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The Paradox of Perception

The attentive mute has an inner ear
The boisterous brute fails to hear,
The frantic eye looks without seeing,
The patient vision sees without looking;
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from splendor to be wise.

Drafted by Ali A. Mazrui and stimulated by Samuel Johnson's poem, The Vanity of Human Wishes (London, 1749).