

BOOK I, ODE 24

Who chides the tears that weep so dear a head?
Sorrowful Muse, for whom the father wed
The voice of waters to a cithern string,
Teach thou my grief to sing.

Ye sisters, Right and Honor, and forsooth
Unshaken Loyalty, and naked Truth,
Quintillius the peerless ye shall weep,
Who sleeps unending sleep.

Vainly, poor Virgil, rise thy pious prayers
To heaven which took him from thee unawares;
His memory many a noble friend reveres,
Thine were the bitterest tears.

What tho' more sweet thy lyre than his of Thrace,
When listening trees joyed in the music's grace,
Would life reclaim the shade from the beyond,
Which, with his fearsome wand,

The Shepherd, harsh the doors of fate to keep,
Has gathered once unto his shadowy sheep?
'Tis hard: but when 'twere impious to rebel,
Less grows the load borne well.