

***The Prelude* (1799–1806), Book XIII, ll.29–44**

With forehead bent
Earthward, as if in opposition set
Against an enemy, I panted up
With eager pace, and no less eager thoughts.
Thus might we wear perhaps an hour away,
Ascending at loose distance each from each,
And I, as chanced, the foremost of the Band,
When at my feet the ground appear'd to brighten,
And with a step or two seem'd brighter still,
Nor had I time to ask the cause of this,
For instantly a Light upon the turf
Fell like a flash: I look'd about, and lo!
The Moon stood naked in the Heavens, at height
Immense above my head, and on the shore
I found myself of a huge sea of mist,
Which meek and silent, rested at my feet: ...

(Owens and Johnson, 1998, pp.169–7)

'The Idiot Boy' (1798)

'Tis eight o'clock, – a clear March night,
The moon is up, – the sky is blue,
The owlet, in the moonlight air, –
Shouts from nobody knows where;
He lengthens out his lonely shout,
Halloo! halloo! A long halloo!

– Why bustle thus about your door?
What means this bustle, Betty Foy?
Why are you in this mighty fret?
And why on horseback have you set
Him whom you love, your idiot boy?

(Hutchinson, rev. edn 1969, p.100)