

Two of the four were twins, and nine years old—  
Dissevered cherries from the selfsame stalk,  
And like as cherries to a stranger's eye.  
They chased the butterfly ; they clomb the trees ;  
They leaped the running stream, or lay them down  
With skyward faces, shaded by their arms,  
Weary and spent with frolic that had passed,  
Eager and ripe for frolic yet to come.

Apart, their sister, seven sweet summers young,  
Sat pleased and happy underneath a thorn,  
That dropped its pink-eyed blossoms in her lap,  
A cherub and a seraph both in one.

Around her forehead, twined amid her hair,  
She wore a wreath of daisies, newly plucked,  
And strung on rushes, by the master-hand  
Of one three summers older than herself—  
A black-eyed, rosy-cheeked, and pensive boy,  
Whose greatest joy was study of her face ;