

Anonymous, "Scattered Thoughts, by a Lady"

Description

ANONYMOUS

Scattered Thoughts, by a Lady

Written in a long and painful illness, after a disturbed and restless night.

While, child of sorrow, on my couch I lie,
And court sweet Sleep to seal my wakeful eye,
Still keenest anguish rankles at my heart,
And pains unceasing pierce each vital part.
I hear the joyless bird of omen sing, 5
And at my casement flap his blacken'd wing;
While nightly spirits hover round my head,
Haunting with horrid thoughts my widow'd bed.
Oh, come, thou kindest nurse! come, gentle Sleep!
Seal with thy wings those eyes which wake to weep. 10
Distill thy poppies on my unclos'd lid,
And on my pillow thy mild opiates shed.
Through night's dark gloom I count the measur'd time,
And hear the knell of Death incessant chime:
The spider, spinning in some lonely notch, 15
Echoes the knell, and keeps th' ill-omen'd watch.
My pensive pillow views my early life,
When in youth's bloom I took the name of wife;
Scarce sixteen suns had dawn'd upon my years,
When I awoke to all a mother's cares; 20
While, at my breast, the tender blossom hung,
Ere the soft accent loos'd the lisp'ing tongue,
Grief's sharpest arrows pierc'd my gentle heart,
And wounded Nature felt her festering dart;
No love congenial to my own I found, 25
But joyless pass'd night's solitary round.
If lost in momentary sleep I lie,
What hideous forms appear to fancy's eye!
With phantoms of a woe-worn feverish brain
I trembling start,—and wake to keener pain; 30
The spectres of delusion still in view,
And the night bag, my waking sense pursue.

