

ACADAMIA

O'er shadowed by a mountain's craggy head,
Where Zeus himself might proudly make his bed,
There Rhetoric and Science, hand in hand
Bring culture to a barren, dusty land.
Here Knowledge seated on her throne of gold
Her gay abandoned revelries doth hold;
Protected from the blasts of intense fire
Born from the South by raging Dogs of Ire.
She watches whilst the graceful Muses sleep,
And leisurely attends her learned sheep;
Untroubled by the sorrows of mankind
They graze, each with a peaceful, empty mind.
'Though seated at the iron gates of Mars,
She winks her eye, and turns to face the stars;
Looks sideways as the Instruments of War
Manoeuvre at her very Palace door.
Her children, in their innocence partake
Of every game simplicity can make,
They sport beneath the trees with books and pens,
Pecking scraps of scholarship like hens.
All day they listen to the bleating flocks,
Or wander through a muddled maze of rocks
And passages, formed by some unknown God
Who sits in judgement with his flaming Rod.
Here Psyche in her infancy doth laugh
With Archimedes' children in the bath.
There cannot be another place on Earth
Where Art is killed so readily at birth,
Or Reason, when she tries to raise her head,
So quickly or so avidly shot dead.
Sometimes a Fury, journeying to Mass
Akin to the Apocalypse will pass,
And spew a few uncalled for words of spleen,
To try and darken this idyllic scene.
But happily Impotence is the rule,
T'is but the ranting of a sterile fool,
And angry words from jesters cannot weigh
Against the voice of Scholarship at bay.
Sometimes the shout of Jupiter will sound,
And, as in answer, Neptune's call resound.
One from his books will oftimes bend his eyes,
The other from his sea of figures rise.
Then God fights God, and friend will batter friend,
In glorious verbal battles they contend;
Harsh words, like thunderbolts, zoom from the sky,

And sharp statistics pierce the open eye.
But soon the sounds of war will die away,
To be continued on some other day.
So peace again will reign over the land,
With nothing won or lost on either hand.
The Muses slumber on, they cannot wake,
Not even for a mighty battle's sake.
The children sport, the sheep still safely graze,
In shallowness and pretence spend their days.
Beneath the waving shade of gums they sit,
And, as they sip their nectar, murder Wit.

Arcadia was ne'er as fair as this,
For surely here, sweet Ignorance is Bliss.

LUCY BOYKO