

Sappho Redivivus: Fragment

By all I lov'd, neglected and forgot,
 No friendly face e'er lights my squalid cot;
 Shunn'd, hated, wrong'd, unpitied, unredrest,
 The mock'd quotation of the scorner's jest!
 Ev'n the poor support of my wretched life,
 Snatched by the violence of legal strife.
 Oft grateful for my very daily bread
 To those my family's once large bounty fed;
 A welcome inmate at their homely fare,
 My griefs, my woes, my sighs, my tears they share:
 (Their vulgar souls unlike the souls refin'd,
 The fashioned marble of the polished mind).

In vain would Prudence, with decorous sneer,
 Point out a censuring world, and bid me fear;
 Above the world, on wings of Love, I rise-
 I know its worst, and can that worst despise;
 Let Prudence' direst bodements on me fall,
 M[ontgomery], rich reward, o'er pays them all!

Mild zephyrs waft thee to life's farthest shore,
 Nor think of me and my distress more, -
 Falsehood accurst! No! still I beg a place,
 Still near thy heart some little, little trace:
 For that dear trace the world I would resign:
 O let me live, and die, and think it mine!

"I burn, I burn, as when thro' ripen'd corn
 By driving winds the crackling flames are borne;"
 Now raving-wild, I curse that fatal night,
 Then bless the hour that charm'd my guilty sight:
 In vain the laws their feeble force oppose,
 Chain'd at Love's feet, they groan, his vanquish'd foes.
 In vain Religion meets my shrinking eye,
 I dare not combat, but I turn and fly:
 Conscience in vain upbraids th' unhallow'd fire,
 Love grasps her scorpions-stifled they expire!
 Reason drops headlong from his sacred throne,

Your dear idea reigns, and reigns alone;
 Each thought intoxicated homage yields,
 And riots wanton in forbidden fields.
 By all on high adoring mortals know!
 By all the conscious villain fears below!
 By your dear self!-the last great oath I swear,
 Not life, nor soul, were ever half so dear!