Eliza Haywood, â??The Visionâ?•

Description

ELIZA HAYWOOD

â??The Visionâ?•

As I this Morn, neglecting coming Day,
In the dull Godâ??s Embrace supinely lay;
My nobler Part, scorning to be confinâ??d,
Did upwards soar, and left my Earth behind:
Throâ?? the AEtherial Regions swiftly flew,
Past interposing Clouds which barrâ??d my View.
Methought, with stedfast and undazled Eyes,
I took in all the Glory of the Skies!
Beheld the rolling Orbs in order move,
And in their Symmetry, provâ??d the Art of *Jove*.
But long I could not in that Prospect stay,
My hurryâ??ng Fancy made me farther stray
To those bright Plains, where, in superior State,
The High-thronâ??d Sons of Wit illustrious sat!
Each had their Works in shining Cases placâ??d,
With Stars adornâ??d, more by their Titles gracâ??d.
These seemâ??d the genuine Product of their Art;
Which to thâ?? Unlearnâ??d, no Profit could impart:
But what amazâ??d me most, vast heaps I spyâ??d
Of Books, (the same Inscriptions beautifyâ??d)
With Pages torn, and Leaves disorderâ??d, lie
Like useless Lumber, thrown neglected by!
With eager haste, the nearest Lines I snatchâ??d,
But, eâ??er my purpose fully was dispatchâ??d,
The awfullâ??st Form, which gracâ??d the Laureat Sect,
Did in these Words, my erring Search direct.
In vain thou here, wouâ??dst *Ovidâ??*s Softness find,
Or trace the Majesty of *Homer*â??s Mind!
Our forceful Fire, in faint Translation lost,
Can little of its native Vigour boast!
Wouldâ??st thou behold us as at first we were,
Back to the nether World again repair;
There thou, thy wonder-searching Soul mayâ??st fill
With due contemplating *Hillariusâ??* Skill;
In him our different Beauties centerâ??d, shine,

With congregated Powâ??r, and Blaze divine!
Our Muses now attend on him alone,
Joinâ??d with a brighter, greater, of his own!
Had former Times been, like the present, blest,
Low Adorations, had their Joy confest!
Each Path to *Delphos*, had been left untrod,
His star-like Fame had pointed out the God!
And happy Britain, proud of such a Birth,
Receivâ??d the loaded Tribute of the Earth!
Go then, his matchless Works with Care read oâ??er.
Just Admiration will enflame thee more,
Than vain Desires of Knowledge could before.
If any Spark of true poetick Fire,
Does thy dull Breast, with generous Warmth inspire;
That Theme will call it forth, and teach thee, how
More able Pens their Gratitude should show
For abdicated Wit, so long deplorâ??d,
Now, by his Genius to the World restorâ??d!
Thus spoke the *Bard*, and all the Bays-wreathâ??d Tribe,
In shouts of Joy, did pleasâ??d Assent ascribe!
Then swift, as shooting Stars, the Phantoms fled,
And I, that moment, found my self in Bed.
But, Oh! when Soul and Body were rejoinâ??d,
What various Transports firâ??d my anxious Mind?
Not movâ??d with wonder at so strange a Dream,
(My waking Thoughts, can find no other Theme,)
But struck with conscious Guilt, with Shame oppressâ??d,
I cursâ??d my backward Muse, which charmâ??d and blest
With unhopâ??d Favours, had no Thanks exprest.
In vain I ragâ??d, vainly did Efforts make,
My grateful Meaning, or his Worth to speak.
Amazing Excellence! what words can paint?
To describe Lightning, Colours are too faint:
The vast Idea, over-swellâ??d my Thought,
And all my Senses to Confusion brought.
As those whose Opticks, neâ??er were blest with Sight,
But from their Birth condemnâ??d to darksome Night;
By miracle at last, their Eyes unsealâ??d,
And the bright Glories of the Sun revealâ??d;
With sudden Transport start, with Rapture gaze,
Their new-born Sense, half lost in wild Amaze!
So I, who but some Glimmerings had seen,
Some little Sketches, of Witâ??s glorious Scene,
With instant Rush, all Heaven at once disclosâ??d,
Such beamy Brightness, â??gainst weak Sense opposâ??d:
Shot Rays too fierce! too poynant to sustain,
And evâ??n to madness, workâ??d my aking Brain!
Awâ??d! charmâ??d! and dazled ! cool Reflections shun;

My staggering Reason, into Flights I run!
With incoherent Extasies am firâ??d,
Such, as of old, the *Bachanals* inspirâ??d!
What can the Medium in my Soul restore?
What give the Calmness I enjoyâ??d before?
Vain Hope, Nature must change, in him, or me!
I grow less sensible, or less glorious he!
Eâ??er past Tranquility again can be.

NOTES:

5 *AEtherial* â??Heavenlyâ?• (*OED*).

9 *Orbs* Planets.

10 *Jove* Jupiter, the highest diety in Roman mythology.

11 *Prospect* â??An extensive or commanding range of sightâ?• (*OED*).

12 *Fancy* â??Faculty of imaginationâ?• (*OED*).

25 *awfullâ??st* â??Arousing or inspiring reverential respect, mixed with wonder or fearâ?• (*OED*); *the Laureat Sect* Poets graced with Apolloâ??s favor.

27 *Ovid* Roman poet (43BC- 17AD), famous for *Metamorphoses*.

28 *Homer* Ancient Greek poet (c. 750BC), famous for the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

34 *Hillariusâ?? Skill* A compliment paid to Aaron Hill (1685-1750), dramatist and poet who, in the early 1720s, developed â??a literary coterie dubbed the â??Hillarian circleâ?? after the name bestowed on him by one of his fervent admirers, the novelist and dramatist Eliza Haywoodâ?• (Christine Gerrard, *Aaron Hill: The Musesâ?? Projector, 1685-1750*, pp. 61-2).

41 *Delphos* Mythical birthplace of Apollo, god of poetry.

59 *Transports* â??The state of being â??carried out of oneself,â?? i.e. out of oneâ??s normal mental condition; vehement emotionâ?• (*OED*).

86 *Bachanals* Followers of Bacchus, the Greco-Roman god of wine, excess, and ecstasy.

SOURCE: ***Poems on Several Occasions*** **(London, 1725), pp. 11-14. [Google Books]**

Edited by Jake Araiza