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Poems

Gray, Thomas

London, 1770

Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fisches.

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O D E

ON THE DEATH OF A

FAVOURITE CAT,

Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.



O D R

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O D E

ON THE DEATH OF A

FAVOURITE CAT,

Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.

TWAS on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dy'd

The azure flowers, that blow;

Demurest of the tabby kind,

The pensive Selima reclin'd,

Gaz'd on the lake below.

Her



12 ODE ON THE DEATH

Her conscious tail her joy declar'd ;

The fair round face, the snowy beard,

The velvet of her paws,

Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,

Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,

She saw ; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gaz'd ; but 'midst the tide

Two angel forms were seen to glide,

The Genii of the stream :

Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue

Thro' richest purple to the view

Betray'd a golden gleam.

The



OF A FAVOURITE CAT. 13

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw :

A whisker first and then a claw,

With many an ardent wish,

She stretch'd in vain to reach the prize.

What female heart can gold despise ?

What Cat's averse to fish ?

Prefumptuous Maid ! with looks intent

Again she stretch'd, again she bent,

Nor knew the gulf between.

(Malignant Fate sat by, and smil'd)

The slipp'ry verge her feet beguil'd,

She tumbled headlong in.

Eight



Eight times emerging from the flood

She mew'd to ev'ry wat'ry God,

Some speedy aid to send.

No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd;

Nor cruel *Tom*, nor *Susan* heard,

A Fav'rite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties, undeceiv'd,

Know, one false step is ne'er retriev'd,

And be with caution bold.

Not all, that tempts your wand'ring eyes

And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;

Not all, that glisters, gold.

O D E