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Poems On Several Occasions

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Act. III.

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ACT III. SCENE I.

Dione lying on the ground by the side of a Fountain.

DIONE.



HERE let me rest, and in the liquid glass
View with impartial look my fading face.
Why are *Parthenia's* striking beauties
priz'd?

And why *Dione's* weaker glance despis'd?
Nature in various molds has beauty cast,
And form'd the feature for each different taste:
This sighs for golden locks and azure eyes;
That, for the gloss of fable tresses, dyes.
Let all mankind these locks, these eyes detest,
So I were lovely in *Evander's* breast!
When o'er the garden's knot we cast our view,
While summer paints the ground with various hue;

Some

Some praise the gaudy tulip's streaky red,
 And some the silver lily's bending head ;
 Some the junquil in shining yellow drest,
 And some the fring'd carnation's varied vest ;
 Some love the sober violet's purple dyes.
 Thus beauty fares in different lovers eyes.
 But bright *Parthenia* like the rose appears,
 She in all eyes superior lustre bears.



S C E N E II.

D I O N E. LAURA.

LAURA.

Why thus beneath the silver willow laid,
 Weeps fair *Dione* in the pensive shade ?
 Hast thou yet found the over-arching bower,
 Which guards *Parthenia* from the sultry hour ?

D I O N E.

With weary step in paths unknown I stray'd,
 And fought in vain the solitary maid.

LAURA.

L A U R A.

Seest thou the waving tops of yonder woods,
 Whose aged arms imbrown the cooling floods?
 The cooling floods o'er breaking pebbles flow,
 And wash the soil from the big roots below;
 From the tall rock the dashing waters bound.
 Hark, o'er the fields the rushing billows sound!
 There, lost in thought, and leaning on her crook,
 Stood the sad nymph, nor rais'd her pensive look;
 With settled eye the bubbling waves survey'd,
 And watch'd the whirling eddys, as they play'd.

D I O N E.

Thither to know my certain doom I speed,
 For by this sentence life or death's decreed. [Exit.]



1

SCENE



S C E N E III.

LAURA. CLEANTHES.

LAURA.

But see! some hasty stranger bends this way ;
 His broider'd vest reflects the funny ray :
 Now through the thinner boughs I mark his mien,
 Now veil'd, in thicker shades he moves unseen.
 Hither he turns ; I hear a mutt'ring sound ;
 Behind this rev'rend oak with ivy bound
 Quick I'll retire ; with busy thought possess'd,
 His tongue betrays the secrets of his breast.

[*She hides herself.*]

CLEANTHES.

The skilful hunter with experienc'd care
 Traces the doubles of the circling hare ;
 The subtle fox, (who breathes the weary hound
 O'er hills and plains) in distant brakes is found ;
 With ease we track swift hinds and skipping roes,
 But who th' inconstant ways of woman knows ?

V O L. II.

K .

They

They say, she wanders with the sylvan train,
 And courts the native freedoms of the plain ;
 Shepherds explain their wish without offence,
 Nor blush the nymphs ;--- for Love is innocence.
 O lead me where the rural youth retreat,
 Where the slope hills the warbling voice repeat.
 Perhaps on daisy'd turf reclines the maid,
 And near her side some rival clown is laid,
 Yet, yet I love her.---O lost nymph return,
 Let not thy fire with tears incessant mourn ;
 Return, lost nymph ; bid Sorrow cease to flow,
 And let *Dione* glad the house of woe.

L A U R A.

Call'd he not lost *Dione*? hence I'll start,
 Cross his slow steps, and sift his op'ning heart.] [*Aside.*]

C L E A N T H E S.

Tell me, fair nymph, direct my wandering way ;
 Where, in close bowers, to shun the sultry ray,
 Repose the swains ; whose flocks with bleating fill
 The bord'ring forest and the thymy hill.
 But if thou frequent join those sylvan bands,
 Thy self can answer what my soul demands.

