

*Summer Wind* (1824)

It is a sultry day; the sun has drank  
 The dew that lay upon the morning grass,  
 There is no rustling in the lofty elm  
 That canopies my dwelling, and its shade  
 Scarce cools me. All is silent, save the faint  
 And interrupted murmur of the bee,  
 Settling on the sick flowers, and then again  
 Instantly on the wing. The plants around  
 Feel the too potent fervors; the tall maize  
 Rolls up its long green leaves; the clover droops  
 Its tender foliage, and declines its blooms.  
 But far in the fierce sunshine tower the hills,  
 With all their growth of woods, silent and stern,  
 As if the scorching heat and dazzling light  
 Were but an element they loved. Bright clouds,  
 Motionless pillars of the brazen heaven;—  
 Their bases on the mountains—their white tops  
 Shining in the far ether—fire the air  
 With a reflected radiance, and make turn  
 The gazer's eye away. For me, I lie  
 Languidly in the shade, where the thick turf,  
 Yet virgin from the kisses of the sun,  
 Retains some freshness, and I woo the wind  
 That still delays its coming. Why so slow,  
 Gentle and voluble spirit of the air?  
 Oh, come and breathe upon the fainting earth  
 Coolness and life. Is it that in his caves  
 He hears me? See, on yonder woody ridge,  
 The pine is bending his proud top, and now,  
 Among the nearer groves, chesnut and oak  
 Are tossing their green boughs about. He comes!  
 Lo, where the grassy meadow runs in waves!  
 The deep distressful silence of the scene  
 Breaks up with mingling of unnumbered sounds  
 And universal motion. He is come,  
 Shaking a shower of blossoms from the shrubs,  
 And bearing on their fragrance; and he brings  
 Music of birds, and rustling of young boughs,

And sound of swaying branches, and the voice  
 Of distant waterfalls. All the green herbs  
 Are stirring in his breath; a thousand flowers,  
 By the road-side and the borders of the brook,  
 Nod gaily to each other; glossy leaves  
 Are twinkling in the sun, as if the dew  
 Were on them yet, and silver waters break  
 Into small waves and sparkle as he comes.

*An Indian at the Burying-Place  
of His Fathers*

It is the spot I came to seek,—  
 My fathers' ancient burial-place,  
 Ere from these vales, ashamed and weak,  
 Withdrew our wasted race.  
 It is the spot,—I know it well—  
 Of which our old traditions tell.  
 For here the upland bank sends out  
 A ridge toward the river side;  
 I know the shaggy hills about,  
 The meadows smooth and wide;  
 The plains, that, toward the southern sky,  
 Fenced east and west by mountains lie.  
 A white man, gazing on the scene,  
 Would say a lovely spot was here,  
 And praise the lawns so fresh and green  
 Between the hills so sheer.  
 I like it not—I would the plain  
 Lay in its tall old groves again.  
 The sheep are on the slopes around,  
 The cattle in the meadows feed,  
 And laborers turn the crumbling ground,  
 Or drop the yellow seed,  
 And prancing steeds, in trappings gay,  
 Whirl the bright chariot o'er the way.