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Barker, Jane: [from Poetical Recreations (1688)]

Volume

Barker, Jane:

On the DEATH of my Brother. [from Poetical Recreations (1688)]

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Barker, Jane: On the DEATH of my Brother. [from Poetical Recreations (1688)]

1 **Come** *Sorrow*, come, embrace my yielding heart,
 2 For thou'rt alone, no *Passion* else a-part;
 3 Since of my *Dear* by Death I am bereft,
 4 Thou art the faithfull'st *Lover* I have left;
 5 And so much int'rest thou hast got in me,
 6 All thoughts of him prove only Pimps to thee:
 7 If any *joy* seem to accost my Soul,
 8 One thought of him do's presently controle
 9 Those fawning *Rivals*; all which steal away,
 10 Like wand'ring *Ghosts* at the approach of day.
 11 But hold, fond *Grief*, thou must forbear a while,
 12 Thy too too kind *Caresses*, which beguile
 13 Me of my Reason,---retire whilst I
 14 Repeat the Life, the Death, the Elogy,

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15 Of him my Soul ador'd with so much pride,


16 As makes me slight all worldly things beside;
 17 Of him who did by his fraternal Love,
 18 More noble *Passions* in my Bosome move,
 19 Than e'er cou'd be infus'd by *Cupid's* Darts,
 20 Or any feign'd, adulterate, sordid Arts;
 21 Of him whose blooming Youth pleas'd each Man's Eye,
 22 And tempted Women to Idolatry;
 23 Of him whose growing *Art* made Death afraid,
 24 He shou'd be vanquish'd, and his Throne betray'd:
 25 'Cause with success, and yet no less applause,
 26 He rescu'd many from the Tyrant's jaws:
 27 At last the Tyrant raging full with spight,
 28 Assaults his Enemy with all his might;
 29 And for his *Second* brings a *Feavour* too;
 30 In this *Attacque* what could our *Champion* doe?
 31 He bravely fights, but forc'd at last to yield,
 32 *Nature*, his *Second*, having lost the Field:
 33 [Footnote: 1Kb] ☰ *Many* bring in their Aid, but 'tis too late,
 34 Grim *Death* had gotten a Decree from *Fate*;
 35 Which *retrograded* all that great supply,
 36 Whose pow'rfull Arms makes *Death* and *Feavers* fly.

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37 But why, great *Fate!* would'st thou so cruel be,
 38 Of Joy at once to rob the World and Me!
 39 What joys so e'er we to our selves propose,
 40 *Fate* still will frustrate, or at least oppose;
 41 'Tis her Ambition sure to let us know,
 42 She has the Regiment of all below.
 43 If it be so, command some mournfull *Muse*
 44 T' inspire my *Soul*, and then my Heart infuse
 45 With Essence of some *Dirges*, that I may
 46 His Matchless worth to all the World display.
 47 Nor *Fate*, nor *Muse* will help us now, I find,
 48 All flee the Wretched, ev'n as *Ships* the Wind.
 49 My *Dear*, had'st thou to me bequeath'd thy *Wit*,
 50 Thy *Character* had long ago been writ
 51 I'th' most sublime and lasting *Verse*,
 52 That e'er Adorn'd the greatest *Hero's Herse*.
 53 But were thy great *Entomium* writ by me,
 54 'Twou'd be the ready way to lessen thee:
 55 Therefore I must desist from that design,
 56 And the attempt to better hands resign;
 57 Only repeat what mournfully was said,
 58 As in thy cold and narrow Bed was't laid

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59 By the *Apollo's* [Footnote: 1Kb] ☰ of thy noble Art,

60 (Who seem'd to grudge me in their grief a part)
61 Alas, he's gone who shou'd have liv'd to be
62 An honour to our Great Society.
63 "Alas, he's gone who shou'd supply the place
64 "Of some of us, when time has left no space
65 "Betwixt us and the Grave; but now we see
66 "How they're deceiv'd, who hold no vacancy:
67 "And all the Gallant *Æsculapian* [Footnote: 1Kb]  Crew,
68 "Whose great Example from Spectators drew
69 "Such floods of tears, that some mistook their aim,
70 "And thought a real show'r from Heav'n came.
71 But I, as if the Fountain of this Source,
72 With Handkerchiefs strove to retard the course;
73 But all in vain, my real loss was great,
74 As many thought, whose Words I here repeat:
75 "I cannot blame you for lamenting so,
76 "Since better friend no friend did e'er forego;
77 "A publick Sorrow for this loss is due,
78 "The Nation surely, Madam, mourns with you.

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