

## The Minstrels

The minstrels played their Christmas tune  
To-night beneath my cottage-eaves;  
While, smitten by a lofty moon,  
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,  
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,  
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze  
Had sunk to rest with folded wings:  
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,  
Nor check, the music of the strings;  
So stout and hardy were the band  
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand.

And who but listened? - till was paid  
Respect to every inmate's claim,  
The greeting given, the music played  
In honour of each household name,  
Duly pronounced with lusty call,  
And "Merry Christmas" wished to all.

*William Wordsworth*

(1820)

