



We are seven

*A simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?*

*I met a little cottage Girl:
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.*

*She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
— Her beauty made me glad.*

*“Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be?”
“How many? Seven in all,” she said,
And wondering looked at me.*

*“And where are they? I pray you tell.”
She answered, “Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.*

*“Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the church-yard cottage,
I dwell near them with my mother.”*

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*“You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven! I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be.”*

*Then did the little Maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree.”*

*“You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five.”*

*“Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little Maid replied,
“Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,
And they are side by side.*

*“My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.*

*“And often after sun-set, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.*

*“The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.*

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*“So in the church-yard she was laid;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.*

*“And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.”*

*“How many are you, then,” said I,
“If they two are in heaven?”
Quick was the little Maid’s reply,
“O Master! we are seven.”*

*“But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!”
’Twas throwing words away; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, “Nay, we are seven!”*

William Wordsworth

