smiling!  
And still, perhaps, with faithless  
gleam,  
Some other loiterer beguiling.  
Such views the youthful bard allure,  
But, heedless of the following  
gloom,  
He deems their colours shall endure  
'Till peace go with him to the tomb.  
—And let him nurse his fond deceit,  
And what if he must die in sorrow!  
Who would not cherish dreams so  
sweet,

Though grief and pain may come  
 to-morrow?  
 Glide gently, thus for ever glide,  
 O Thames! that other bards may  
 see,  
 As lovely visions by thy side  
 As now, fair river! come to me.  
 Oh glide, fair stream! for ever so;  
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,  
 'Till all our minds for ever flow,  
 As thy deep waters now are flow-  
 ing.  
 Vain thought! yet be as now thou  
 art,  
 That in thy waters may be seen  
 The image of a poet's heart,  
 How bright, how solemn, how  
 serene!  
 Such heart did once the poet bless,  
 Who, pouring here a<sup>3</sup> *later ditty*,  
 Could find no refuge from distress,  
 But in the milder grief of pity.  
 Remembrance! as we glide along,  
 For him suspend the dashing oar,  
 And pray that never child of Song  
 May know his freezing sorrows  
 more.  
 How calm! how still! the only  
 sound,  
 The dripping of the oar suspended!  
 -The evening darkness gathers  
 round  
 By virtue's holiest powers attended.

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<sup>3</sup>Collins's Ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his life-time. This Ode is also alluded to in the next stanza.

# EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

"Why William, on that old grey  
stone,  
"Thus for the length of half a day,  
"Why William, sit you thus alone,  
"And dream your time away?  
"Where are your books? that light  
bequeath'd  
"To beings else forlorn and blind!  
"Up! Up! and drink the spirit  
breath'd  
"From dead men to their kind.  
"You look round on your mother  
earth,  
"As if she for no purpose bore you;  
"As if you were her first-born birth,  
"And none had lived before you!"  
One morning thus, by Esthwaite  
lake,  
When life was sweet I knew not  
why,  
To me my good friend Matthew  
spake,

And thus I made reply.

"The eye it cannot chuse but see,

"We cannot bid the ear be still;

"Our bodies feel, where'er they be,

"Against, or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are powers,

"Which of themselves our minds impress,

"That we can feed this mind of ours,

"In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, mid all this mighty sum

"Of things for ever speaking,

"That nothing of itself will come,

"But we must still be seeking?

"—Then ask not wherefore, here,  
alone,

"Conversing as I may,

"I sit upon this old grey stone,

"And dream my time away."

# THE TABLES TURNED;

## AN EVENING SCENE, ON THE SAME SUBJECT

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.  
Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife,  
Come, hear 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.  
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  
Misshapes the beautiful forms of  
things;  
—We murder to dissect.  
Enough of science and of art;  
Close up these barren leaves;  
Come forth, and bring with you a  
heart  
That watches and receives.

# OLD MAN TRAVELLING;

## ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY, A SKETCH

The little hedge-row birds,  
That peck along the road, regard  
him not.  
He travels on, and in his face, his  
step,  
His gait, is one expression; every  
limb,  
His look and bending figure, all be-  
speak  
A man who does not move with  
pain, but moves  
With thought—He is insensibly sub-  
dued  
To settled quiet: he is one by whom  
All effort seems forgotten, one to  
whom  
Long patience has such mild com-  
posure given,  
That patience now doth seem a  
thing, of which  
He hath no need. He is by nature  
led

To peace so perfect, that the young  
  behold  
With envy, what the old man hardly  
  feels.  
-I asked him whither he was bound,  
  and what  
The object of his journey; he replied  
"Sir! I am going many miles to take  
"A last leave of my son, a mariner,  
"Who from a sea-fight has been  
  brought to Falmouth,  
And there is dying in an hospital."

# THE COMPLAINT OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN

*When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions; he is left behind, covered over with Deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he is unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the Desert; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other Tribes of Indians. It is unnecessary to add that the females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work, Hearne's Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean. When the Northern Lights, as the same writer informs us, vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise. This circumstance is alluded to in the first stanza of the following poem.*

Before I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away!  
In sleep I heard the northern  
gleams;  
The stars they were among my  
dreams;

In sleep did I behold the skies,  
I saw the crackling flashes drive;  
And yet they are upon my eyes,  
And yet I am alive.  
Before I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away!

My fire is dead: it knew no pain;  
Yet is it dead, and I remain.  
All stiff with ice the ashes lie;  
And they are dead, and I will die.  
When I was well, I wished to live,  
For clothes, for warmth, for food,  
and fire;  
But they to me no joy can give,  
No pleasure now, and no desire.  
Then here contented will I lie;  
Alone I cannot fear to die.

Alas! you might have dragged me  
on  
Another day, a single one!  
Too soon despair o'er me prevailed;  
Too soon my heartless spirit failed;  
When you were gone my limbs  
were stronger,  
And Oh how grievously I rue,  
That, afterwards, a little longer,  
My friends, I did not follow you!  
For strong and without pain I lay,  
My friends, when you were gone  
away.

