

# The Cataract of Lodore by Southey

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" How does the Water  
Come down at Lodore?"  
My little boy ask'd me  
Thus, once on a time;  
And moreover he task'd me  
To tell him in rhyme.  
Anon at the word  
There came first one daughter  
And then came another,  
To second and third  
The request of their brother  
And to hear how the water  
Comes down at Lodore  
With its rush and its roar,  
As many a time  
They had seen it before.  
So I told them in rhyme,  
For of rhymes I had store:  
And 'twas in my vocation  
For their recreation  
That so should I sing  
Because I was Laureate  
To them and the King.  
From its sources which well  
In the Tarn on the fell;  
From its fountains  
In the mountains,  
Its rills and its gills;  
Through moss and through brake,  
It runs and it creeps  
For awhile till it sleeps  
In its own little Lake.  
And thence at departing,  
Awakening and starting,  
It runs through the reeds  
And away it proceeds,  
Through meadow and glade,  
In sun and in shade,  
And through the wood-shelter,  
Among crags in its flurry,  
Helter-skelter,  
Hurry-scurry.

Here it comes sparkling,  
And there it lies darkling;  
Now smoking and frothing  
Its tumult and wrath in,  
Till in this rapid race  
On which it is bent,  
It reaches the place  
Of its steep descent.

The Cataract strong  
Then plunges along,  
Striking and raging  
As if a war waging  
Its caverns and rocks among:  
Rising and leaping,  
Sinking and creeping,  
Swelling and sweeping,  
Showering and springing,  
Flying and flinging,  
Writhing and ringing,  
Eddying and whisking,  
Spouting and frisking,  
Turning and twisting,  
Around and around  
With endless rebound!  
Smiting and fighting,  
A sight to delight in;  
Confounding, astounding,  
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.  
Collecting, projecting,  
Receding and speeding,  
And shocking and rocking,  
And darting and parting,  
And threading and spreading,  
And whizzing and hissing,  
And dripping and skipping,  
And hitting and splitting,  
And shining and twining,  
And rattling and battling,  
And shaking and quaking,  
And pouring and roaring,  
And waving and raving,  
And tossing and crossing,  
And flowing and going,  
And running and stunning,

And foaming and roaming,  
And dinning and spinning,  
And dropping and hopping,  
And working and jerking,  
And guggling and struggling,  
And heaving and cleaving,  
And moaning and groaning;  
And glittering and frittering,  
And gathering and feathering,  
And whitening and brightening,  
And quivering and shivering,  
And hurrying and scurrying,  
And thundering and floundering,  
Dividing and gliding and sliding,  
And falling and brawling and sprawling,  
And diving and riving and striving,  
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,  
And sounding and bounding and rounding,  
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,  
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,  
And clattering and battering and shattering;  
Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,  
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,  
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,  
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,  
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,  
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,  
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,  
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,  
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,  
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;  
And so never ending, but always descending,  
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending,  
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,  
And this way the water comes down at Lodore.