Anonymous, â??Sonnet, on the Inhabitants of Londonâ?•

Description

ANONYMOUS

â??Sonnet, *on the Inhabitants of* LONDONâ?•

In London scarce a bird but may be found:
The sun-eyâ??d eagle borne on lofty wing,
Linnets that adulate the smile of Spring,
And ravens croaking with portentous sound:

Owls wrapt in dulness, crows towâ??rd carrion bound,
Parrots whose squalling notes incessant ring,
Swallows that dare to chatter near a King,
And gabbling geese nice students wish were drownâ??d:

Mud-haunting ducks that dabble in the street,
Fine birds of paradise with little feet,
Peacocks that spread a gaudy-painted fan;
Grain-raking poultry, enemies to flowâ??rs,
The stork imperious that all things devours,
A phoenix there would be an honest man.

NOTES:

3 *Linnets* A type of finch known for its pleasant song with quick trills and tweets; *adulate â??*To flatter in an obsequious or sycophantic manner, to fawn onâ?• (*OED*).

4 *portentous* â??Ominous, threateningâ?• (*OED*).

10 *birds of paradise* A family of birds found throughout the islands of New Guinea which are recognizable by the malesâ?? highly elaborate plumage.

13 *imperious* â??Exercising a commanding influence; ruling, sovereign, dominantâ?• (*OED*).

14 *Phoenix* A bird in Greek mythology that was characteristically long lived and went through cycles of death and rebirth from its ashes. Also an early symbol of Christianity.

Source: *The Gentlemanâ??s Magazine* (July, 1777), p. 345.

Edited by Tyler Greer