Mary Leapor, â??The Power of Beautyâ?•

Description

MARY LEAPOR

â??The Power of Beautyâ?•

O Goddess of eternal Smiles,
Bright *Cythera* the fair,
Who taught *Sabinaâ??s* pleasing Wiles,
By which she won *Bellair*.

Bellair, the witty and the vain,
Who laughâ??d at Beautyâ??s Powâ??r;
But now the conquerâ??d humble Swain
Adores a painted Flowâ??r.

With *Deliaâ??s* Art my Song inspire,
Whose Lips of rosy Hue
Can neâ??er the partial Audience tire,
Thoâ?? wiser *Claudiaâ??s* do.

Thoâ?? *Claudiaâ??s* Wit and Sense refinâ??d,
Flows easy from her Tongue;
Her Soul but coarsely is enshrinâ??d,
So *Claudiaâ??s* in the wrong.

Hark, *Delia* speaksâ??that blooming Fair,
See Crowds are gathering round
With open Mouths: and wildly stare
To catch the empty Sound.

See *Lelia* with a Judgement clear,
With manly Wisdom blest;
Wit, Learning, Prudence, all appear
In that unruffled Breast.

But yet no Beau for *Lelia* dies,
No Sonnets pave her way;
Say, Muse, from whence these Evils rise,
Why *Leliaâ??s* Teeth decay.

Then, why do revâ??rend Sages rail
At Womanâ??s wanton Pride?
If Wisdom, Wit, and Prudence fail,

Let meaner Arts be tryâ??d.

Those Arts to please are only meant;
But with an angry Frown,
The Queen of Wisdom lately sent
This Proclamation down:

Minerva, with the azure Eyes,
And thus the Statute runs,
If you wouâ??d have your Daughters wise,
Take care to mend your Sons.

NOTES:

2 *Cythera* Venus, the goddess of love (*OED*).

3 *Sabinaâ??s* This and subsequent names at lines 9, 12, and 21 were common womenâ??s names in pastoral poetry.

7 *Swain* A shepherd in pastoral poetry.

29 *Sages* Men of â??profound wisdomâ?• (*OED*).

30 *wanton* â??Recklessâ?• (*OED*).

35 *Queen of Wisdom* Minerva, the goddess of wisdom (*OED*).

Source: *Poems upon Several Occasions* (London, 1748), pp. 229-231. [Google Books]

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