

ELEGY.

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Their lot forbade : nor circumscrib'd alone
 Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd ;
 Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
 And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

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The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
 Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
 With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

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Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
 Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;
 Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
 They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

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Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
 With uncouth rhimes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh,

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Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered muse,
 The place of fame and elegy supply :
 And many a holy text around she strews,
 That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
 This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
 Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind ?

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On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
 Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
 E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
 E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

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For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
 If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
 Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate.

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Haply some hoary-headed swain may say :
 Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
 Brushing with hasty step the dews away
 To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

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