Thomas Woolston, â??Sonnet to the Memory of Falconer, Author of the Shipwreckâ?•

Description

THOMAS WOOLSTON

â??Sonnet to the Memory of Falconer, Author of the Shipwreckâ?•

Ill-fated Bard marine, who strung the lyre,
A chilling tale of sorrow to rehearse,
In all the mournful melody of verse,
Warmâ??d by a beam of true Maeonian fire;
Well might the theme the tuneful breast inspire,
Who felt the rage of Fateâ??s most adverse storm,
And saw grim Deathâ??s most drear terrific form,
Whilst struggling round thy gallant mates expire.
Thy strains to distant times their names shall give,
Snatchâ??d from oblivionâ??s ever-dreaded gloom,
Oh that my Muse could bid thy memâ??ry live,
And paint in verse like thine thy mournful doom,
The plaintive strains with energy should flow,
And sympathy unborn should melt at Falconerâ??s woe.

NOTES:

Title *Falconer, the Author of the Shipwreck* William Falconer (1732-1769), published a wildly popular epic poem titled *The Shipwreck* in 1762.

1 *lyre* â??A stringed instrument of the harp kind, used by the Greeks for accompanying song and recitationâ?• (*OED*).

4 *Maeonian* â??A native inhabitant of Maeonia; a Lydian. Frequently in reference to Homer, who, according to some accounts, was born at Smyrna in Maeoniaâ?• or modern day Turkey (*OED*).

10 *oblivion* â??The state or condition of having been forgottenâ?• (*OED*).

11 *Muse* The source of poetic inspiration.

12 *doom* â??It is said he was lost in the Aurora frigate going to the East Indies.â??We should be glad to see some authentic memoirs of himâ?• [Editorâ??s Note].

13 *plaintive* â??Having the character of a lament; expressive of sorrow; mournful, sadâ?• (*OED*).

Source: *The Gentlemanâ??s Magazine* (July 1789), p. 650.

Edited by Randall Pedersen