

TO THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK, ESQ.

*Napoli, Feb. 25th, 1819*

[...]

The royal collection of paintings in this city is sufficiently miserable. Perhaps the most remarkable is the original studio by Michael Angelo, of the ('Day of Judgement', which is painted in fresco on the Sixtine chapel of the Vatican. It is there so defaced as to be wholly indistinguishable. I cannot but think the genius of this artist highly overrated. He has not only no temperance, no modesty, no feeling for the just boundaries of art (and in these respects an admirable genius may err), but he has no sense of beauty, and to want this is to want the sense of the creative power of mind. What is terror without a contrast with, and a connexion with, loveliness. How well Dante understood this secret" Dante, with whom this artist has been so presumptuously compared!

[...]