

Thomas Percy (1729-1811)

3 *The Hermit of Warkworth. A Northumberland Ballad*

FIT THE FIRST.

Dark was the night, and wild the storm,
And loud the torrent's roar;
And loud the sea was heard to dash
Against the distant shore.

Musing on man's weak hapless state, 5
The lonely Hermit lay;
When, lo! he heard a female voice
Lament in sore dismay.

With hospitable haste he rose,
And wak'd his sleeping fire; 10
And snatching up a lighted brand,
Forth hied the reverend sire.

All sad beneath a neighbouring tree
A beauteous maid he found,
Who beat her breast, and with her tears 15
Bedew'd the mossy ground.

O weep not, lady, weep not so;
Nor let vain fears alarm;
My little cell shall shelter thee,
And keep thee safe from harm. 20

It is not for myself I weep,
Nor for myself I fear;
But for my dear and only friend,
Who lately left me here:

And while some sheltering bower he sought 25
 Within this lonely wood,
Ah! sore I fear his wandering feet
 Have slipt in yonder flood.

O! trust in heaven, the Hermit said,
 And to my cell repair; 30
Doubt not but I shall find thy friend,
 And ease thee of thy care.

Then climbing up his rocky stairs,
 He scales the cliff so high;
And calls aloud, and waves his light 35
 To guide the stranger's eye.

Among the thickets long he winds
 With careful steps and slow:
At length a voice return'd his call,
 Quick answering from below: 40

O tell me, father, tell me true,
 If you have chanc'd to see
A gentle maid, I lately left
 Beneath some neighbouring tree:

But either I have lost the place, 45
 Or she hath gone astray:
And much I fear this fatal stream
 Hath snatch'd her hence away.

Praise heaven, my son, the Hermit said;
 The lady's safe and well: 50
And soon he join'd the wandering youth,
 And brought him to his cell.

Then well was seen, these gentle friends
 They lov'd each other dear:

The youth he press'd her to his heart; 55
The maid let fall a tear.

Ah! seldom had their host, I ween,
Beheld so sweet a pair:
The youth was tall with manly bloom,
She slender, soft, and fair. 60

The youth was clad in forest green,
With bugle-horn so bright:
She in a silken robe and scarf
Snatch'd up in hasty flight.

Sit down, my children, says the Sage; 65
Sweet rest your limbs require:
Then heaps fresh fewel on the hearth,
And mends his little fire.

Partake, he said, my simple store,
Dried fruits, and milk, and curds; 70
And spreading all upon the board,
Invites with kindly words.

Thanks, father, for thy bounteous fare;
The youthful couple say:
Then freely ate, and made good cheer, 75
And talk'd their cares away.

Now say, my children, (for perchance
My counsel may avail)
What strange adventure brought you here
Within this lonely dale? 80

First tell me, father, said the youth,
(Nor blame mine eager tongue)
What town is near? What lands are these?
And to what lord belong?

Alas! my son, the Hermit said, 85
Why do I live to say,
The rightful lord of these domains
Is banish'd far away?

Ten winters now have shed their snows
On this my lowly hall, 90
Since valiant HOTSPUR (so the North
Our youthful lord did call)

Against Fourth HENRY BOLINGBROKE
Led up his northern powers,
And stoutly fighting lost his life 95
Near proud Salopia's towers.

One son he left, a lovely boy,
His country's hope and heir;
And, oh! to save him from his foes
It was his grandsire's care. 100

In Scotland safe he plac'd the child
Beyond the reach of strife,
Nor long before the brave old Earl
At Bramham lost his life.

And now the PERCY name, so long 105
Our northern pride and boast,
Lies hid, alas! beneath a cloud;
Their honors reft and lost.

No chieftain of that noble house
Now leads our youth to arms; 110
The bordering Scots dispoil our fields,
And ravage all our farms.

Their halls and castles, once so fair,

Now moulder in decay;
Proud strangers now usurp their lands, 115
And bear their wealth away.

