

BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS

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Ballads and other poems by Alfred Tennyson

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ALFRED TENNYSON

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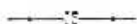
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TO
ALFRED TENNYSON

MY GRANDSON



Golden-hair'd Ally whose name is one with mine,
Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,
Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,
O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,
Glorious poet who never hast written a line,
Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.
May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine!

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THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

‘WAIT a little,’ you say, ‘you are sure it ’ll all come
right,’

But the boy was born i’ trouble, an’ looks so wan an’
so white :

Wait! an’ once I ha’ waited—I hadn’t to wait for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—No, no, you are
doing me wrong!

Harry and I were married: the boy can hold up his
head,

The boy was born in wedlock, but after my man was
dead;

I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I work an' I
wait to the end.

I am all alone in the world, an' you are my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the tale o' my
life.

When Harry an' I were children, he call'd me his own
little wife ;

I was happy when I was with him, an' sorry when he
was away,

An' when we play'd together, I loved him better than
play ;

He workt me the daisy chain—he made me the cows-
lip ball,

He fought the boys that were rude an' I loved him
better than all.

Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at home in disgrace,
 grace,

I never could quarrel with Harry—I had but to look
 in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's kin, that
 had need

Of a good stout lad at his farm; he sent, an' the
 father agreed;

So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire farm for years
 an' for years;

I walked with him down to the quay, poor lad, an'
 we parted in tears.

The boat was beginning to move, we heard them
 a-ringing the bell,

'I'll never love any but you, God bless you, my own
 little Nell.'