

## "I.O.," "Love's Answer to Reason"

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"I.O."

### "LOVE'S *Answer to* REASON"

INTRUDER bold, whose impious tongue  
Presumes to chide my hallow'd flame,  
Art thou of earthly parents sprung?  
Whence dost thou come? or what thy name?  
Not earthly thou: some Hell-born foe, 5  
Or sure some stranger from above:  
Its nature well thou seem'st to know,  
But ne'er did'st feel what 'tis to love.  
Give me a breast as cold as thine,  
Or teach the maid to frown like thee; 10  
Then shall this soul no longer pine,  
And thou alone shalt govern me.  
But, whilst I view that eye so sweet,  
And in that eye a sweeter mind,  
Still may'st thou ever idly prate, 15  
And preach thy lessons to the wind.  
Go, tell the Sun to hide his fire,  
And tell the stars to shine no more;  
Go, bid the surges back retire,  
Nor dare to lash the bellowing shore. 20  
Seek Bedlam's din and mingled yells;  
There, if thou canst, resume thy reign;  
Bid Madness leave her iron cells,  
And drag no more the clanking chain.  
Go call her wand'ring senses home, 25  
Her frantic rage and storms allay;  
Or teach her fixt and sullen gloom  
To laugh and dance the hours away.  
Could'st thou but view my charmer's form,  
Or hear the music of her tongue, 30  
Thine icy soul might then grow warm,  
And Age itself once more be young.  
Alas! I fear that hoary hair  
Is not the badge of creeping Time;  
Those locks from endless days you wear, 35

And never felt youth's glowing prime.  
That lifted eye, whose sharp rebuke  
Still points to yonder starry pole —  
It never knew the down-cast look,  
Which marks the Lover's pensive soul. 40  
The front sublime, whose angry lour  
Would kill the flame I nourish here —  
It never stooped to Beauty's pow'r,  
Or fondly smooth'd the frown severe.  
That trumpet tongue, whose harsher noise 45  
Would from this breast her image scare —  
It never us'd the dulcet voice  
Which Love employs to woo the Fair.  
Till Grace itself can please no more,  
Shall I not feel those charms divine? 50  
How can I learn thy rigid lore,  
Or leave her face to gaze on thine?  
Oh! had my love that ugly frame,  
Thy furrow'd brow, thine haggard eye,  
This heart had never known a flame, 55  
This breast had never learnt to sigh!

**NOTES:**

**Title:** *LOVE'S Answer to REASON* This poem is the answer to "REASON'S *Expostulation with LOVE*," which was published on the same page in this issue.

**21** *Bedlam* Place or state of confusion or madness; reference to the Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem in London which was an asylum from the 1400s through the eighteenth century (*Online Etymology Dictionary*).

**33** *hoary* Old, grey-haired (*Online Etymology Dictionary*).

**41** *lour* Form of *lower*, a frown, scowl, dark and threatening appearance (*Online Etymology Dictionary*).

**48** *dulcet* Soothing, pleasant, sweet (*OED*).

**Source:** *The Gentleman's Magazine* (July, 1788), p. 640. [Hathi Trust]

*Edited by Annika Thiem*