

William Wordsworth, "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood"

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

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

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound 20
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong: 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,
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!

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 fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
O 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 look'd 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?

 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 beholds the light, and whence it flows, 70
 He sees it in his joy;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended; 75
 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 nurse doth all she can
 To make her foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came. 85

 Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' darling of a pigmy size!
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes! 90
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd 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

Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized, 150
 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, 155
 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, 160
 To perish never:
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy! 165
 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, 170
 And see the children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
 And let the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound! 175
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May!
 What though the radiance which was once so bright 180
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind; 185
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through death, 190
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves!
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
 I only have relinquish'd one delight 195
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they;

The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet; 200
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live, 205
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.