L A U R A.

L A U R A.

Seven years I trod these fields, these bowers and glades,
 And by the less'ning and the length'ning shades
 Have mark'd the hours; what time my flock to lead
 To sunny mountains, or the watry mead:
 Train'd in the labours of the sylvan crew,
 Their sports, retreats, their cares and loves I knew.

C L E A N T H E S.

Instruct me then, if late among your race,
 A stranger nymph is found, of noble grace,
 In rural arts unskill'd, no charge she tends:
 Nor when the morn and ev'ning dew descends
 Milks the big-udder'd ewe. Her mien and dress
 The polish'd manners of the Court confess.

L A U R A.

Each day arrive the neighb'ring nymphs and swains
 To share the pastime of our jovial plains;
 How can I there thy roving beauty trace,
 Where not one nymph is bred of vulgar race?

K 2

CLE-



CLEANTHES.

If yet she breathe, what tortures must she find!
 The curse of disobedience tears her mind.
 If e'er your breast with filial duty burn'd,
 If e'er you sorrow'd when a parent mourn'd;
 Tell her, I charge you, with incessant groans
 Her drooping sire his absent child bemoans.

LAURA.

Unhappy Man!

CLEANTHES.

————— With storms of passion tost,
 When first he learnt his vagrant child was lost,
 On the cold floor his trembling limbs he flung,
 And with thick blows his hollow bosom rung;
 Then up he started, and with fixt surprise,
 Upon her picture threw his frantick eyes,
 While thus he cry'd. ' In her my life was bound,
 ' Warm in each feature is her mother found!
 ' Perhaps despair has been her fatal guide,
 ' And now she floats upon the weeping tide;

' Or

‘ Or on the willow hung, with head reclin’d,
 ‘ All pale and cold she wavers in the wind.
 ‘ Did I not force her hence by harsh commands?
 ‘ Did not her soul abhor the nuptial bands?

L A U R A.

Teach not, ye fires, your daughters to rebel,
 By counsel rein their wills, but ne’er compel.

C L E A N T H E S.

Ye duteous daughters, trust these tender guides;
 Nor think a parent’s breast the tyrant hides.

L A U R A.

From either lid the scalding sorrows roll;
 The moving tale runs thrilling to my soul.

C L E A N T H E S.

Perhaps she wanders in the lonely woods,
 Or on the sedgey borders of the floods;
 Thou know’st each cottage, forest, hill and vale,
 And pebbled brook that winds along the dale.
 Search each sequester’d dell to find the fair;
 And just reward shall gratify thy care.

K 3

L A U R A.



L A U R A.

O ye kind boughs protect the virgin's flight,
 And guard *Dione* from his prying sight! [Aside.

C L E A N T H E S.

Mean while I'll seek the shepherd's cool abodes,
 Point me, fair nymph, along these doubtful roads.

L A U R A.

Seest thou yon' mountain rear his shaggy brow?
 In the green valley graze the flocks below:
 There ev'ry gale with warbling musick floats,
 Shade answers shade, and breathes alternate notes.
 [Exit Cleanthes.

He's gone; and to the distant vales is sent,
 Nor shall his force *Dione's* love prevent.
 But see, she comes again with hasty pace,
 And conscious pleasure dimples on her face.



S C E N E



S C E N E IV.

LAURA. DIONE.

DIONE.

I found her laid beside the crystal brook,
 Nor rais'd she from the stream her settled look,
 Till near her side I stood; her head she rears,
 Starts sudden, and her shrieks confess her fears.

LAURA.

Did not thy words her thoughtful soul surprize,
 And kindle sparkling anger in her eyes?

DIONE.

Thus she reply'd, with rage and scorn possess.
 ' Will importuning love ne'er give me rest?
 ' Why am I thus in desarts wild pursu'd,
 ' Like guilty consciences when stain'd with blood?
 ' Sure boding ravens, from the blasted oak,
 ' Shall learn the name of *Lycidas* to croak,
 ' To found it in my ears! As swains pass by,
 ' With look askance, they shake their heads and cry,

K 4

Lo!