Nor far from hence, where yon full stream
Runs winding down the lea,
Fair WARKWORTH lifts her lofty towers,
And overlooks the sea. 120

Those towers, alas! now lie forlorn,
With noisome weeds o'erspred,
Where feasted lords and courtly dames,
And where the poor were fed.

Meantime far off, mid Scottish hills 125
The PERCY lives unknown:
On stranger's bounty he depends,
And may not claim his own.

O might I with these aged eyes
But live to see him here, 130
Then should my soul depart in bliss! —
He said, and dropt a tear.

And is the PERCY still so lov'd
Of all his friends and thee?
Then, father, bless me, said the youth, 135
For I thy guest am HE.

Silent he gaz'd, then turn'd aside
To wipe the tears he shed;
And lifting up his hands and eyes,
Pour'd blessings on his head: 140

Welcome, our dear and much-lov'd lord,
Thy country's hope and care:
But who may this young lady be,

That is so wonderous fair?

Now, father, listen to my tale, 145
And thou shalt know the truth:
And let thy sage advice direct
My unexperienc'd youth.

In Scotland I've been nobly bred
Beneath the Regent's hand, 150
In feats of arms, and every lore
To fit me for command.

With fond impatience long I burn'd
My native land to see:
At length I won my guardian friend, 155
To yield that boon to me.

Then up and down in hunter's garb
I wandered as in chace,
Till in the noble NEVILLE's house
I gain'd a hunter's place. 160

Sometime with him I liv'd unknown,
Till I'd the hap so rare,
To please this young and gentle dame,
That baron's daughter fair.

Now, PERCY, said the blushing maid, 165
The truth I must reveal;
Souls great and generous, like to thine,
Their noble deeds conceal.

It happened on a summer's day,
Led by the fragrant breeze 170
I wandered forth to take the air
Among the green-wood trees.

Sudden a band of rugged Scots,
That near in ambush lay,
Moss-troopers from the border-side, 175
There seiz'd me for their prey.

My shrieks had all been spent in vain,
But heaven, that saw my grief,
Brought this brave youth within my call,
Who flew to my relief. 180

With nothing but his hunting spear,
And dagger in his hand,
He sprung like lightning on my foes,
And caus'd them soon to stand.

He fought, till more assistance came; 185
The Scots were overthrown;
Thus freed me, captive, from their bands
To make me more his own.

O happy day! the youth replied:
Blest were the wounds I bare! 190
From that fond hour she deign'd to smile,
And listen to my prayer.

And when she knew my name and birth,
She vowed to be my bride;
But oh! we fear'd, (alas, the while!) 195
Her princely mother's pride:

Sister of haughty BOLINGBROKE
Our house's ancient foe,
To me I thought a banish'd wight
Could ne'er such favour show. 200

Despairing then to gain consent;
At length to fly with me

I won this lovely timorous maid;
To Scotland bound are we.

This evening, as the night drew on, 205
Fearing we were pursu'd,
We turn'd adown the right-hand path,
And gain'd this lonely wood:

Then lighting from our weary steeds
To shun the pelting shower, 210
We met thy kind conducting hand,
And reach'd this friendly bower.

Now rest ye both, the Hermit said;
Awhile your cares foregoe:
Nor, lady, scorn my humble bed; 215
— WE'll pass the night below.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

FIT THE SECOND.

Lovely smil'd the blushing morn,
And every storm was fled:
But lovelier far, with sweeter smile,
Fair ELEANOR left her bed.

She found her HENRY all alone, 5
And cheer'd him with her sight;
The youth consulting with his friend
Had watch'd the livelong night.

What sweet surprize o'erpower'd her breast?
Her cheek what blushes dyed, 10
When fondly he besought her there
To yield to be his bride?

Our reverend host is gone;
 And soon, I trust, his pious hands
 Will join us both in one.

Thus they in sweet and tender talk 45
 The lingering hours beguile:
 At length they see the hoary sage
 Come from the neighbouring isle.

