

Mary Masters, "To my Self"

by admin - Saturday, May 05, 2018

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MARY MASTERS

"To my Self"

Maria, now, leave all that thou hast lov'd,
And be, no more, by outward objects mov'd.
Quit the vain World, and its alluring Toys,
Its airy Pleasures, and fictitious Joys.
False are the Colours, high is the Deceit, 5
And that, which fairest seems, the greatest Cheat.
Turn then, fond Maid, from the Delusion fly,
And guide thy future Aims by Reason's Eye.
No more let Sense the radiant *Queen* depose,
Or the fair *Monarch* her just Sceptre lose. 10
Let Her mild Dictates bend thy stubborn Will,
And keep thy wild impetuous Passions still:
Let gentle *Prudence* her soft Pow'r exert,
And curb the Transports of thy foolish Heart.
Tempestuous Anger, and tumultuous Joy, 15
Both are uncomely, both the Health destroy.
These, and all others of the ardent Kind,
Are prejudicial to a peaceful Mind,
Then, shun extremes, and calmly bear thy Fate,
Not too dejected, nor too much elate. 20
If thy kind Lord a prosp'rous Lot has giv'n,
Bless the Indulgence of all-bounteous Heav'n.
Or, if he fixes a severer Doom,
And should think fit to call his Favours home;
Humbly submit to the divine Decree, 25
None but himself his wise designs can see.

NOTES:

1 *Maria* Mary Masters's poetic name for herself.

3 *Toys* "Matter of no importance; thing of no value" (Johnson).

12 *impetuous* "Violent; forcible" (Johnson).

13 *Prudence* "Wisdom applied to practice" (Johnson).

15 *Tempestuous* "Strong conflicting emotions" (OED); *tumultuous* "Violent commotion; irregularly and confusedly agitated" (Johnson).

17 *ardent* "Fiery; fierce" (Johnson).

20 *dejected* "Low spirited" (Johnson); *elate* "To heighten" (Johnson).

21 *kind Lord* Likely a reference to the Christian God

23 *Doom* Death.

25 *Decree* "A law" (Johnson).

Source: *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1733), pp. 169-171.

Edited by Kaili Ferreira