

SISTERS  
(Lyrics after Alfred Tennyson)

We were two daughters of one race  
She was the fairest in the face:  
They were together, and she fell;  
Therefore revenge became me well.

The wind is howling in turret  
and tree.  
Oh the Earl was fair to see!

She dies: she went to burning flame:  
she mixed her ancient blood with shame.  
Whole weeks and months, and early and late  
To win his love I lay in wait:  
Oh the Earl was fair to see!

I made a feast; I bad him come;  
I won his love, I brought him home.  
And after supper, on a bed,  
Upon my lap he laid his head:  
Oh the Earl was fair to see!

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest:  
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.  
I hated him with the hate of hell  
But I loved his beauty passing well:

I rose up in the silent night:  
I made my dagger sharp and bright.  
As half-asleep his breath he drew  
Three times I stabb'd him thro'  
and thro'.

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
He look'd so grand when he was dead.  
The wind is blowing in turret  
and tree.

I wrapt his body in the sheet,  
and laid him at his mother's feet.  
Oh the Earl was fair to see!

Oh, sister, I did it for you.  
I took revenge, there is no rue.  
Staying alone is now my bane.  
After all, I feel a creeping pain.

Oh, the Earl was fair to see!

THE SANDS OF DEE  
(Lyrics after Thomas Moore)

Is it weed or fish or floating hair above the nets at sea? Oh, drowned maiden's hair, a tress of golden hair among the stakes of Dee?

They rowed her in, across the rolling foam,  
the cruel, hungry foam ...

The western wind was wild and dank with foam.

The creeping tide came up along the sand.

The blinding mist came down and hid the land -  
never home came she ...

Oh, Mary, go and call the cattle home.

(The) western wind was wild and dank with foam.

Call the cattle home and all alone went she.

The creeping tide came up along the sand

as far as eye could see and round the sand.

The blinding mist came down and hid the land -  
never home came she.

Oh, is it weed or fish or floating hair above the nets at sea?

Oh, drowned maiden's hair, a tress of golden hair among the stakes of Dee.

They rowed her in across the rolling foam.

The cruel, hungry foam across the sands of Dee,

(but) still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home.

Blinding mist came down

and never, never, never home came she.

SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND  
(Lyrics after Thomas Moore)

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,  
And lovers are round her, sighing:  
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,  
For her heart in his grave is lying

She sings the wild song of her dear native plains,  
Every note which he loved awaking;  
Ah, little they think who delight in her strains  
How the heart of the Minstrel is breaking

Oh, make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,  
When they promise a glorious morrow;  
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the West,  
From her own loved island of sorrow

THE ANGEL FLIES  
(Lyrics after William Blake)

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?  
And that I was a maiden queen  
Guarded by an Angel mild

And I wept both night and day  
And he wiped my tears away  
And I wept both day and night

So he took his wings and fled:  
Then the mourn blushed rosy red  
I dried my tears and armed my fears

Soon my Angel came again  
I was armed, he came in vain:  
For the time of youth was fled

If I live            or if I die  
Grey hairs        were on my head

Little fly, thy summer's play  
My thoughtless hand has brushed away  
Guarded by an Angel mild

Am not I a fly like thee  
Or art not thou a man like me  
Guarded by an Angel mild

For I dance and drink and sing  
Till some blinde hand shall brush my wing  
Guarded by an Angel mild

Then am I a happy fly  
If I live or or if I die  
Guarded by an Angel mild

If I live            or if I die  
Grey hairs        were on my head

STRANGE WAYS  
(Lyrics after George Byron)

There is some walking      in the pathless wood  
There is a rapture      on the lonely shore  
    There is an Ocean, there is an Ocean  
    Roll on you deep, roll on you blue (ocean)

Strange ways – strange ways  
Strange ways – strange ways

A glorious mirror,      glasses itself  
in tempests      and in all time;

Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm

Dark heaving – boundless, endless and sublime  
Strange ways      strange ways      strange ways

His steps are not upon your paths, your fields  
Are not a spoil for him, and shake him from yours’;

When, in a moment,      like a drop of rain  
He sinks into the depth with bubbling groan

Dark heaving – boundless, endless and sublime  
Strange ways      strange ways      strange ways

LUNATIC BOY  
(Lyrics after Charles Causley)

Trees turned and talked to me, Tigers sang,  
Houses put on leaves, water rang.  
Flew in, flew out on my tongue's thread  
A speech of birds from my hurt head.

At my fine loin fire and cloud kissed,  
rummaged the green bone, beneath my wrist.  
I saw a sentence of fern and tare  
write with loud light the mineral air.

On a stopped morning the city spoke,  
in my rich mouth oceans broke.  
No more on the spun shore I walked unfed,  
I drank the sweet see, stones were bread.  
Then came the healer grave as grass,  
his hair of water and hand of glass.  
I watched at his tongue the white words eat,  
in death, dismounted at his stabbed feet.

Now river is river and tree is tree,  
my house stands still as the northern see.  
On my hundreds of parables I heard him pray,  
seize my smashed world, wrap it away.

Now the pebble is sour, the birds beat high,  
the fern is silent, the river dry.  
A seething summer burned to bone,  
feeds at my mouth but finds a stone.  
Flew in, flew out on my tongue's thread,  
a speech of birds from my hurt head.