With pious joy and wonder mix'd
 He greets the noble pair, 50
 And glad consents to join their hands
 With many a fervent prayer.

Then strait to RABY's distant walls
 He kindly wends his way;
 Mean-time in love and dalliance sweet 55
 They spend the livelong day.

And now, attended by their host,
 The Hermitage they view'd,
 Deep-hewn within a craggy cliff,
 And over-hung with wood. 60

And near a flight of shapely Steps,
 All cut with nicest skill,
 And piercing thro' a stony Arch,
 Ran winding up the hill.

There deck'd with many a flower and herb 65
 His little Garden stands;
 With fruitful trees in shady rows,
 All planted by his hands.

Then, scoop'd within the solid rock,
 Three sacred Vaults he shows: 70
 The chief a Chapel, neatly arch'd,

On branching columns rose.

Each proper ornament was there,
That should a chapel grace;
The Lattice for confession fram'd, 75
And Holy-water Vase.

O'er either door a sacred Text
Invites to godly fear;
And in a little Scutcheon hung
The cross, and crown, and spear. 80

Up to the Altar's ample breadth
Two easy steps ascend;
And near a glimmering solemn light
Two well-wrought Windows lend.

Beside the altar rose a Tomb 85
All in the living stone;
On which a young and beauteous Maid
In goodly sculpture shone.

A kneeling Angel fairly carv'd
Lean'd hovering o'er her breast; 90
A weeping Warrior at her feet;
And near to these her Crest.

The cliff, the vault, but chief the tomb,
Attract the wondering pair:
Eager they ask, What hapless dame 95
Lies sculptured here so fair?

The Hermit sigh'd, the Hermit wept,
For sorrow scarce could speak:
At length he wip'd the trickling tears
That all bedewed his cheek: 100

Alas! my children, human life
Is but a vale of woe;
And very mournful is the tale,
Which ye so fain would know.

THE HERMIT'S TALE.

Young lord, thy grandsire had a friend 105
In days of youthful fame;
Yon distant hills were his domains,
Sir BERTRAM was his name.

Where'er the noble PERCY fought
His friend was at his side; 110
And many a skirmish with the Scots
Their early valour try'd.

Young Bertram lov'd a beauteous maid,
As fair as fair might be;
The dew-drop on the lily's cheek 115
Was not so fair as she.

Fair WIDDRINGTON the maiden's name,
Yon towers her dwelling place;
Her sire an old Northumbrian chief
Devoted to thy race. 120

Many a lord, and many a knight
To this fair damsel came;
But Bertram was her only choice;
For him she felt a flame.

Lord PERCY pleaded for his friend, 125
Her father soon consents;
None but the beauteous maid herself
His wishes now prevents.

But she with studied fond delays
Defers the blissful hour; 130
And loves to try his constancy,
And prove her maiden power.

That heart, she said, is lightly priz'd,
Which is too lightly won;
And long shall rue that easy maid, 135
Who yields her love too soon.

Lord PERCY made a solemn feast
In Alnwick's princely hall;
And there came lords, and there came knights,
His chiefs and barons all. 140

With wassel, mirth, and revelry
The castle rung around:
Lord PERCY call'd for song and harp,
And pipes of martial sound.

The Minstrels of thy noble house, 145
All clad in robes of blue,
With silver crescents on their arms,
Attend in order due.

The great achievements of thy race
They sung: their high command: 150
"How valiant MAINFRED o'er the seas
"First led his northern band.

"Brave GALFRID next to Normandy
"With venturous Rollo came;
"And from his Norman castles won 155
"Assum'd the PERCY name.

"They sung, how in the Conqueror's fleet

“Lord WILLIAM ship’d his powers,
“And gain’d a fair young Saxon bride
“With all her lands and towers. 160

“Then journeying to the Holy Land,
“There bravely fought and dy’d:
“But first the silver Crescent wan,
“Some Paynim Soldan’s pride.

“They sung how AGNES, beauteous heir, 165
“The queen’s own brother wed
“Lord JOSCELINE, sprung from Charlemagne,
“In princely Brabant bred.

“How he the PERCY name reviv’d,
“And how his noble line 170
“Still foremost in their country’s cause,
“With godlike ardour shine.”

With loud acclaims the listening crowd
Applaud the master’s song,
And deeds of arms and war became 175
The theme of every tongue.

Now high heroic acts they tell,
Their perils past recall:
When, lo! a damsel young and fair
Step’d forward thro’ the hall. 180

She Bertram courteously address’d;
And kneeling on her knee;
Sir knight, the lady of thy love
Hath sent this gift to thee.

Then forth she drew a glittering helme 185
Well-plated many a fold,
The casque was wrought of tempered steel,

The crest of burnish'd gold.

Sir knight, thy lady sends thee this,
And yields to be thy bride, 190
When thou hast prov'd this maiden gift
Where sharpest blows are try'd.

Young Bertram took the shining helme
And thrice he kiss'd the same:
Trust me, I'll prove this precious casque 195
With deeds of noblest fame.

Lord PERCY, and his barons bold
Then fix upon a day
To scour the marches, late opprest,
And Scottish wrongs repay. 200

The knights assembled on the hills
A thousand horse and more:
Brave Widdrington, tho' sunk in years,
The PERCY-standard bore.

Tweed's limpid current soon they pass, 205
And range the borders round:
Down the green slopes of Tiviotdale
Their bugle-horns resound.

As when a lion in his den
Hath heard the hunters cries, 210
And rushes forth to meet his foes;
So did the DOUGLAS rise.

Attendant on their chief's command
A thousand warriors wait:
And now the fatal hour drew on 215
Of cruel keen debate.

A chosen troop of Scottish youths
Advance before the rest;
Lord PERCY mark'd their gallant mien,
And thus his friend address'd. 220

Now, Bertram, prove thy Lady's helme,
Attack yon forward band;
Dead or alive I'll rescue thee,
Or perish by their hand.

Young Bertram bow'd, with glad assent, 225
And spur'd his eager steed,
And calling on his Lady's name,
Rush'd forth with whirlwind speed.

As when a grove of sapling oaks
The livid lightning rends; 230
So fiercely 'mid the opposing ranks
Sir Bertram's sword descends.

This way and that he drives the steel,
And keenly pierces thro';
And many a tall and comely knight 235
With furious force he slew.

Now closing fast on every side
They hem sir Bertram round:
But dauntless he repels their rage,
And deals forth many a wound. 240

The vigour of his single arm
Had well-nigh won the field;
When ponderous fell a Scottish ax,
And clove his lifted shield.

Another blow his temples took, 245
And reft his helm in twain;

That beauteous helm, his Lady's gift!
— His blood bedewed the plain.

Lord PERCY saw his champion fall
Amid the unequal fight; 250
And now, my noble friends, he said,
Let's save this gallant knight.

Then rushing in, with stretch'd out shield
He o'er the warrior hung;
As some fierce eagle spreads her wing 255
To guard her callow young.

Three times they strove to seize their prey,
Three times they quick retire:
What force could stand his furious strokes,
Or meet his martial fire? 260

Now gathering round on every part
The battle rag'd amain;
And many a lady wept her lord
That hour untimely slain.

PERCY and DOUGLAS, great in arms, 265
There all their courage show'd;
And all the field was strew'd with dead,
And all with crimson flow'd.

At length the glory of the day
The Scots reluctant yield, 270
And, after wonderous valour shown,
They slowly quit the field.

All pale extended on their shields
And weltering in his gore
Lord PERCY's knights their bleeding friend 275
To WARK's fair castle bore.

Well hast thou earn'd my daughter's love;
Her father kindly sed;
And she herself shall dress thy wounds,
And tend thee in thy bed. 280

A message went, no daughter came,
Fair ISABEL ne'er appears:
Beshrew me, said the aged chief,
Young maidens have their fears.

