

\* THE DREAM

Respectfully Dedicated to Master Consul Hasting

As t'other night young Damon lay  
A-dreaming o'er his studious day,  
To his lone couch there stole with grace  
The likeness of his Delia's face.  
Above his raptur'd eyes it hung,  
And round his heart a magic flung;  
Till all the gifts of heav'n seem'd blent  
In one fair figure slight extent.  
The nymph (tho' fair enough in truth)  
Shone doubly to the spellbound youth,  
For in her childish look there gleam'd  
A score of charms he only dream'd.  
Who shall with fitting pencil draw  
The vision that young Damon saw?  
The task is sure beyond my skill,  
Whose nights such visions never fill!  
Fancy a visage young and fair,  
With ev'ry goddess' mingled air;  
A lip that obvious Graces lack,  
And matchless eyes of lustrous black.  
Tresses of silk, as dark in hue  
As summer midnights sweet with dew,  
And a slim form whose robes of white  
Trail'd by like clouds of filmy light.  
This Damon saw, and as he gaz'd,  
His love to ardent lustre blaz'd;  
The bending nymph he dimly view'd,  
And blessed the pleasing solitude.  
Closer the lovely phantom came,  
As brighter burn'd the stripling's flame;  
Till ere her kind intent was known,  
The vision's lips had touch'd his own!  
In bliss the conscious youth essay'd  
To clasp this form his dream had made;  
But such rude haste all spells must break,  
So Damon started broad awake.  
"Delia!" he cry'd, "return, return,  
To quench the fires that in me burn!"  
But empty space repeats his cries.  
And only mem'ry fills his eyes,  
Transported thus, young Damon swore

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His nymph in virtue to adore:  
With sounding oath he vow'd that ne'er  
To well-known sports would he repair.  
Charisiys' banquets, rich with wine,  
He vow'd for ever to resign;  
The games, the dice, the friendly cup,  
All these forthwith he must give up.  
Sustain'd by vows, he sought the street,  
Nor could a saint more vows repeat!  
That evening as he called to mind  
The virtues of the day behind;  
The solemn rigour of his tread,  
The wines untouched, the jests unsaid,  
Young Damon sought to pass the time  
Now grown so dull, by scribbling rhyme.  
With hard-pushed quill he strove to tell  
Of comely Delia's magic spell;  
Of love, and youth, and such affairs  
As bards concoct to kill their cares.  
But sad to say, 'twas soon made clear  
That verse was nor his proper sphere;  
Tho' great the pains a bard may take,  
Fine dreams will oft poor dactyls make!  
The hour grew late, but still the swain  
To write his thoughts essay'd in vain;  
When sudden all his virtues new  
Burst in a curse and fled from view.  
Cry'd he, "How vast a dunce am I  
To put my solid pleasures by!  
If dreams my soul to good impel,  
I'll dream my virtuous life as well!"