Anne Finch, â??The Cautious Loversâ?•

Description

ANNE FINCH

â??The Cautious Loversâ?•

Silvia, letâ??s from the Croud retire;
For, What to you and me
(Who but each other do desire)
Is all that here we see?

Apart weâ??ll live, thoâ?? not alone;
For, who *alone* can call
Those, who in Desarts live with One,
If in that One theyâ??ve All?

The World a vast *Meander* is,
Where Hearts confusâ??dly stray;
Where Few do hit, whilst Thousands miss
The happy mutual Way:

Where Hands are by stern Parents tyâ??d
Who oft, in *Cupidâ??s* Scorn,
Do for the widowâ??d State provide,
Before that Love is born:

Where some too soon themselves misplace;
Then in Another find
The only Temper, Wit, or Face,
That couâ??d affect their Mind.

Others (but oh! avert that Fate!)
A well-chose Object change:
Fly, *Silvia*, fly, ere â??tis too late;
Fallâ??n Natureâ??s prone to range.

And, thoâ?? in heat of Love we swear
More than perform we can;
No *Goddess* You, but *Woman* are,
And I no more than *Man*.

Thâ?? impatient *Silvia* heard thus long;
Then with a Smile replyâ??d:

Those Bands couâ??d neâ??er be very strong,
Which Accidents divide.

Who eâ??er was movâ??d yet to go down,
By such oâ??er-cautious Fear;
Or for one Lover left the Town,
Who might have Numbers here?

Your Heart, â??tis true, is worth them all,
And still preferrâ??d the first;
But since confessâ??d so apt to fall,
â??Tis good to fear the worst.

In ancient History we meet
A flying Nymph betrayâ??d
Who, had she kept in fruitful *Crete*,
New Conquest might have made.

And sure, as on the *Beach* she stood,
To view the parting Sails;
She cursâ??d her self, more than the Flood,
Or the conspiring Gales.

False *Theseus*, since thy Vows are broke,
May following Nymphs beware:
Methinks I hear how thus she spoke,
And will not trust too far.

In Love, in Play, in Trade, in War
They best themselves acquit,
Who, thoâ?? their Intâ??rests shipwreckt are,
Keep unreprovâ??d their Wit.

NOTES:

9 *Meander â??*A winding course, like a labyrinthâ?• (*OED*).

42 *Nymph* Poetical for woman in this context; an allusion to Ariadne, daughter of Minos and princess of Crete (*Britannica*).

43 *Crete* The largest island in Greece. Inhabited by the Minoans, a Bronze Age civilization, ruled by King Minos (*Britannica*).

45 *Beach* Refers to the shores of Naxos, the island where Ariadne was abandoned by her lover Theseus (*Ancient History Encyclopedia*).

48 *Gales* â??A wind of considerable strengthâ?• (*OED*).

49 *Theseus* Athenian hero noteworthy for slaying the minotaur in the Cretan labyrinth with the help of Ariadne, who provided a yarn ball as aid for navigating the labyrinth (*Ancient History Encyclopedia*).

56 u*nreprovâ??d* â??Uncensuredâ?• (*OED*).

Source: *Poems on Several Occasions* (London 1714), pp. 118-122. [*Google Books*]

Edited by Roland Shepherd