Cheer up, my son, thou shalt her see 285
So soon as thou canst ride;
And she shall nurse thee in her bower,
And she shall be thy bride.

Sir Bertram, at her name reviv'd,
He bless'd the soothing sound; 290
Fond hope supplied the Nurse's care,
And heal'd his ghastly wound.

THE END OF THE SECOND PART.

FIT THE THIRD.

One early morn, while dewy drops
Hung trembling on the tree,
Sir Bertram from his sick-bed rose,
His bride he would go see.

A brother he had in prime of youth, 5
Of courage firm and keen,
And he would tend him on the way
Because his wounds were green.

All day o'er moss and moor they rode,

By many a lonely tower; 10
And 'twas the dew-fall of the night
Ere they drew near her bower.

Most drear and dark the castle seem'd,
That wont to shine so bright;
And long and loud sir Bertram call'd 15
Ere he beheld a light.

At length her aged Nurse arose
With voice so shrill and clear:
What wight is this, that calls so loud,
And knocks so boldly here? 20

'Tis Bertram calls, thy Lady's love,
Come from his bed of care:
All day I've ridden o'er moor and moss
To see thy Lady fair.

Now out alas! (she loudly shriek'd) 25
Alas! how may this be?
For six long days are gone and past
Since she set out to thee.

Sad terror seiz'd sir Bertram's heart,
And oft he deeply sigh'd; 30
When now the draw-bridge was let down,
And gates set open wide.

Six days, young knight, are past and gone,
Since she set out to thee;
And sure if no sad harm had hap'd 35
Long since thou wouldst her see.

For when she heard thy grievous chance
She tore her hair, and cried,
Alas! I've slain the comeliest knight,

All thro' my folly and pride! 40

And now to atone for my sad fault,
And his dear health regain,
I'll go myself, and nurse my love,
And soothe his bed of pain.

Then mounted she her milk-white steed 45
One morn at break of day;
And two tall yeomen went with her
To guard her on the way.

Sad terror smote sir Bertram's heart,
And grief o'erwhelm'd his mind: 50
Trust me, said he, I ne'er will rest
'Till I thy Lady find.

That night he spent in sorrow and care;
And with sad boding heart
Or ever the dawning of the day 55
His brother and he depart.

Now, brother, we'll our ways divide,
O'er Scottish hills to range;
Do thou go north, and I'll go west;
And all our dress we'll change. 60

Some Scottish carle hath seized my love,
And borne her to his den;
And ne'er will I tread English ground
Till she is restored agen.

The brothers strait their paths divide, 65
O'er Scottish hills to range;
And hide themselves in quaint disguise,
And oft their dress they change.

Sir Bertram clad in gown of gray,
Most like a Palmer poor, 70
To halls and castles wanders round,
And begs from door to door.

Sometimes a Minstrel's garb he wears,
With pipes so sweet and shrill;
And wends to every tower and town; 75
O'er every dale and hill.

One day as he sate under a thorn
All sunk in deep despair,
An aged Pilgrim pass'd him by,
Who mark'd his face of care. 80

All Minstrels yet that ever I saw,
Are full of game and glee:
But thou art sad and woe-begone!
I marvel whence it be!

Father, I serve an aged Lord, 85
Whose grief afflicts my mind;
His only child is stol'n away,
And fain I would her find.

Cheer up, my son; perchance, (he said)
Some tidings I may bear: 90
For oft when human hopes have fail'd,
Then heavenly comfort's near.

Behind yon hills so steep and high,
Down in a lowly glen,
There stands a castle fair and strong, 95
Far from th' abode of men.

As late I chanc'd to crave an alms
About this evening hour,

Me-thought I heard a Lady's voice
Lamenting in the tower. 100

And when I ask'd, what harm had hap'd,
What Lady sick there lay?
They rudely drove me from the gate,
And bade me wend away.

These tidings caught sir Bertram's ear, 105
He thank'd him for his tale;
And soon he hasted o'er the hills,
And soon he reach'd the vale.

