

LINES LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE WHICH STANDS NEAR THE LAKE OF ESTHWAITE, ON A DESOLATE PART OF THE SHORE, YET COMMANDING A BEAUTIFUL PROSPECT.

—Nay, Traveller! rest. This lonely yew-tree stands  
Far from all human dwelling: what if here  
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb;  
What if these barren boughs the bee not loves;  
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,  
That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind  
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

—Who he was

That piled these stones, and with the mossy sod  
First covered o'er, and taught this aged tree,  
Now wild, to bend its arms in circling shade,  
I well remember.—He was one who own'd  
No common soul. In youth, by genius nurs'd,  
And big with lofty views, he to the world  
Went forth, pure in his heart, against the taint  
Of dissolute tongues, 'gainst jealousy, and hate,  
And scorn, against all enemies prepared,  
All but neglect: and so, his spirit damped  
At once, with rash disdain he turned away,  
And with the food of pride sustained his soul  
In solitude.—Stranger! these gloomy boughs  
Had charms for him; and here he loved to sit,  
His only visitants a straggling sheep,  
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper;  
And on these barren rocks, with juniper,  
And heath, and thistle, thinly sprinkled o'er,  
Fixing his downward eye, he many an hour  
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here  
An emblem of his own unfruitful life:  
And lifting up his head, he then would gaze  
On the more distant scene; how lovely 'tis  
Thou seest, and he would gaze till it became  
Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain  
The beauty still more beautiful. Nor, that time,  
Would he forget those beings, to whose minds,  
Warm from the labours of benevolence,  
The world, and man himself, appeared a scene  
Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh  
With mournful joy, to think that others felt  
What he must never feel: and so, lost man!  
On visionary views would fancy feed,

Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale  
He died, this seat his only monument.

If thou be one whose heart the holy forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,  
Stranger! henceforth be warned; and know, that pride,  
Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; that thought with him  
Is in its infancy. The man, whose eye  
Is ever on himself, doth look on one,  
The least of nature's works, one who might move  
The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds  
Unlawful, ever. O, be wiser thou!  
Instructed that true knowledge leads to love,  
True dignity abides with him alone  
Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,  
Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
In lowliness of heart.