LAND OF CONTRASTS

his mind, a cheerer of his spirits, a diverter of sadness, a calmer of unquiet thoughts, a moderator of passions, a procurer of  
contentedness; and that it begat habits of peace and patience in those that professed and practiced it indeed, my friend, you will find Angling to be like the virtue of humility, which has a calmness of spirit, and a world of other blessings attending upon it. Sir, this was  
the saying of that learned man and I do easily believe, that peace, and patience, and calm content, did cohabit in the cheerful heart of  
Sir Henry Wotton, because I know that when he was beyond seventy years of age, he made this description of a part of the present pleasure that possessed him, as he sat quietly, in a summer’s evening, on bank a fishing. It is a description of the spring; which, because  
it glided as soft and sweetly from his pen, as that river does at this time, by which it was then made, I shall repeat it unto you: This day dame nature seem’d in love The lusty sap began to move; Fresh juice did stir th embracing vines. And birds had drawn their valentines. The jealous trout, that low did lie Rose at a well dissembled fly There stood my friend, with patient skill, Attending of his trembling  
quill. Already were the eves possess With the swift pilgrim’s daubed nest; The groves already did rejoice In philomel’s triumphing voice: The showers were short, the weather mild, The morning fresh, the evening smil’d. Joan takes her neat rubb’d pail, and now, she trips to milk the sand red cow; Where, for some sturdy foot ball swain, Joan strokes a syllabub or twain. The fields and gardens were beset With  
tulips, crocus, violet; And now, though late, the modest rose Did more than half a blush disclose. Thus all looks gay, and full of cheer, To welcome the new livery’d year. These were the thoughts that then possessed the undisturbed mind of Sir Henry Wotton. Will you hear  
the wish of another Angler, and the commendation of his happy life, which he also sing in verse: Jo. Davors, Esq. Let me live  
harmlessly, and near the brink of Trent or Avon have a dwelling place Where I may see my quill, or cork, down sink With eager bite   
of perch, or Bleak, or Dace; And on the world and my creator think: Whilst some men strive ill gotten goods embrace; And other spend their time in base excess Of wine. or worse. In war and wantonness Let them that list, these pastimes still pursue, And on such pleasing fancies feed their fill; so I the fields and meadows green may view, And daily by fresh rivers walk at will Among the daisies and the violets blue, Red hyacinth, and yellow daffodil, purple Narcissus like the morning rays, pale gander grass, and azure culver keys, I   
count it higher pleasure to behold The stately compass of the lofty sky; And in the midst thereof, like burning gold, The flaming chariot   
of the the world’s great eye: I the watery clouds that in the air up roll’d with sundry kinds of painted colours fly; And fair Aurora, lifting up her head, still blushing, rise from old Tithonus bed. The hills and mountains raised from the plains, The plains extended level with   
the ground The grounds divided into Sundry veins, The veins inclos’d with rivers running round; These rivers making way through nature’s chains, With headlong course, into the sea profound; The raging sea, beneath the vallies low, Where lakes, and rills, and rivulets do flow: The lofty woods, the forests wide and long, Adorned with leaves and branches fresh and green, In whose cool bowers the birds with many a song, Do welcome with their quire the summer’s Queen; The meadows fair, where Flora’s gifts, among Are intermix with verdant grass between; The silver scaled fish that softly swim Within the sweet brook’s crystal, watery stream. All these, and many   
more of his creation That made the heavens, the Angler oft doth see; Taking therein no little delectation, To think how strange, how wonderful they be: Framing thereof an inward contemplation To set his heart from the other fancies free; And which he looks these with joyful eye, His mind is rapt above the starry sky. Sir, I am glad my memory has not lost these last verses, because they are somewhat   
more pleasant and more suitable to May day than my harsh discourse. And I am glad your patience hath held out so long as to hear   
them and me, for both together have brought us within the sight of the Thatched House. And I must be your debtor, if you think it worth your attention, for the rest of my promised discourse, till some other opportunity, and a like time of leisure. Venator. Sir, you have   
angled me on with much pleasure to the Thatched House; and I now find your words true, that good company makes the way seem short for trust me, Sir, I thought we had wanted three miles of this house, till you showed it to me. But now we are at it, we’ll turn into it, and refresh ourselves with a cup of drink, and a little rest Piscator. Most gladly, Sir, and we’ll drink a civil cup to all the Otter hunters that   
are to meet you to morrow. Venator. That we will, Sir, and to all the lovers of Angling too, of which number I am now willing to be one myself; for, by the help of your good discourse and company, I have put on new thoughts both of the art of Angling and of all that   
profess it; and if you will but meet to morrow at the time and place appointed, and bestow one day with me and my friend, in   
hunting the other, I will dedicated the next two days to wait upon you; and we too will, for that time, do nothing but angle, and talk of   
fish and fishing. Piscator. It is a match, sir, I will not fail you, God willing, to be at Amwell Hill to morrow morning before sun rising. The second day On the Otter and the chub Piscator, Venator, Huntsman, and Hostess Venator. My friend Piscator, your have kept time with my thoughts; for the sun is just rising, and I myself just now come to this place, and the dogs have just now put down an Otter.  
Look down at the bottom of the hill there, in that meadow, chequered with water lilies and lady smocks; there you may see what work they make; look look you may see all busy; men and dogs; dogs and men; all busy. Piscator. Sir, I am right glad to meet you and glad to have so fair an entrance into this day’s sport, and glad to see so many dogs, and more men, all in pursuit of the Otter. Let us   
compliment no longer, but join unto them. Come, honest Venator, let us be gone, let us make haste; I long to be doing; no reasonable

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