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| **Lines** |
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| **Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour July 13, 1798** |
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| **William Wordsworth (1770–1850)** |
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| |  | | --- | |  | | FIVE years have past; 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 |  | | Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, | *5* | | 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 |  | | Here, under this dark sycamore, and view | *10* | | 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 |  | | These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines | *15* | | 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 |  | | Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, | *20* | | 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. | *50* | | If this 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, | *55* | | Have hung upon the beatings of my heart, |  | | How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee, |  | | O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro’ the woods, |  | | How often has my spirit turned to thee! |  | | And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought, | *60* | | With many recognitions dim and faint, |  | | And somewhat of a sad perplexity, |  | | The picture of the mind revives again: |  | | While here I stand, not only with the sense |  | | Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts | *65* | | 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 | *70* | | 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, | *75* | | 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, | *80* | | 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, nor any interest |  | | Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past, | *85* | | 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 | *90* | | To look on nature, not as in the hour |  | | 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 | *95* | | A presence that disturbs me with the joy |  | | 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, | *100* | | And the blue sky, and in the mind of man: |  | | A motion and a spirit, that impels |  | | All thinking things, all objects of all thought, |  | | And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still |  | | A lover of the meadows and the woods, | *105* | | 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, |  | | And what perceive; well pleased to recognise |  | | In nature and the language of the sense, | *110* | | 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 | *120* | | My former pleasures in the shooting lights |  | | Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while |  | | May I behold in thee what I was once, |  | | My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make |  | | Knowing that Nature never did betray | *125* | | The heart that loved her; ’tis her privilege |  | | Through all the years of this our life, to lead |  | | From joy to joy: for she can so inform |  | | The mind that is within us, so impress |  | | With quietness and beauty, and so feed | *130* | | With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues, |  | | Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men, |  | | Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all |  | | The dreary intercourse of daily life, |  | | Shall e’er prevail against us, or disturb | *135* | | 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, | *140* | | When these wild ecstasies shall be matured |  | | Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind |  | | Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, |  | | Thy memory be as a dwelling-place |  | | For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then, | *145* | | 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 | *150* | | Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes those gleams |  | | Of past existence,—wilt thou then forget |  | | That on the banks of this delightful stream |  | | We stood together; and that I, so long |  | | A worshipper of Nature, hither came | *155* | | 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, | *160* | | And this green pastoral landscape, were to me |  | | More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake! |  | |