

## There was a Boy

There was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs  
 And islands of Winander!--many a time,  
 At evening, when the earliest stars began  
 To move along the edges of the hills,  
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone,  
 Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake;  
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands  
 Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth  
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls, 10  
 That they might answer him.--And they would shout  
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
 Responsive to his call,--with quivering peals,  
 And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud  
 Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild  
 Of jocund din! And, when there came a pause  
 Of silence such as baffled his best skill:  
 Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung  
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
 Has carried far into his heart the voice 20  
 Of mountain-torrents; or the visible scene  
 Would enter unawares into his mind  
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received  
 Into the bosom of the steady lake.  
 This boy was taken from his mates, and died  
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.  
 Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale  
 Where he was born and bred: the churchyard hangs  
 Upon a slope above the village-school; 30  
 And, through that church-yard when my way has led  
 On summer-evenings, I believe, that there  
 A long half-hour together I have stood  
 Mute--looking at the grave in which he lies!

## Nutting

-It seems a day  
 (I speak of one from many singled out)  
 One of those heavenly days that cannot die;  
 When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
 I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth  
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,  
 A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my steps  
 Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint,  
 Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds  
 Which for that service had been husbanded, 10  
 By exhortation of my frugal Dame--  
 Motley accoutrement, of power to smile  
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,--and, in truth,  
 More ragged than need was! O'er pathless rocks,  
 Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,  
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook  
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
 Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign  
 Of devastation; but the hazels rose  
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung, 20  
 A virgin scene!--A little while I stood,  
 Breathing with such suppression of the heart  
 As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint  
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
 The banquet;--or beneath the trees I sate  
 Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;  
 A temper known to those, who, after long  
 And weary expectation, have been blest  
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.  
 Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves 30  
 The violets of five seasons re-appear  
 And fade, unseen by any human eye;  
 Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
 For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam,