

Henry Kirke White (1785-1806)

1 *A Ballad* (“Be hush’d, be hush’d, ye bitter winds”)

1 Be hush’d, be hush’d, ye bitter winds,
Ye pelting rains, a little rest;
Lie still, lie still, ye busy thoughts,
That wring with grief my aching breast.

2 Oh! cruel was my faithless love, 5
To triumph o’er an artless maid;
Oh! cruel was my faithless love,
To leave the breast by him betray’d.

3 When exiled from my native home,
He should have wiped the bitter tear; 10
Nor left me, faint and lone, to roam,
A heart-sick weary wanderer here.

4 My child moans sadly in my arms,
The winds they will not let it sleep:
Ah, little knows the hapless babe 15
What makes its wretched mother weep!

5 Now lie thee still, my infant dear,
I cannot bear thy sobs to see;
Harsh is thy father, little one,
And never will he shelter thee. 20

6 Oh, that I were but in my grave,
And winds were piping o’er me loud,
And thou, my poor, my orphan babe,
Wert nestling in thy mother’s shroud!

(From *The Poetical Works of Henry Kirke White and James Grahame*. With Memoirs, Critical Dissertations, and Explanatory Notes, by the Rev George Gilfillan. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1856)