

5 The purple noon's transparent might,  
The breath of the moist earth is light,  
Around its unexpanded buds;  
Like many a voice of one delight,  
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,  
The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

2

10 I see the Deep's untrampled floor  
With green and purple seaweeds strown;  
I see the waves upon the shore,  
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:  
I sit upon the sands alone—  
15 The lightning of the noontide ocean  
Is flashing round me, and a tone  
Arises from its measured motion;  
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

3

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,  
20 Nor peace within nor calm around,  
Nor that content surpassing wealth  
The sage in meditation found,  
And walked with inward glory crowned—  
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.  
25 Others I see whom these surround—  
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;  
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

4

Yet now despair itself is mild,  
Even as the winds and waters are;  
30 I could lie down like a tired child,  
And weep away the life of care  
Which I have borne and yet must bear,  
Till death like sleep might steal on me,  
And I might feel in the warm air  
35 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea  
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

5

Some might lament that I were cold,  
As I, when this sweet day is gone,  
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,  
40 Insults with this untimely moan;  
They might lament—for I am one  
Whom men love not—and yet regret,  
Unlike this day, which, when the sun  
Shall on its stainless glory set,  
45 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

1818

## England in 1819

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king<sup>4</sup>—  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race,<sup>5</sup> who flow  
Through public scorn—mud from a muddy spring;  
Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,  
5 But leechlike to their fainting country cling,  
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow;  
A people starved and stabbed in the untilled field—  
An army, which liberticide<sup>6</sup> and prey  
Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield;  
10 Golden and sanguine<sup>7</sup> laws which tempt and slay;  
Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;  
A Senate—Time's worst statute<sup>8</sup> unrepealed—  
Are graves, from which a glorious Phantom<sup>9</sup> may  
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

1819

1839

## Ode to the West Wind<sup>1</sup>

1

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,  
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,  
5 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

10 Her clarion<sup>2</sup> o'er the dreaming earth, and fill  
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)  
With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;  
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

4. George III (1738–1820), who lived for years in a state of advanced senility. The "Princes" of line 2 are George III's sons, including the Prince-Regent, later George IV, whom Shelley detested.

5. The "Hanoverian" line of English monarchs, beginning in 1714 with George I.

6. Destruction of liberty.

7. Sanguinary; causing bloodshed.

8. I.e., probably the Act of Union (1801), uniting Ireland to England and excluding Roman Catholics from exercising full citizenship.

9. I.e., the spirit of liberty.

1. "This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapours which pour down the autumnal rains" [Shelley's note]. Florence was the home of Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), who originated the verse form of Shelley's *Ode* (see *terza rima*, p. 1114) for his masterpiece, *The Divine Comedy* (*La divina commedia*).

2. Melodious trumpet-call.

1824

## 2

15 Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,  
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,  
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels<sup>3</sup> of rain and lightning: there are spread  
On the blue surface of thine aëry surge,  
20 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad,<sup>4</sup> even from the dim verge  
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,  
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night  
25 Will be the dome of a vast sepulcher,  
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere  
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: oh, hear!

## 3

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams  
30 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,  
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,<sup>5</sup>  
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

35 All overgrown with azure moss and flowers  
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou  
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below  
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear  
40 The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,  
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

## 4

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;  
45 A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free  
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even  
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

3. In Greek derivation, messengers or divine messengers.

4. Frenzied dancer, worshiper of Dionysus (Greek

god of wine and fertility).

5. Near Naples, Italy.

The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,  
50 As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed  
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.  
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!  
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

55 A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed  
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

## 5

Make me thy lyre,<sup>6</sup> even as the forest is:  
What if my leaves are falling like its own!  
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

60 Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,  
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,  
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe  
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!  
65 And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth  
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!  
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,  
70 If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

1820

## The Cloud

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,  
From the seas and the streams;  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In their noonday dreams.

