

Selection from
“A Satire Against Reason and Mankind”
by John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester

Season 6, Episode 5

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Were I, who to my cost, already am,
One of those strange, prodigious creatures Man;
A Spirit free, to choose for my own share,
What sort of Flesh and Blood I pleas'd to wear,
I'd be a Dog, a Donkey or a Bear:
Or any thing, but that vain Animal,
Who is so proud of being rational.
His Senses are too gross; and he'll contrive
A sixth, to contradict the other five:
And before certain Instinct, will preferr
Reason, which Fifty times for one does err.
Reason, an *Ignis fatuus* of the mind,
Which leaves the Light of mature Sense behind.
Pathless, and dangerous, wandr'ing wayes, it takes,
Through errors fenny Bogs, and Thorny Brakes:
Whil'st the mis-guided follower thinks, with pain,
Mountains of Whimseys, heap't in his own brain;
Stumbling from thought, to thought, falls headlong down
Into doubts boundless Sea, where like to drown,
Books bear him up a while, and make him try
To swim with Bladders of Philosophy:
In hopes still to o'retake the skipping Light,
The Vapour dances, in his Dazeling sight,
Till spent, it leaves him to Eternal night.
Then Old Age, and Experience, hand in hand,
Leads him to Death, makes him to understand,
After a search so painful, and so long,
That all his Life, he has been in the wrong.

Hudled in Dirt, the reas'ning Engine lies,
Who was so proud, so witty, and so wise...

NOTES/NARRATION:



A large, faint watermark is centered on the page. It consists of a large circle containing a stylized quill pen with a feather. The quill is positioned diagonally, pointing towards the bottom left. The feather is large and detailed, extending towards the top right. The entire watermark is rendered in a light green or grey color. The background of the page is filled with horizontal lines, typical of a notebook or writing paper.

Recited By:

Date Recited: