

Ocean

Phillis Wheatley

Now muse divine, thy heav'nly aid impart,
The feast of Genius, and the play of Art.
From high Parnassus' radiant top repair,
Celestial Nine! propitious to my pray'r.
In vain my Eyes explore the wat'ry reign,
By you unaided with the flowing strain.

When first old Chaos of tyrannic soul
Wav'd his dread Sceptre o'er the boundless whole,
Confusion reign'd till the divine Command
On floating azure fix'd the Solid Land,
Till first he call'd the latent seeds of light,
And gave dominion o'er eternal Night.
From deepest glooms he rais'd this ample Ball,
And round its walls he bade the surges roll;
With instant haste the new made seas complyd,
And the globe rolls impervious to the Tide;
Yet when the mighty Sire of Ocean frownd
"His awful trident shook the solid Ground."
The King of Tempest thunders o'er the plain,
And scorns the azure monarch of the main,
He sweeps thy surface, makes thy billows rore,
And furious, lash the loud resounding shore.
His pinion'd race his dread commands obey,
Syb's, Eurus, Boreas, drive the foaming sea!
See the whole stormy progeny descend!
And waves on waves devolving without End,
But cease Eolus, all thy winds restrain,
And let us view the wonders of the main
Where the proud Courser paws the blue abode,
Impetuous bounds, and mocks the driver's rod.
There, too, the Heifer fair as that which bore
Divine Europa to the Cretan shore.
With guileless mein thy gentle Creature strays [.]
Quaffs the pure stream, and crops ambrosial Grass [.]

Again with recent wonder I survey
The finny sov'reign bask in hideous play
(So fancy sees) he makes a tempest rise
And intercept the azure vaulted skies
Such is his sport: — but if his anger glow
What kindling vengeance boils the deep below!

Twas but e'er now an Eagle young and gay
Pursu'd his passage thro' the aierial way [.]
He aim'd his piece, would C—f's hand do more [?]
Yes, him he brought to pluto's dreary shore [.]
Slow breathed his last, the painful minutes move
With lingring pace his rashness to reprove;
Perhaps his father's Just commands he bore
To fix dominion on some distant shore [.]
Ah! me unblest he cries [.] Oh! Had I staid
Or swift my Father's mandate had obey [ed.]
But ah! too late. — Old Ocean heard his cries [.]
He stroakes his hoary tresses and replies [:]
What mean these plaints so near our wat'ry throne,
And what the Cause of this distressful moan!
Confess [.] Iscarius, let thy words be true
Nor let me find a faithless Bird in you [.]
His voice struck terror thro' the whole domain[.]
Aw'd by his frowns the royal youth began,
Saw you not Sire, a tall and Gallant ship
Which proudly scims the surface of the deep [?]
With pompous form from Boston's port she came [.]
She flies, and London her resounding name [.]
O'er the rough surge the dauntless Chief prevails
For partial Aura fills his swelling sails [.]
His fatal musket shortens thus my day
And thus the victor takes my life away [.]

Faint with his wound Iscarius said no more [.]
His Spirit sought Oblivion's sable shore.
This Neptune saw, and with a hollow groan
Resum'd the azure honours of his Throne.