5 From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
10 And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
And their great pines groan aghast;

6. Small harp traditionally used to accompany songs and recited poems.

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1770–1850

## Lines

*Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour. July 13, 1798*<sup>1</sup>

Five years have passed; five summers, with the length  
Of five long winters! and again I hear  
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs  
With a soft inland murmur. Once again  
5 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,  
That on a wild secluded scene impress  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect  
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
The day is come when I again repose  
10 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view  
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,  
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,  
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves  
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see  
15 These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines  
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,  
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke  
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!  
With some uncertain notice, as might seem  
20 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,  
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire  
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye;  
25 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,  
30 With tranquil restoration—feelings too  
Of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts  
35 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

40 Of all this unintelligible world,  
Is lightened—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  
45 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul;  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

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

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,  
With many recognitions dim and faint,  
60 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,  
The picture of the mind revives again;  
While here I stand, not only with the sense  
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts  
That in this moment there is life and food  
65 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,  
70 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<sup>2</sup> pleasures of my boyish days,  
And their glad animal movements all gone by)  
75 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 colors and their forms, were then to me  
80 An appetite; a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,  
And all its aching joys are now no more,  
85 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
Faint<sup>3</sup> I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts  
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,

*become discouraged*

1. Ruins of a medieval abbey situated in the valley of the river Wye, in Monmouthshire, noted for its

2. i.e., primarily physical

Abundant recompense. For I have learned  
 To look on nature, not as in the hour  
 90 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes  
 The still, sad music of humanity,  
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power  
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
 95 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply interfused,  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
 And the round ocean and the living air,  
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:  
 100 A motion and a spirit, that impels  
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still  
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
 And mountains; and of all that we behold  
 105 From this green earth; of all the mighty world  
 Of eye, and ear—both what they half create,  
 And what perceive; well pleased to recognize  
 In nature and the language of the sense  
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,  
 110 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<sup>o</sup> to decay:  
 For thou art with me here upon the banks  
 115 Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,<sup>3</sup>  
 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  
 120 May I behold in thee what I was once,  
 My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,  
 Knowing that Nature never did betray  
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,  
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
 125 From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
 The mind that is within us, so impress  
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
 130 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon  
 135 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;  
 And let the misty mountain winds be free

*vital energies*

To blow against thee: and, in after years,  
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured  
 Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind  
 140 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,  
 Thy memory be as a dwelling place  
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,  
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief  
 Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts  
 145 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 forget  
 150 That on the banks of this delightful stream  
 We stood together; and that I, so long  
 A worshiper of Nature, hither came  
 Unwearied in that service; rather say  
 With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal  
 155 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!

1798

## From The Prelude

### From Book I

Fair seedtime had my soul, and I grew up  
 Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:  
 Much favored in my birthplace,<sup>4</sup> and no less  
 In that belovèd Vale<sup>5</sup> to which erelong  
 305 We were transplanted—there were we let loose  
 For sports of wider range. Ere I had told  
 Ten birthdays, when among the mountain slopes  
 Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had snapped  
 The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy  
 310 With store of springes<sup>o</sup> o'er my shoulder hung  
 To range the open heights where woodcocks run  
 Along the smooth green turf. Through half the night,  
 Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied  
 That anxious visitation—moon and stars  
 315 Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,  
 And seemed to be a trouble to the peace  
 That dwelt among them. Sometimes it befell  
 In these night wanderings, that a strong desire  
 O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird  
 320 Which was the captive of another's toil  
 Became my prey; and when the deed was done

*snares*

4. Cockermouth, in the northern part of the Eng- 5. Esthwaite, also in the Lakes.



In solitude, such intercourse was mine;  
 Mine was it in the fields both day and night,  
 And by the waters, all the summer long.