My child! they gave thee to another,  
A woman who was not thy mother.  
When from my arms my babe they  
took,  
On me how strangely did he look!  
Through his whole body something  
ran,

A most strange something did I see;  
—As if he strove to be a man,  
That he might pull the sledge for  
me.

And then he stretched his arms,  
how wild!  
Oh mercy! like a little child.

My little joy! my little pride!  
In two days more I must have died.  
Then do not weep and grieve for  
me;

I feel I must have died with thee.  
Oh wind that o'er my head art fly-  
ing,

The way my friends their course did  
bend,

I should not feel the pain of dying,  
Could I with thee a message send.  
Too soon, my friends, you went  
away;

For I had many things to say.

I'll follow you across the snow,  
You travel heavily and slow:

In spite of all my weary pain,  
I'll look upon your tents again.

My fire is dead, and snowy white  
The water which beside it stood;  
The wolf has come to me to-night,  
And he has stolen away my food.

For ever left alone am I,  
Then wherefore should I fear to die?

My journey will be shortly run,  
I shall not see another sun,  
I cannot lift my limbs to know  
If they have any life or no.  
My poor forsaken child! if I

For once could have thee close to  
me,  
With happy heart I then would die,  
And my last thoughts would happy  
be,  
I feel my body die away,  
I shall not see another day.

## THE CONVICT

The glory of evening was spread  
through the west;

—On the slope of a mountain I  
stood;

While the joy that precedes the calm  
season of rest

Rang loud through the meadow  
and wood.

"And must we then part from a  
dwelling so fair?"

In the pain of my spirit I said,

And with a deep sadness I turned,  
to repair

To the cell where the convict is laid.

The thick-ribbed walls that  
o'ershadow the gate

Resound; and the dungeons un-  
fold:

I pause; and at length, through the  
glimmering grate,

That outcast of pity behold.

His black matted head on his shoul-  
der is bent,

And deep is the sigh of his breath,

And with stedfast dejection his eyes  
are intent  
On the fetters that link him to  
death.

'Tis sorrow enough on that visage to  
gaze.  
That body dismiss'd from his care;  
Yet my fancy has pierced to his  
heart, and pourtrays  
More terrible images there.

His bones are consumed, and his  
life-blood is dried,  
With wishes the past to undo;  
And his crime, through the pains  
that o'erwhelm him, descried,  
Still blackens and grows on his  
view.

When from the dark synod, or  
blood-reeking field,  
To his chamber the monarch is led,  
All soothers of sense their soft  
virtue shall yield,  
And quietness pillow his head.

But if grief, self-consumed, in obliv-  
ion would doze,  
And conscience her tortures ap-  
pease,  
'Mid tumult and uproar this man  
must repose;  
In the comfortless vault of disease.

When his fetters at night have so  
press'd on his limbs,  
That the weight can no longer be  
borne,  
If, while a half-slumber his memory  
bedims,

The wretch on his pallet should  
turn,  
While the jail-mastiff howls at the  
dull clanking chain,  
From the roots of his hair there shall  
start  
A thousand sharp punctures of  
cold-sweating pain,  
And terror shall leap at his heart.  
But now he half-raises his deep-  
sunken eye,  
And the motion unsettles a tear;  
The silence of sorrow it seems to  
supply,  
And asks of me why I am here.  
"Poor victim! no idle intruder has  
stood  
"With o'erweening complacence  
our state to compare,  
"But one, whose first wish is the  
wish to be good,  
"Is come as a brother thy sorrows to  
share.  
"At thy name though compassion  
her nature resign,  
"Though in virtue's proud mouth  
thy report be a stain,  
"My care, if the arm of the mighty  
were mine,  
"Would plant thee where yet thou  
might'st blossom again."

LINES WRITTEN A FEW  
MILES ABOVE TINTERN  
ABBEY,

ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING  
A TOUR, July 13, 1798.

Five years have passed; five sum-  
mers, with the length  
Of five long winters! and again I  
hear  
These waters, rolling from their  
mountain-springs  
With a sweet inland murmur.<sup>4</sup>—  
Once again  
Do I behold these steep and lofty  
cliffs,  
Which on a wild secluded scene im-  
press  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion;  
and connect  
The landscape with the quiet of the  
sky.

---

<sup>4</sup>The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern.

The day is come when I again re-  
pose  
Here, under this dark sycamore,  
and view  
These plots of cottage-ground, these  
orchard-tufts,  
Which, at this season, with their un-  
ripe 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,  
With some uncertain notice, as  
might seem,  
Of vagrant dwellers in the house-  
less 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,  
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 influ-  
ence  
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,  
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



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  
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  
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  
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 sub-  
lime  
Of something far more deeply inter-  
fused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of set-  
ting 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. There-  
fore 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,<sup>5</sup>  
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,  
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,

---

<sup>5</sup>This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young, the exact expression of which I cannot recollect.

Knowing that Nature never did be-  
tray  
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 in-  
form  
The mind that is within us, so im-  
press  
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 dis-  
turb  
Our cheerful faith that all which we  
behold  
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the  
moon  
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;  
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 har-  
monies; 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,  
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 for-  
get  
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,  
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.

V

.....END