

Sarah Dixon, “Aminta’s Dream”

Description

SARAH DIXON

“Aminta’s Dream”

Tir'd with the Disappointments of the Day,
As on her Bed the Fair *Aminta* lay,
The wild Ideas which her Mind imprest
Still kept their Rounds, and wou'd not let her rest;
Till the sweet Lark, who dedicates the Prime 5
To the Disposer of her future Time,
Had prun'd her Wings, and tow'ring thro' the Air
Call'd drowsie Mortals to their Morning Prayer.
With Cloyster'd Virgins had she Vigils kept,
Aminta now perhaps had sweetly slept; 10
A Stranger been to Love, and all its Cares,
Fallacious Hopes, inseparable Fears.
Just as the Sun lick'd off the pearly Dews,
Her long extended Lids began to close;
Gay Fancy then assum'd to play its Part 15
In every Avenue of Head and Heart;
In various Trim presented every Wish,
And the Unhappy dream'd of Happiness:
A *Group* of inconsistent Figures first
Address'd her Senses, by her Passions nurst: 20
The stubborn Goddess *Fortune* led the Van,
Smiles in her Face and Trophies in her Hand:
Attractive Riches, dying Lovers Tears,
Obliging Friendships, many happy Years;
Park, Balls, and Operas, and *Brussel's* Lace 25
A gilded Chariot and a lasting Face:
Fictitious Joys! how fleet your Motions haste,
Like flying Shadows just observ'd e're past;
The hasty Bubbles of a christal Brook,
Rais'd in a Moment, in a Moment broke. 30
Loud Acclamations snapt the pleasing Chain,
And all the Gew-gaws vanish'd from her Brain:
Her Maid in Tears the fatal Tiding brought,
Silvio had all his Vows and Her's forgot;
That Morning married to her favourite Friend, 35

And here, poor Girl, her Expectations end.

NOTES:

Title *Aminta* The male protagonist in a pastoral play written in 1573 by Torquato Tasso; Dixon has switched the gender of her titular character (*Britannica*).

5 *Prime* “The time just before sunrise” (*OED*).

15 *Fancy* Poetical imagination (Johnson).

17 *Trim* “Neatly or smartly made, prepared, or arranged; elegantly or finely arrayed” (*OED*).

21 *Goddess Fortune* Roman goddess of fate, chance, or luck; *Van* “The foremost portion of, or the foremost position in, a company or train of persons moving, or prepared to move, forwards or onwards” (*OED*).

25 *Brussel’s Lace* Delicate, handmade lace from Flanders (*Britannica*); *Operas* Emended from “Opera’s” (a printer’s error).

32 *Gew-gaws* In plural, “vanities” (*OED*).

34 *Silvio* Silvia is the female love interest of Aminta in Tasso’s play; Dixon also has switched the gender of this character (*Britannica*).

SOURCE: *Poems on Several Occasions* (Canterbury, 1740), pp. 29-30. [Google Books]

Edited by Hallie Stark