

1817

O SOLITUDE! IF I MUST WITH THEE DWELL

John Keats

Keats, John (1795-1821) - Widely regarded as the most talented of the English romantic poets, Keats, whose work was poorly received during his lifetime, could not have foreseen his later recognition. Ironically, he wrote for his own epitaph:

“Here lies one whose name was writ in water.” O Solitude! if I must with thee dwell (1817) - Opening lines: O Solitude! if I must with thee dwell, / Let it not be among the jumbled heap ...

O SOLITUDE

O Solitude! if I must with thee dwell,
Let it not be among the jumbled heap
Of murky buildings; climb with me the steep,
Nature's observatory- whence the dell,
Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell,
May seem a span; let me thy vigils keep
'Mongst boughs pavillion'd, where the deer's swift leap
Startles the wild bee from the fox-glove bell.
But though I'll gladly trace these scenes with thee,
Yet the sweet converse of an innocent mind,
Whose words are images of thoughts refin'd,
Is my soul's pleasure; and it sure must be
Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.

THE END