

Our childhood's days return again in thought,  
 We wander in a land of love and light,  
 And mingled memories, joy — and sorrow — fraught  
 Gush on our hearts with overwhelming might.  
 Sweet flowers seem gleaming 'mid the tangled grass  
 Sparkling with spray-drops from the rushing rill,  
 And as these fleeting visions fade and pass  
 Perchance some pensive tears our eyes may fill. . . .  
 These soon are wiped away, again we turn  
 With fresh delight to the enchanted page  
 Where pictured thoughts that breathe and speak and burn  
 Still please alike our youth and riper age.  
 There rises some lone rock all wet with surge  
 And dashing billows glimmering in the light  
 Of a wan moon, whose silent rays emerge  
 From clouds that veil their lustre, cold and bright.  
 And there 'mongst reeds upon a river's side  
 A wild bird sits, and brooding o'er her nest  
 Still guards the priceless gems, her joy and pride,  
 Now ripening 'neath her hope-enlivened breast.  
 We turn the page: before the expectant eye  
 A traveller stands lone on some desert heath;  
 The glorious sun is passing from the sky  
 While fall his farewell rays on all beneath;  
 O'er the far hills a purple veil seems flung,  
 Dim herald of the coming shades of night;  
 E'en now Diana's lamp aloft is hung,  
 Drinking full radiance from the fount of light.  
 Oh, when the solemn wind of midnight sighs,  
 Where will the lonely traveller lay his head?  
 Beneath the tester of the star-bright skies  
 On the wild moor he 'll find a dreary bed.  
 Now we behold a marble Naiad placed  
 Beside a fountain on her sculptured throne,  
 Her bending form with simplest beauty graced,  
 Her white robes gathered in a snowy zone.  
 She from a polished vase pours forth a stream  
 Of sparkling water to the waves below  
 Which roll in light and music, while the gleam  
 Of sunshine flings through shade a golden glow.  
 A hundred fairer scenes these leaves reveal;  
 But there are tongues that injure while they praise:  
 I cannot speak the rapture that I feel  
 When on the work of such a mind I gaze.  
 Then farewell, Bewick, genius' favoured son,  
 Death's sleep is on thee, all thy woes are past;  
 From earth departed, life and labour done,  
 Eternal peace and rest are thine at last.

C. Brontë, 27 November, 1832

This poem was first printed under the tentative title of 'Lines on the Celebrated Bewick' in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 4 January, 1907.