' Lo! this is she for whom the shepherd dy'd!
 ' Soon *Lycidas*, a victim to her pride,
 ' Shall seek the grave; and in the glimm'ring glade,
 ' With look all pale, shall glide the restless shade
 ' Of the poor swain; while we with haggard eye
 ' And bristled hair the fleeting phantom fly.
 Still let their curses innocence upbraid:
 Heav'n never will forsake the virtuous maid.

L A U R A.

Didst thou persist to touch her haughty breast!

D I O N E.

She still the more disdain'd, the more I prest.

L A U R A.

When you were gone, these walks a stranger coast,
 He turn'd through ev'ry path, and wander'd lost;
 To me he came; with courteous speech demands
 Beneath what bowers repos'd the shepherd bands;
 Then further asks me, if among that race
 A shepherdess was found of courtly grace;
 With profer'd bribes my faithful tongue essays;
 But for no bribe the faithful tongue betrays.

In

In me *Dione's* safe. Far hence he speeds,
Where other hills resound with other reeds.

D I O N E.

Should he come back ; Suspicion's jealous eyes
Might trace my feature through the swain's disguise.
Now ev'ry noise and whistling wind I dread,
And in each sound approaches human tread.

L A U R A.

He said, he left your house involv'd in cares,
Sighs swell'd each breast, each eye o'erflow'd with tears ;
For his lost child thy pensive father mourns,
And sunk in sorrow to the dust returns.
Go back, obedient daughter ; hence depart,
And still the sighs that tear his anxious heart.
Soon shall *Evander*, wearied with disdain,
Forego these fields, and seek the town again.

D I O N E.

Think, *Laura*, what thy hasty thoughts persuade.
If I return, to Love a victim made,
My wrathful Sire will force his harsh command,
And with *Cleantes* join my trembling hand.

K 5

L A U R A.



L A U R A.

Trust a fond father ; raise him from despair.

D I O N E.

I fly not him ; I fly a life of care.
 On the high nuptials of the Court look round ;
 Where shall, alas, one happy pair be found !
 There marriage is for fervile int'rest fought :
 Is love for wealth or power or title bought ?
 'Tis hence domestick jars their peace destroy,
 And loose adult'ry steals the shameful joy.
 But search we wide o'er all the blissful plains,
 Where love alone, devoid of int'rest, reigns.
 What concord in each happy pair appears !
 How fondness strengthens with the rolling years !
 Superior power ne'er thwarts their soft delights,
 Nor jealous accusations wake their nights.

L A U R A.

May all those blessings on *Dione* fall.

D I O N E.

Grant me, *Esvander*, and I share them all.

Shall

Shall a fond Parent give perpetual strife,
 And doom his child to be a wretch for life ?
 Though he bequeath'd me all these woods and plains,
 And all the flocks the ruffet down contains ;
 With all the golden harvests of the year,
 Far as where yonder purple mountains rear ;
 Can these the broils of nuptial life prevent ?
 Can these, without *Ewander*, give content ?
 But see, he comes.

L A U R A.

————— I'll to the vales repair,
 Where wanders by the stream my fleecy care.
 Mayst thou the rage of this new flame controul,
 And wake *Dione* in his tender Soul ! [Ex, Laura.



SCENE



S C E N E V.

D I O N E. L Y C I D A S.

L Y C I D A S.

Say, my *Alexis*, can thy words impart

Kind rays of hope to cheer a doubtful heart ?

How didst thou first my pangs of love disclose ?

Did her disdainful brow confirm my woes ?

Or did soft pity in her bosom rise,

Heave on her breast, and languish in her eyes ?

D I O N E.

How shall my tongue the salt'ring tale explain !

My heart drops blood to give the shepherd pain.