Then drawing near those lonely towers,
Which stood in dale so low, 110
And sitting down beside the gate,
His pipes he 'gan to blow.

Sir Porter, is thy lord at home
To hear a Minstrel's song?
Or may I crave a lodging here, 115
Without offence or wrong?

My Lord, he said, is not at home
To hear a Minstrel's song:
And should I lend thee lodging here
My life would not be long. 120

He play'd again so soft a strain,
Such power sweet sounds impart,
He won the churlish Porter's ear,
And moved his stubborn heart.

Minstrel, he say'd, thou play'st so sweet, 125
Fair entrance thou should'st win;
But, alas, I'm sworn upon the rood
To let no stranger in.

Yet, Minstrel, in yon rising cliff
Thou'lt find a sheltering cave; 130
And here thou shalt my supper share,
And there thy lodging have.

All day he sits beside the gate,
And pipes both loud and clear:
All night he watches round the walls, 135
In hopes his love to hear.

The first night, as he silent watch'd,
All at the midnight hour,
He plainly heard his Lady's voice
Lamenting in the tower. 140

The second night the moon shone clear,
And gilt the spangled dew;
He saw his Lady thro' the grate,
But 'twas a transient view.

The third night wearied out he slept 145
'Till near the morning tide;
When starting up, he seiz'd his sword,
And to the castle hy'd.

When, lo! he saw a ladder of ropes
Depending from the wall; 150
And o'er the mote was newly laid
A poplar strong and tall.

And soon he saw his love descend
Wrapt in a tartan plaid;
Assisted by a sturdy youth 155
In highland garb y-clad.

Amaz'd, confounded at the sight,

He lay unseen and still;
And soon he saw them cross the stream,
And mount the neighbouring hill. 160

Unheard, unknown of all within,
The youthful couple fly.
But what can scape the lover's ken?
Or shun his piercing eye?

With silent step he follows close 165
Behind the flying pair,
And saw her hang upon his arm
With fond familiar air.

Thanks, gentle youth, she often said;
My thanks thou well hast won: 170
For me what wiles hast thou contriv'd?
For me what dangers run?

And ever shall my grateful heart
Thy services repay: —
Sir Bertram could no further hear, 175
But cried, Vile traitor, stay!

Vile traitor! yield that Lady up! —
And quick his sword he drew.
The stranger turn'd in sudden rage,
And at Sir Bertram flew. 180

With mortal hate their vigorous arms
Gave many a vengeful blow:
But Bertram's stronger hand prevail'd,
And laid the stranger low.

Die, traitor, die! — A deadly thrust 185
Attends each furious word.
Ah! then fair Isabel knew his voice,

And rush'd beneath his sword.

 O stop, she cried, O stop thy arm!
 Thou dost thy brother slay! — 190
 And here the Hermit paus'd, and wept:
 His tongue no more could say.

 At length he cried, Ye lovely pair,
 How shall I tell the rest?
 Ere I could stop my piercing sword, 195
 It fell, and stab'd her breast.

 Wert thou thyself that hapless youth?
 Ah! cruel fate! they said.
 The Hermit wept, and so did they:
 They sigh'd; he hung his head. 200

 O blind and jealous rage, he cried,
 What evils from thee flow?
 The Hermit paus'd; they silent mourn'd:
 He wept, and they were woe.

 Ah! when I heard my brother's name, 205
 And saw my lady bleed,
 I rav'd, I wept, I curst my arm,
 That wrought the fatal deed.

 In vain I clasp'd her to my breast,
 And clos'd the ghastly wound; 210
 In vain I press'd his bleeding corpse,
 And rais'd it from the ground.

 My brother, alas! spake never more,
 His precious life was flown.
 She kindly strove to sooth my pain, 215
 Regardless of her own.

Bertram, she said, be comforted,
And live to think on me:
May we in heaven that union prove,
Which here was not to be! 220

Bertram, she said, I still was true;
Thou only hadst my heart:
May we hereafter meet in bliss!
We now, alas! must part.