- 425 And in the frosty season, when the sun  
 Was set, and visible for many a mile  
 The cottage windows blazed through twilight gloom,  
 I heeded not their summons: happy time  
 It was indeed for all of us—for me  
 430 It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud  
 The village clock tolled six—I wheeled about,  
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
 That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,  
 We hissed along the polished ice in games  
 435 Confederate, imitative of the chase  
 And woodland pleasures—the resounding horn,  
 The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.  
 So through the darkness and the cold we flew,  
 And not a voice was idle; with the din  
 440 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;  
 The leafless trees and every icy crag  
 Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills  
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
 Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars  
 445 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west  
 The orange sky of evening died away.  
 Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
 Into a silent bay, or sportively  
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,  
 450 To cut across the reflex<sup>o</sup> of a star  
 That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed  
 Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,  
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,  
 And all the shadowy banks on either side  
 455 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still  
 The rapid line of motion, then at once  
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
 Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs  
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled  
 460 With visible motion her diurnal round!  
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,  
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched  
 Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

- Ye Presences of Nature in the sky  
 465 And on the earth! Ye Visions of the hills!  
 And Souls of lonely places! can I think  
 A vulgar<sup>o</sup> hope was yours when ye employed  
 Such ministry, when ye, through many a year  
 Haunting me thus among my boyish sports,  
 470 On caves and trees, upon the woods and hills,  
 Impressed upon all forms the characters

reflection

lowly

The surface of the universal earth  
 With triumph and delight, with hope and fear,  
 475 Work like a sea?

1798–1800

1850



### She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways

She dwelt among the untrodden ways  
 Beside the springs of Dove.<sup>6</sup>  
 A Maid whom there were none to praise  
 And very few to love;

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

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

1800

### Three Years She Grew

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

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

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

- "The floating clouds their state shall lend  
 20 To her; for her the willow bend;  
 Nor shall she fail to see  
 Even in the motions of the Storm

6. Several rivers in England are named Dove.

Grace that shall mold the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

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

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

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

1800

### A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal

A slumber did my spirit seal;  
I had no human fears:  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

- 5 No motion has she now, no force;  
She neither hears nor sees;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

1800

### Resolution and Independence

1

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

2

All things that love the sun are out of doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;  
The grass is bright with rain-drops on the moor.

The hare is running races in her mirth;  
And with her feet she from the plashy earth  
Raises a mist; that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

3

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

4

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

5

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

6

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

7

- I thought of Chatterton,<sup>7</sup> the marvelous Boy,  
The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride;  
45 Of Him<sup>8</sup> who walked in glory and in joy  
Following his plow, along the mountain-side:  
By our own spirits are we deified:  
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;  
But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

8

- 50 Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,  
A leading from above, a something given,  
Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,

7. Thomas Chatterton (1752–1770), a gifted English poet who committed suicide.

8. Robert Burns (1759–1796), who died before achieving his later great renown.

# My Heart Leaps Up

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

William Wordsworth

1807

## Ode

### Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood

The Child is father of the Man;  
 And I could wish my days to be  
 Bound each to each by natural piety.<sup>6</sup>

1

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

2

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

3

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
 20 And while the young lambs bound  
 As to the tabor's sound,<sup>7</sup>  
 To me alone there came a thought of grief:  
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
 And I again am strong:  
 25 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;  
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;  
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,

6. Final lines of Wordsworth's "My Heart Leaps Up."  
 7. "Tabor": a small drum.

The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,  
 And all the earth is gay;

30

Land and sea  
 Give themselves up to jollity,  
 And with the heart of May  
 Doth every Beast keep holiday—  
 Thou Child of Joy,

35

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd-boy!

4

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call

Ye to each other make; I see

The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;

My heart is at your festival,

40

My head hath its coronal,

The fullness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.

Oh, evil day! if I were sullen

While Earth herself is adorning,

This sweet May morning,

45

And the Children are culling

On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and wide,

Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,

And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm—

50

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!

—But there's a Tree, of many, one,

A single Field which I have looked upon,

Both of them speak of something that is gone:

The Pansy at my feet

55

Doth the same tale repeat:

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

5

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:

The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

60

Hath had elsewhere its setting,

And cometh from afar:

Not in entire forgetfulness,

And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come

65

From God, who is our home:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Shades of the prison-house begin to close

Upon the growing Boy

But he

70

Beholds the light, and whence it flows,

He sees it in his joy;

The Youth, who daily farther from the east

Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,

And by the vision splendid

75

Is on his way attended;

At length the Man perceives it die away,

And fade into the light of common day.



Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,

80

And no unworthy aim,

The homely<sup>8</sup> Nurse doth all she can

To make her foster child, her Innate Man,

Forget the glories he hath known,

And that imperial palace whence he came.

85

## 7

Behold the Child among his newborn blisses,

A six-years' Darling of a pygmy size!

See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,

Fretted<sup>9</sup> by sallies of his mother's kisses,

90

With light upon him from his father's eyes!

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,

Some fragment from his dream of human life,

Shaped by himself with newly-learned art,

A wedding or a festival,

A mourning or a funeral;

95

And this hath now his heart,

And unto this he frames his song;

Then will he fit his tongue

To dialogues of business, love, or strife;

100

Ere it will not be long

But it will be thrown aside,

And with new joy and pride

The little Actor cons<sup>10</sup> another part,

Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"<sup>11</sup>

105

With all the Persons,<sup>12</sup> down to palsied Age,

That Life brings with her in her equipage;<sup>13</sup>

As if his whole vocation

Were endless imitation.

## 8

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie

110

Thy Soul's immensity;

Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep

Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,

Haunted forever by the eternal mind—

115

Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!

On whom those truths do rest,

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,

In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;

Thou, over whom thy Immortality

120

Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,

A Presence which is not to be put by;

Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might

Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,

Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke  
The years to bring the inevitableness at strife?

125

Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife,

Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,

And custom lie upon thee with a weight,

Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

## 9

O joy! that in our embers

Is something that doth live,

Is something that remembers

That nature yet remembers

What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed

135

Perpetual benediction: not indeed

For that which is most worthy to be blest,

Delight and liberty, the simple creed

Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,

With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast—

140

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise;

But for those obstinate questionings

Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings;

Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realized,

High instincts before which our mortal Nature

Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised,

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being

Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,

To perish never;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,

Nor Man nor Boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,

Can utterly abolish or destroy!

Hence in a season of calm weather

Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither,

Can in a moment travel thither,

And see the Children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## 10

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!

And let the young Lambs bound

As to the tabor's sound!

We in thought will join your throng,

Ye that pipe and ye that play,

commits to memory  
dramatis personae  
group of servants

simple, kindly

veered

8. I.e., playing the parts of characters with various temperaments, called "humors" by Elizabethan poets and playwrights; "humorous stage" is a quotation from line 1 of Samuel Daniel's dedicatory sonnet to Fulke Greville, in *Muscophilus*.



- 175 Ye that through your hearts today  
 Feel the gladness of the May!  
 What though the radiance which was once so bright  
 Be now forever taken from my sight,  
 Though nothing can bring back the hour  
 Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;  
 180 We will grieve not, rather find  
 Strength in what remains behind;  
 In the primal sympathy  
 Which having been must ever be;  
 In the soothing thoughts that spring  
 185 Out of human suffering;  
 In the faith that looks through death,  
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## 11

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

1802-04

symbols of victory

most ordinary / blooms

1807

## I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud

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

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

- The waves beside them danced; but they  
 Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;  
 15 A poet could not but be gay,  
 In such a jocund<sup>o</sup> company;  
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
 What wealth the show to me had brought:

cheerful

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

1807

## She Was a Phantom of Delight

vivid image

- She was a Phantom<sup>o</sup> of delight  
 When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
 A lovely Apparition, sent  
 To be a moment's ornament;  
 5 Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;  
 Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
 But all things else about her drawn  
 From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;  
 A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
 10 To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

- I saw her upon nearer view,  
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too!  
 Her household motions light and free,  
 And steps of virgin-liberty;  
 15 A countenance in which did meet  
 Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
 A Creature not too bright or good  
 For human nature's daily food;  
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
 20 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

- And now I see with eye serene  
 The very pulse of the machine;<sup>9</sup>  
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
 A Traveler between life and death;  
 25 The reason firm, the temperate will,  
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
 A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
 To warn, to comfort, and command;  
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
 30 With something of angelic light.

1807