Martha Ferrar Peckard, â??An Ode to Spring. By a Ladyâ?•

Description

[MARTHA FERRAR PECKARD]

â??An Ode to Spring. By a Ladyâ?•

Hail, genial goddess, bloomy spring!
Thy blest return, O! let me sing,
And aid my languid lays.
Let me not sink in sloth supine,
While all creation, at thy shrine
Its annual tribute pays.

Escapâ??d from *Winterâ??s* freezing powâ??r,
Each blossom greets thee, and each flowâ??r,
While foremost of the train,
By *nature* (artless handmaid!) dreft,
The snow-drop comes in lillyâ??d vest,
Prophetic of thy reign.

The lark now strains his warbling throat,
And, with a loud and chearful note,
Calls *Echo* from her cell.
Be warnâ??d, ye fair, that listen round,
A beauteous nymph became a *sound*,
By having lovâ??d too well.

The bright-hairâ??d sun, with warmth divine,
Bids trees and shrubs before thy shrine
Their infant buds display.
Again the streams refresh the plains,
Which winter bound in icy chains
And sparkling bless his ray!

Life- giving *Zephyrs* breathe around,
And insant glows thâ?? enamellâ??d ground.
With natureâ??s varyâ??d hues:
Not so returns our youth decayâ??d;
Alas! nor air, nor sun, nor shade,
The spring of life renews.

The sunâ??s too quickâ??revolving beam,
Dissolves at once the human dream,
And brings thâ?? appointed hour.

Too late we catch his parting ray,
And mourn the idly-wasted day
    No longer in our power.

Then happiest he, whose lengthenâ??d sight,
Pursues by virtueâ??s steady light
    A hope beyond the skies;
Where frowning winter neâ??er shall come,
But rosy spring for ever bloom,
    And suns eternal rise!

NOTES:

Author Attribution based on the poemâ??s appearance in Dodsleyâ??s *Collection of Poems by Several Hands* in 1758 (5:332-4). See Emily Lorraine de Montluzin, *The Poetry of the Gentlemanâ??s Magazine (1731-1800): A Database of Titles, Authors, and First Lines*.

1 *genial* â??Literary (especially of air or climate), pleasantly mild, and warmâ?• (*OED*).

3 *languid lays* Weak verses.

4 *supine* â??Lying on oneâ??s back, lying downâ?• (*OED*).

11 *snow-drop* â??A bulbous European plant which bears drooping white flowers during the late winterâ?• (*OED*); *lillyâ??d vest* Used here as an adjective, which means â??purity and beautyâ?• (*OED*).

13 *lark* â??A small ground-dwelling songbird with elongated hind claws and a song that is delivered on the wing, typically crested and with brown streaky plumageâ?• (*OED*).

15 *Echo* â??Greek Mythology, a nymph deprived of speech by Hera in order to stop her chatter, and left able only to repeat what others had said. She also has a lovely soundâ?• (*OED*).

25 *Zephyrs* â??Personification of the west windâ?• (*OED*).

Source: *The Gentlemanâ??s Magazine*, vol. 25 (1755), p. 37.

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