

John Hoy, Junior, "Delia's Farewel, An Elegy"

Description

JOHN HOY, JUNIOR

DELIA'S FAREWEL, An Elegy

Once more, O Muses! ere you leave this grove,
Awake the strain, but sing in accents new:
DELIA no more attends the tale of love,
Such love as flows from DAMON or from you.

But tune to nobler themes the heav'nly lyre, Â 5
And, unprov'd, the darling strain prolong;
Swell the big note with Friendship's sacred fire,
Or sound in DELIA'S ear the moral song.

Alas! alas! Love's subtle lurking fiend,
Which feeble Reason never can control, Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 10
Kindles anew at DELIA'S long lov'd name,
And fills again, and warms my raptur'd soul.

In ev'ry tender tie to Friendship known,
In all the kind endearments Love affords,
How many years together we have grown, Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 15
Ye Muses know, and still your song records.

My song was DELIA'S praise when first I lov'd,
And DELIA listen'd to the tender strain;
Yes, DELIA listen'd! and my song approv'd,
Nor scorn'd the passion of a simple swain. Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 20

'Twas DELIA's love inspir'd the early song,
And kindled rapture in my infant breast:—
Alas! why could I not the strain prolong?
Ah! why has Heav'n forbid me to be blest?

Fond wish! I hop'd to call young DELIA mine; Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 25
But, ah! can wishes thwart eternal fate?
Would mortals regulate the deep design
Of Heav'n, presiding wisely o'er our state?

Now DELIA's gone! and each dejected muse,
In sullen sounds, the absent nymph deplores: 30
The sad remembrance of my loss renews,
Where ev'ry scene her memory restores.

Methinks I see her still in virgin charms —
Such as no more these faded eyes shall view;
Such as no more shall raise the soft alarms, 35
And Love's sweet passion in my breast renew.

Can I forget those soft enchanting smiles?
Those cordial looks beam'd from the inmost soul?
Those gentle offices, and friendly toils,
With which she strove my sorrows to control? 40

How oft, O DELIA! has thy tender care
Giv'n to my sense of pain a kind relief?
How oft thy sympathy repress'd despair,
And wip'd the drops from my pale cheek of grief?

(Thy pity still I claim, for still 'tis dear, 45
And Pity, sure, is due to misery!

Ah! shall one sigh, or shall one tender tear,
Be deem'd too much to DAMON's memory?)

Oft as I watch'd the lonely midnight hour,
Each black idea i'ed when thou wast nigh : 50
No more I languish'd for the balmy pow'r;
And Night's dull wheels roll'd swifter o'er the sky.

But now, alas! the melancholy scene
(How chang'd!) presents me with a dreary waste,
Save where my absent friend, by fancy seen, 55
Augments the horrors of my tortur'd breast.

I blame not DELIA:— DELIA's soul was kind: —
'Twas envious Fortune tore my love away: —
But still thou'rt here, and from my sadden'd mind
My DELIA's image never shall decay. 60

I saw what anguish swell'd her gentle breast,
What horrors shook her when she slow withdrew;
What load of grief her fainting voice suppress,
When Fate oblig'd her to pronounce,—Adieu !

Thrice o'er her face the waving crimson spread, 65
And thrice her visage chang'd to deadly pale;

Her speech forsook her when she wou'd have said,
"Farewel, ye groves! and, DAMON, O farewel!"

Ah! then, what anguish tore my bursting heart!

Scarce could my breast its tide of grief control, Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 70
When, beam'd tremendous, like a mortal dart,
Her parting look transi-x'd me to the soul.

Less cruel pangs had pierc'd my wounded breast,

Had Fate's dread mandate stopt thy vital breath;
Less had I griev'd to see my DELIA drest Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 75
Â Â Â Â 75
In all the sad and awful pomp of death.

I then a pleasing melancholy joy

Had felt, to wander near my DELIA's tomb;
To press the turf where her dear dust should lie,
And tell my woes to Night's surrounding gloom. Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 80

Quick Fancy, fir'd, should mount th' ethereal height,

And view the lovely maid, my DELIA there,
Array'd in robes for mortal eyes too bright,
Alive, immortal, more divinely fair!

But now I see the idol of my soul Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 85
Â Â Â Â Â Â 85

For ever ravish'd from my longing arms,
Another's joy to share, his griefs control; —
—Another's raptures kindle at her charms!

My deep distresses all relief refuse:

Ev'n gentle STREPHON's friendship is in vain, Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 90
Tho' to his aid he call th' inspiring muse,
And cheer his DAMON with the rural strain.

In vain, to soothe the troubles of my breast,

Fair Science opens all her copious store ;
Soft magic song no more can give me rest, Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 95
Â Â 95
And wit and genius charm my soul no more.

No more bold MILTON, on the car of morn,

Whirls my rapt soul above th' ethereal sphere,
Where i-ery seraphs i-erce for combat burn,
While front to front the shadowy hosts draw near. Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 100

In vain great SHAKESPEARE, taught of Heav'n alone,

Unfolds the scene of Nature to my view: —

Fly! magic pictures! and, with DELIA gone,
Farewel the ecstasy which once I knew!

Perhaps the lenient hand of Time may ease
105

The lively sense of grief which now I feel,
That peace restore which makes ev'n sorrow please,
And wipes the gall from keen affliction's steel.

If not, — should ev'ry other refuge fail,

O Death! thou still remain'st to give relief: —
110

In vain thy all-composing pow'rs assail
The frowns of Fortune, and the stings of grief.

To thee, O melancholy pow'r! I call;

To thee, with hasty steps, impatient I fly: —
O grant a shelter in thy dusky hall,
115

To me the child of pain and misery!

NOTES:

1 *Muses* — In greek mythology each of the nine goddesses regarded as presiding over and inspiring learning and the arts, esp. poetry and music (QED).

20 *swain* — A country gallant or lover (QED).

51 *balmy* — Deliciously soft and soothing (QED).

65 *crimson* — Of or relating to blood; sanguinary (QED).

76 *pomp* — Splendid display or celebration; magnificent show or ceremony (QED).

94 *Science* — Knowledge or understanding acquired by study; acquaintance with or mastery of any branch of learning (QED).

97 *No* — emended to *No* (printer's error). MILTON John Milton (1608–1674), poet and polemicist; the following lines in this stanza appear to reference *Paradise Lost* (1667).

99 *seraphs* Angels.

101 *SHAKESPEARE, taught of Heav'n alone* Shakespeare was considered a "natural genius" in this period, a notion popularized by Joseph Addison in *Spectator* no. 160 (1711).

SOURCE: *Poems on Various Subjects* (Edinburgh, 1781), pp. 52-57. [Google Books]

Edited by Yesenia Rodriguez