

Ann Murry, "An Ode"

Description

ANN MURRY

An Ode

Beneath a Willow's mournful shade,
Fair Ariadne lay;
A cheerless, solitary maid,
Tho' once content and gay.

In tender accents thus I spoke, 5
To ease her labring breast:
Dost thou complain of promise broke?
Art thou by want oppress'd?

Can I thy wounded heart relieve,
By pity's healing balm? 10
Or if some faithless youth deceive,
Thy perturbations calm?

"Ah no" (she said) "hard is my fate,
From lovely Theseus torn;
Thy consolation comes too late, 15
His absence thus I mourn.

The beams I shun of chearing day,
To Luna hence complain;
Like Philomel in mournful lay,
Pour forth my plaintive strain. 20

Remembrance sad, of former joys,
Is ever in my sight;
The cruel Phantom which destroys
My peace both day and night.

Thus am I plung'd in fell despair, 25
As Love my anguish mocks;
With sighs I rend the fragrant air,
Implore unpitying rocks.

In me her lamentations wrought
Emotions of desire, 30
To kindle in her ruffled thoughts,
Sparks of celestial fire.

Cease, lovely mourner! then I cry
To yield to cankered woe;
Let slighted love, and fear subside, 35
And sorrow cease to flow.

Ingratitude in Men we find,
By various forms express'd;
Unlike the constant ray refin'd,
Which warms the female breast. 40

Impetuous, and inclin'd to change,
They bear a lawless sway;
From flow'r to flow'r delight to range,
And flatter to betray.

Forbear to struggle with thy fate, 45
Opposing Heav'n's decrees;
Which grants things suited to thy state,
Pertaining to thy ease.

Yet oft denies the Lover's pray'r,
And vain mistaken boon; 50
Regards their sighs as empty air,
If heard, repented soon.

Love, the invader of thy peace,
Subdued by Reason's power,
Shall feel his daring influence cease, 55
Nor cloud thy future hour.

Serenity shall grace thy brows,
With Friendship's sacred band;
To her then offer up thy vows,
And yield thy willing hand. 60

Be thou the messenger of peace,
Dispensing holy joy;
Rely on hopes which ne'er can cease,
Nor mortal Man destroy.

Depend on him, whose pow'r alone,
Can give substantial rest;
Aspire to reach his heav'nly throne,
A meek and welcome guest.

NOTES:

2,14 *Ariadne/Theseus* Star-crossed lovers of Greek mythology; Ariadne hangs herself after being abandoned by Theseus (*Britannica*).

12 *perturbations* 'The disturbance of the regular state of a thing' (*OED*).

18 *Luna* The moon.

19 *Philomel* The nightingale.

20 *plaintive strain* Mournful song (*OED*).

23 *Phantom* 'Something not real but appearing to the imagination' (Johnson).

25 *fell* 'Intensely painful or destructive' (*OED*).

32 *Sparks of celestial fire* Interest in a love of God.

34 *cank'ring* From 'canker,' meaning to 'spread harmfully and insidiously' (*OED*).

41 *Impetuous* 'Acting with or marked by great sudden or rash energy; passionate, ardent' (*OED*).

50 *boon* 'A favour, in response to asking' (*OED*).

SOURCE: *Poems on Various Subjects* (London, 1779), pp. 35-39. [Google Books]

Edited by Molly Davies

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