Mary Leapor, â??The Charms of Anthonyâ?•

Description

MARY LEAPOR

â??The Charms of Anthonyâ?•

YE Swains, attend; let evâ??ry Nymph be near;
Be still, ye Rivers, that the Swains may hear:
Ye Winds, be calm, and brush with softer Wing,
We mean the Charms of *Anthony* to sing;
See all around the listâ??ning Shepherds throng;
O help, ye Sisters of immortal song.

LUCY.

Sing, *Phebe*, sing what Shepherd rules the Plain,
Young *Colin*â??s Envy, and *Aminda*â??s Pain:
Whom none can rival when he mows the Field,
And to whose Flute the Nightingale must yield.

PHEBE.

â??Tis *Anthony* â?? â??tis he deserves the Lay,
As mild as Evâ??ning, and as Morning gay;
Not the fresh Blooms on yonder Codling-tree,
Not the white Hawthorn half so fair as he;
Nor the young Daisy dressâ??d in Morning Dew;
Nor the Pea Blossom wears a brighter Hue.

LUCY.

None knows like him to strew the wheaten Grain,
Or drive the Plough-share oâ??er the fertile Plain;
To raise the Sheaves, or reap the waving Corn,
Or mow brown Stubble in the early Morn.

PHEBE.

How mild the Youth, when on a sultry Day
In yonder Vale we turnâ??d the fragrant Hay:
How on his Voice the listâ??ning Shepherds hung,
Not tuneful *Stella* half so sweetly sung.

LUCY.

Whether he binds the Sheaf in twisted Band,
Or turns the Pitch-fork on his nimble Hand;
Heâ??s sure to win a Glance from evâ??ry Eye,
While clumsy *Colin* stands neglected by.

PHEBE.

His curling Locks by far more lovely shew,
Than the white Wig on Squire *Fopling*â??s Brow;
And when the Shepherd on a rainy Day,
Weaves for his Hat a Wisp of flowâ??ry Hay,
The scarlet Feather not so gay appears,
Which on his Crown Sir *Ambrose Fino* wears.

LUCY.

For *Anthony Meriah* leaves her Cow,
And stands to gape at him upon the Mow:
While he (for who but must that Wench despise?)
Throws Straws and Cobwebs on her staring Eyes.

PHEBE.

To the Back-door I saw proud *Lydia* hie,
To see the Team with *Anthony* go by;
He slily laughâ??d, and turnâ??d him from the Door,
I thought the Damsel would have spoke no more.

LUCY.

Me once he met, â??twas when from yonder Vale,
Each Morn I brought the heavy milking Pail:
He took it from my Head, and with a Smile
Reachâ??d out his Hand, and helpâ??d me oâ??er the Stile.

PHEBE.

As I was dancing late amongst the Crew,
A yellow Pippin oâ??er my Head he threw:
Sue bit her Lips, and *Barbaretta* frownâ??d;
And *Phillis* lookâ??d as thoâ?? she wouâ??d have swoonâ??d.

Thus sung the Maids till *Colinet* came by,
And *Rodrigo* from weeding of the Rye;
Each took his Lass, and sped â??em to the Town,
To drink cool Cider at the *Hare* and *Hound*:
The Damsels simper like the sparkling Beer,
And *Colin* shines till *Anthony* is near.

NOTES:

1 S*wain* â??A country or farm labourer, frequently a shepherd; a country loverâ?•; N*ymph* â??Spiritsâ?¦ taking the form of a maiden inhabiting the sea, rivers, mountains, woods, trees, etc.; a beautiful young womanâ?• (*OED).*

6 *Sisters of immortal song* The Muses of Greek mythology: â??Each of the nine goddesses regarded as presiding over and inspiring learning and the artsâ?• *(OED).*

7 *Phebe* This and other names used in the poem are stereotypical names used in pastoral verse.

10 *Nightingale* In poetry, a symbol of â??melodious songâ?• *(OED).*

13 C*odling-tree* A kind of apple tree.

18 *Plough-share* â??The large pointed blade of a ploughâ?• *(OED).*

19 *Sheaves* â??Large bundles in which it is usual to bind cereal plants after reapingâ?• *(OED).*

30 *Fopling* Variation of â??fop,â?• â??a foolish person; one who is foolishly attentive to and vain of his appearance, dress, or mannersâ?• *(OED).*

36 *Mow â??A* heap of grain or hay in a barnâ?• *(OED).*

39 *hie* â??Haste, speedâ?• *(OED).*

46 *Stile* Steps or rungs allowing â??passage over or through a fence, while forming a barrier to the passage of sheep or cattleâ?• *(OED).*

48 *A yellow Pippin oâ??er my Head he threw* A variation on the custom in ancient Greece in which â??apples were presented to sweethearts as a proffer or declaration of loveâ?¦oftentimes apples were tossed or thrownâ?• in this context (McCartney, â??How the Apple Became the Token of Love,â?• p. 70).

54 *Hare and Hound* A tavern or pub, possibly alluding to a passage in Ovidâ??s *Metamorphoses* in which Phoebus and Daphne are figured as hound and hare respectively (Book I, ll. 521-525).

55 *simper* â??To glimmer, shimmer, twinkleâ?• *(OED).*

Source: ***Poems Upon Several Occasions*** **(London, 1748), pp. 249-252. [Google Books]**

Edited by Angel Johnson