L Y C I D A S.

Pronounce her utmost scorn ; I come prepar'd

To meet my doom. Say, is my death declar'd ?

D I O N E.

Why should thy fate depend on Woman's will ?

Forget this tyrant, and be happy still.

L Y C I.

LYCIDAS.

Didst thou beseech her not to speed her flight,
 Nor shun with wrathful glance my hated sight ?
 Will she consent my sighing plaint to hear,
 Nor let my piercing crys be lost in air ?

D I O N E.

Can mariners appease the tossing storm,
 When foaming waves the yawning deep deform ?
 When o'er the sable cloud the thunder flies,
 Say, who shall calm the terror of the skies ?
 Who shall the lion's famish'd roar assuage ;
 And can we still proud woman's stronger rage ?
 Soon as my faithful tongue pronounc'd thy name,
 Sudden her glances shot resentful flame :
 Be dumb, she cries, this whining love give o'er,
 And vex me with the teasing theme no more.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis pride alone that keeps alive her scorn,
 On the mean swain in humble cottage born,
 Can Poverty that haughty heart obtain
 Where avarice and strong ambition reign ?

If



If Poverty pass by in tatter'd coat,
 Curs vex his heels and stretch their barking throat ;
 If chance he mingle in the female croud,
 Pride tosses high her head, Scorn laughs aloud ;
 Each nymph turns from him to her gay gallant,
 And wonders at the impudence of Want.
 'Tis vanity that rules all woman-kind,
 Love is the weakest passion of their mind.

D I O N E.

Though one is by those servile views possess'd,
 O *Lycidas*, condemn not all the rest.

L Y C I D A S.

Though I were bent beneath a load of years,
 And seventy winters thin'd my hoary hairs ;
 Yet if my olive branches dropt with oil,
 And crooked shares were brighten'd in my soil,
 If lowing herds my fat'ning meads possess'd,
 And my white fleece the tawny mountain dress'd ;
 Then would she lure me with love-darting glance,
 Then with fond mercenary smiles advance.
 Though hell with ev'ry vice my soul had stain'd,
 And froward anger in my bosom reign'd,

Though

Though avarice my coffers cloath'd in rust,
And my joints trembled with enfeebled lust ;
Yet were my ancient name with titles great,
How would she languish for the gaudy bait !
If to her love all-tempting wealth pretend,
What virtuous woman can her heart defend ?

D I O N E.

Conquests, thus meanly bought, men soon despise,
And justly slight the mercenary prize.

L Y C I D A S.

I know these frailties in her breast reside,
Direct her glance and ev'ry action guide,
Still let *Alexis'* faithful friendship aid,
Once more attempt to bend the stubborn maid.
Tell her, no base-born swain provokes her scorn,
No clown, beneath the sedy cottage born ;
Tell her, for her this sylvan drefs I took,
For her my name and pomp of Courts forsook ;
My lofty roofs with golden sculpture shine,
And my high birth descends from ancient line.

D I O N E.



D I O N E,

Love is a sacred voluntary fire,
 Gold never bought that pure, that chaste desire;
 Who thinks true love for lucre to possess,
 Shall grasp false flattery and the feign'd cares;
 Can we believe that mean, that servile wife,
 Who vilely sells her dear-bought love for life,
 Would not her virtue for an hour resign,
 If in her sight the proser'd treasure shine.

L Y C I D A S.

Can reason (when by winds swift fires are born
 O'er waving harvests of autumnal corn)
 The driving fury of the flame reprove?
 Who then shall reason with a heart in love?

D I O N E.

Yet let me speak; O may my words persuade
 The noble youth to quit this sylvan maid!
 Resign thy crook, no more to plains resort,
 Look round on all the beauties of the Court;
 There shall thy merit find a worthy flame,
 Some nymph of equal wealth and equal name.

