Sarah Dixon, â??On the Death of My Dear Brotherâ?¦â?•

Description

[SARAH DIXON]

â??On the* DEATH *of My* Dear BROTHER, *Late of* University College, OXFORD. *Who Dyâ??d Young.â?•

Mournful the Night! with utmost Horror spread;
Which told my trembling *Soul*, that *thine* was fled.
To Sense â??twas dreadful, Nature couâ??d not bear
So great a Breach, nor the sad Tidings hear,
Without the Symptoms of a wild Despair.
â??Twas then I lost, a Brother and a Friend!
What poinant Grief, must such a Stroke attend?
Thoâ?? as prophetick of so short a Date,
His Soul was disciplinâ??d, to meet his Fate,
Yet my *Distress* no Mitigation finds;
That Blessing is reservâ??d for *stronger* Minds:
Minds like his *own*, who can extend their View;
Sit loose to every transient Good below,
Rise to aetherial Joys, and the bright Track pursue.
Wondâ??rous young Man! thou *early blooming* Good,
Snatchâ??d hence, eâ??re half thy Virtueâ??s understood.
In useful Learning, what swift Progress made!
How soon the tender Parents Care repaid.
His toward Genius did with Ease attain,
What some by long Fatigue have sought in vain;
Strict were his Morals, his Address polite!
Wit, Judgment, and Humanity, unite
To make his Loss esteemâ??d, as infinite.
Ah! faint Description, of a Worth so great;
This a short Sketch, thâ?? Original compleat.
Like some Noviciate, I attempt to show,
Those Lines a Master Hand wants Skill to do:
Who can paint Souls? or trace to Realms of Light,
Spirits preparâ??d, to reach that glorious Height.
â??Twas Heavâ??n, not Death, that ravishâ??d him away,
For such *Perfection* never can decay.

NOTES:

Title *On the DEATH of my Dear BROTHER* A reference to James Dixon Jr. (1673-1700), brother of Sarah Dixon whose death inspired the poem (Kennedy, *Poetic Sisters*, 129).

7 *poinant* Poignant; â??painfully sharp to the physical or mental feelingsâ?• (*OED*).

8 *prophetick* Prophetic; â??of the nature of a prophecy or predictionâ?• (*OED*).

10 *Mitigation* â??Compassion, mercy, or favourâ?• (*OED*).

14 *aetherial* Ethereal; â??Of or relating to heaven, God, or the gods; heavenly, celestialâ?• (*OED*).

26 *Noviciate* â??A beginner, a novice; a person who is new to somethingâ?• (*OED*).

Source: *Poems on Several Occasions* (Canterbury, 1740), pp. 169-170. [*Google Books*]

Edited by Lee Hammel