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**She was a phantom of delight**

(1798)

She was a phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
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,  
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A spirit, yet a woman too!  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin liberty;  
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,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A traveller between life and death;  
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  
With something of angelic light.

**We Are Seven**

*(Lyrical Ballads, 1798)*

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 ye 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!'