Think,

Think, if these offers should thy wish obtain,
 And should the rustick beauty stoop to gain;
 Thy heart could ne'er prolong th' unequal fire,
 The sudden blaze would in one year expire;
 Then thy rash folly thou too late shalt chide,
 To Poverty and base-born blood ally'd;
 Her vulgar tongue shall animate the strife,
 And hourly discord vex thy future life.

LYCIDAS.

Such is the force thy faithful words impart,
 That like the galling goad they pierce my heart.
 You think fair virtue in my breast resides,
 That honest truth my lips and actions guides,
 Deluded shepherd, could you view my soul,
 You'd see it with deceit and treach'ry foul?
 I'm base, perfidious. Ere from Court I came,
 Love singled from the train a beauteous dame;
 The tender maid my fervent vows believ'd,
 My fervent vows the tender maid deceiv'd,
 Why dost thou tremble?---why thus heave thy sighs?
 Why steal the silent sorrows from thy eyes?

D I O N E.

D I O N E.

Sure the soft lamb hides rage within his breast,
 And cooing turtles are with hate possess'd ;
 When from so sweet a tongue flow fraud and lies,
 And those meek looks a perjur'd heart disguise.
 Ah ! who shall now on faithless man depend ?
 The treach'rous lover proves as false a friend.

L Y C I D A S.

When with *Dione's* love my bosom glow'd,
 Firm constancy and truth sincere I vow'd ;
 But since *Parthenia's* brighter charms were known,
 My love, my constancy and truth are flown.

D I O N E.

Are not thy hours with conscious anguish stung ?
 Swift vengeance must o'ertake the perjur'd tongue.
 The Gods the cause of injur'd love assert,
 And arm with stubborn pride *Parthenia's* heart.

L Y C I D A S.

Go, try her ; tempt her with my birth and state,
 Stronger ambition will subdue her hate.

D I O N E.

D I O N E.

O rather turn thy thoughts on that lost maid,
 Whose hourly sighs thy faithless oath upbraid !
 Think you behold her at the dead of night,
 Plac'd by the glimm'ring taper's paly light,
 With all your letters spread before her view,
 While trickling tears the tender lines bedew ;
 Sobbing she reads the perj'rys o'er and o'er,
 And her long nights know peaceful sleep no more.

L Y C I D A S.

Let me forget her.

D I O N E.

————— O false youth, relent ;
 Think should *Parthenia* to thy hopes consent ;
 When *Hymen* join your hands, and musick's voice
 Makes the glad echoes of thy domes rejoyce,
 Then shall *Dione* force the crouded hall,
 Kneel at thy feet and loud for justice call ;
 Could you behold her weltring on the ground,
 The purple dagger reeking from the wound ?

Could



Could you unmov'd this dreadful fight survey?
Such fatal scenes shall stain thy bridal day.

LYCIDAS.

The horrid thought sinks deep into my soul,
And down my cheek unwilling furrows roll.

DIONE.

From this new flame you may as yet recede,
Or have you doom'd that guiltless maid shall bleed?

LYCIDAS.

Name her no more. — Haste, seek the sylvan Fair.

DIONE.

Should the rich profer tempt her list'ning ear,
Bid all your peace adieu. O barb'rous youth,
Can you forgo your honour, love and truth?
Yet should *Parthenia* wealth and title slight,
Would justice then restore *Dione's* right?
Would you then dry her ever-falling tears;
And blest with honest love your future years?

LYCIE.

LYCIDAS.

I'll in yon' shade thy wish'd return attend ;
Come quickly come, and cheer thy fighting friend.
[Exit Lycidas.]

DIONE.

Should her proud soul resist the tempting bait;
Should she contemn his profer'd wealth and state,
Then I once more his perjur'd heart may move,
And in his bosom wake the dying love.
As the pale wretch involv'd in doubts and fears,
All trembling in the judgment-hall appears ;
So shall I stand before *Parthenia's* eyes,
For as she dooms, *Dione* lives or dies.



A C T