

John Ogilvie, "Jupiter and the Clown. A Fable"

Description

JOHN OGILVIE

•œJupiter and the Clown. A Fableœ•

Envy! thou Fiend, whose venom'd sting  
 Still points to Fame's aspiring wing;  
 Whose breath, blue sulphur's blasting steam,  
 Whose eye the basilisk's lightning-gleam;  
 Say, through the dun ile's solemn round, 5  
 Where Death's dread foot-step prints the ground,  
 Lovest thou to haunt the yawning tomb,  
 And crush fallen Grandeur's dusty plume?  
 Or, where the wild Hyaena's yell  
 Rings thro' the hermit's cavern'd cell, 10  
 Moves thy black wing its devious flight?  
 (The wing that bloats the cheek of Night)  
 There oft beneath some hoary wall  
 Thy stings are dipt in scorpion's gall;  
 Thence whizzing springs the forky dart, 15  
 And spreads its poison to the heart.

Hence all th' unnumber'd cares of life,  
 Hence malice, fury, rapine, strife;  
 Hence all exclaim on partial fate;  
 Hence pale Revenge, and stern Debate; 20  
 Hence man (to every passion prone)  
 Sees much, loves all;—but hates his own.

Now, Delia, should the chance to know  
 Some trifling fool, "perhaps" a beau,  
 The fair at once implores the skies, 25  
 With glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes;  
 O, hear your Votary's earnest prayer,  
 Ye guardian angels of the fair!  
 Make but this charming creature prove  
 A victim to the power of love: 30  
 'Tis this, Ye Gods, I would implore!





Sly Envy markâ€™d the secret snare,  
The pickâ€™d a chosen dart with care; Â 115  
Of power to edge the quickest pain;—  
Then plunged it reeking in his brain.  
Inflamed with fury and surprize,  
Red Anger flashes from his eyes  
â€œMust I (he cryed and scratchâ€™d his head) Â 120  
Supply this prattling thing with bread?  
Must Farmers sweat, and wear their cloaths,  
To furnish equipage for beaux?  
We, Drudges doomâ€™d to ceaseless toil,  
For others tear the stubborn soil, Â 125  
Our thoughts suspense and fears inflame,  
Wretched and cursâ€™d beyond a name;  
While these amidâ€™ the balmy bower,  
Spend in soft ease the fleeting hour;—  
How fine they look! what charms they show, Â 130  
Ah! would to heavâ€™n I was a Beau!â€•

Soft Pity touchâ€™d thâ€™ Almighty Sire:  
Jove heard, and granted his desire.  
At once his furrowâ€™d brow was smooth,  
In all the blooming pride of youth; Â 135  
His hair in wavy ringlets flowâ€™d,  
His cheek with fine vermilion glowâ€™d;  
Not like our modern pigmy race,  
With witherâ€™d limbs, and meagre face,  
But plump and pruce heâ€™d matchâ€™d a score; Â 140  
Such were the Beaux in days of yore.  
Gay pleasure dancâ€™d in every limb,  
He skimmâ€™d along with airy swim;  
The God, propitious to his prayer,  
Gave the soft look, and graceful air; Â 145  
But wrapt in his dreams of bliss, the Fool  
Forgot his pocket, and his soul.



Then scornâ€™d by all,—in deep despair, 190  
To Jove once more he made his prayer,  
And beggâ€™d the God to ease his pain,  
And give him back his plough again.

**NOTES:**

**1** *Title* *Jupiter* *Clown* *rustic* (OED).

**4** *basilisk* (ancient authors stated that its hissing drove away all other serpents, and that its breath, and even its look, was fatal (OED).

**5** *dun ile's* [Unable to trace.]

**18** *rapine* (The act or practice of seizing and taking away by force the property of others; plunder (OED).

**27** *Votary* (A person who has dedicated himself or herself to religious service by taking vows; a monk or nun (OED).

**35** *beau* (Suitor of a lady, but also a man who gives particular, or excessive, attention to dress (OED).

**57** *Zephyr* (A gentle, mild wind or breeze (OED).

**58** *Aurora* (The (Roman) goddess of dawn, represented as rising with rosy fingers from the saffron-coloured bed of Tithonus (OED).

**64** *cinctured* (Girdled (OED).

**88** *mitre* (The headdress of a priest (OED); *f-r* (Likely fur, worn as a mark of office or state (OED).

**123** *equipage for beaux* (Articles of dress and ornament for young men (OED).

**133** *Jove* (A poetical equivalent of Jupiter, the highest deity of the ancient Romans (OED)

**143** *swim* (The smooth gliding movement of the body (OED).

**147** *pocket* (Any small bag or pouch worn on the person (OED).

**173** *brilliant* (A diamond of the finest cut (OED).

**187** *cent per cent* (Profit (OED).

**189** *sharper* (A fraudulent gamester, a cheat (OED).

**SOURCE:** *A Collection of Poems on Several Subjects* (London, 1762), pp. 120-28. [Google Books]

*Edited by Jordan Young*