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An Ode to John Keats

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An Ode to John Keats

Michelle Rash

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness
pains my sense, as your poetry I read.
To loathe your overwhelming poesy hath my heart decreed.
My spirit, too weak; thy diction, too deep,
I am not even permitted the gentle luxury to weep.
Thou speaks of Arcady and Attica and Greece,
Of love and war and paradox, in which I find no peace.
I was once full of sweet dreams and quiet breathing,
Then poetry abounded, the importance of which I found deceiving.
I linger in the soul-searching despair of the tomb,
Hoping Hemingway or Twain will emerge from the gloom.
Authors of straightforward narrative, of prose!
Not as if you could ever recognize those.
At least by your profound questioning, your mind appears to be alight,
Your queries are most significant, such as “Why Did I Laugh Tonight?”
You write of a golden-tongued Siren with lute -
If I spoke like that, I’d prefer to be mute.
Dryads and faeries amuse you to no end,
After pages of this, even Meyers is a godsend.
Yes, a thing of beauty is a joy forever;
Yet your poems are counted in this category approximately never.
As my mental end draws near, I have but one request
Give me Dickens or give me death!