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257            from *The Enthusiast: or The Lover of Nature*

YE green-robed Dryads, oft at dusky eve  
By wondering shepherds seen, to forests brown,  
To unfrequented meads, and pathless wilds,  
Lead me from gardens decked with art's vain pomps.  
Can gilt alcoves, can marble-mimic gods,  
Parterres embroidered, obelisks, and urns,  
Of high relief; can the long, spreading lake,  
Or vista lessening to the sight; can Stow  
With all her Attic fanes, such raptures raise,  
As the thrush-haunted copse, where lightly leaps            10  
The fearful fawn the rustling leaves along,  
And the brisk squirrel sports from bough to bough,  
While from an hollow oak, whose naked roots  
O'erhang a pensive rill, the busy bees  
Hum drowsy lullabies? The bards of old,  
Fair Nature's friends, sought such retreats, to charm  
Sweet Echo with their songs; oft too they met  
In summer evenings, near sequestered bow'rs,  
Or mountain-nymph, or Muse, and eager learned  
The moral strains she taught to mend mankind.            20  
As to a secret grot Aegeria stole  
With patriot Numa, and in silent night  
Whispered him sacred laws, he list'ning sat,  
Rapt with her virtuous voice, old Tiber leaned  
Attentive on his urn, and hushed his waves.

Rich in her weeping country's spoils, Versailles  
May boast a thousand fountains, that can cast  
The tortured waters to the distant heav'ns;  
Yet let me choose some pine-topped precipice  
Abrupt and shaggy, whence a foamy stream,            30  
Like Anio, tumbling roars; or some bleak heath,  
Where straggling stand the mournful juniper,  
Or yew-tree scathed; while in clear prospect round,  
From the grove's bosom spires emerge, and smoke  
In bluish wreaths ascends, ripe harvests wave,  
Low, lonely cottages, and ruined tops  
Of Gothic battlements appear, and streams  
Beneath the sunbeams twinkle.---The shrill lark,  
That wakes the woodman to his early task,  
Or lovesick Philomel, whose luscious lays            40

Soothe lone night-wanderers, the moaning dove  
Pitied by listening milkmaid, far excel  
The deep-mouthed viol, the soul-lulling lute,  
And battle-breathing trumpet. Artful sounds!  
That please not like the choristers of air,  
When first they hail th' approach of laughing May.

. . . . .  
All-beauteous Nature! by thy boundless charms  
Oppressed, O where shall I begin thy praise,  
Where turn th' ecstatic eye, how ease my breast  
That pants with wild astonishment and love! 50  
Dark forests, and the op'ning lawn, refreshed  
With ever-gushing brooks, hill, meadow, dale,  
The balmy bean-field, the gay-coloured close,  
So sweetly interchanged, the lowing ox,  
The playful lamb, the distant water-fall  
Now faintly heard, now swelling with the breeze,  
The sound of pastoral reed from hazel-bower,  
The choral birds, the neighing steed, that snuffs  
His dappled mate, stung with intense desire,  
The ripened orchard when the ruddy orbs 60  
Betwixt the green leaves blush, the azure skies,  
The cheerful sun that through earth's vitals pours  
Delight and health and heat; all, all conspire  
To raise, to soothe, to harmonise the mind,  
To lift on wings of praise, to the great Sire  
Of being and of beauty, at whose nod  
Creation started from the gloomy vault  
Of dreary Chaos, while the grisly king  
Murmured to feel his boisterous power confined.

What are the lays of artful Addison, 70  
Coldly correct, to Shakespeare's warblings wild?  
Whom on the winding Avon's willowed banks  
Fair Fancy found, and bore the smiling babe  
To a close cavern (still the shepherds show  
The sacred place, whence with religious awe  
They hear, returning from the field at eve,  
Strange whisp'rings of sweet music through the air):  
Here, as with honey gathered from the rock,  
She fed the little prattler, and with songs  
Oft soothed his wond'ring ears; with deep delight 80  
On her soft lap he sat, and caught the sounds.