For thee, I left my father's hall, 225
And flew to thy relief,
When, lo! near Chiviot's fatal hills
I met a Scottish chief,

Lord Malcolm's son, whose proffered love,
I had refus'd with scorn; 230
He slew my guards and seiz'd on me
Upon that fatal morn:

And in these dreary hated walls
He kept me close confin'd;
And fondly sued, and warmly press'd 235
To win me to his mind.

Each rising morn increas'd my pain,
Each night increas'd my fear;
When wandering in this northern garb
Thy brother found me here. 240

He quickly form'd this brave design
To set me captive free;
And on the moor his horses wait
Ty'd to a neighbouring tree.

Then haste, my love, escape away, 245
And for thyself provide;

And sometime fondly think on her,
Who should have been thy bride.

Thus pouring comfort on my soul
Even with her latest breath, 250
She gave one parting fond embrace,
And clos'd her eyes in death.

In wild amaze, in speechless woe
Devoid of sense I lay:
Then sudden all in frantic mood 255
I meant myself to slay:

And rising up in furious haste
I seiz'd the bloody brand:
A sturdy arm here interpos'd,
And wrench'd it from my hand. 260

A crowd, that from the castle came,
Had miss'd their lovely ward;
And seizing me to prison bare,
And deep in dungeon barr'd.

It chanc'd that on that very morn 265
Their chief was prisoner ta'en:
Lord PERCY had us soon exchange'd,
And strove to soothe my pain.

And soon those honoured dear remains,
To England were convey'd; 270
And there within their silent tombs,
With holy rites were laid.

For me, I loath'd my wretched life,
And oft to end it sought;
Till time, and thought, and holy men 275
Had better counsels taught.

They rais'd my heart to that pure source,
Whence heavenly comfort flows:
They taught me to despise the world,
And calmly bear its woes. 280

No more the slave of human pride,
Vain hope, and sordid care;
I meekly vowed to spend my life
In penitence and prayer.

The bold Sir BERTRAM now no more, 285
Impetuous, haughty, wild;
But poor and humble BENEDICT,
Now lowly, patient, mild:

My lands I gave to feed the poor,
And sacred altars raise; 290
And here a lonely Anchorete
I came to end my days.

This sweet sequestered vale I chose,
These rocks, and hanging grove;
For oft beside this murmuring stream 295
My love was wont to rove.

My noble Friend approv'd my choice;
This blest retreat he gave:
And here I carv'd her beauteous form,
And scoop'd this holy cave. 300

Full fifty winters, all forlorn,
My life I've lingered here;
And daily o'er this sculptured saint
I drop the pensive tear.

And thou, dear brother of my heart, 305

So faithful and so true,
The sad remembrance of thy fate
Still makes my bosom rue!

Yet not unpitied pass'd my life,
Forsaken, or forgot, 310
The PERCY and his noble Son
Would grace my lowly cot.

Oft the great Earl from toils of state,
And cumbrous pomp of power,
Would gladly seek my little cell 315
To spend the tranquil hour.

But length of life is length of woe,
I liv'd to mourn his fall:
I liv'd to mourn his godlike SON,
Their friends and followers all. 320

But thou the honours of thy race,
Lov'd youth, shalt now restore;
And raise again the PERCY name
More glorious than before.

He ceas'd, and on the lovely pair 325
His choicest blessings laid:
While they with thanks and pitying tears
His mournful tale repaid.

And now what present course to take
They ask the good old sire; 330
And guided by his sage advice
To Scotland they retire.

Mean-time their suit such favour found
At RABY's stately hall,
Earl Neville, and his princely Spouse 335

Now gladly pardon all.

She suppliant at her Nephew's throne
The royal grace implor'd:
To all the honours of his race
The PERCY was restor'd.

340

The youthful Earl still more and more
Admir'd his beauteous dame:
NINE noble SONS to him she bore,
All worthy of their name.

THE END OF THE BALLAD.

1771

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