

The Rape of the Lock introduces the readers to a typically little world of fashions and frivolities, obsessed with its gaity, dressing, flirting, card-playing in the old London of Queen Anne. Belinda is the heroine of the glittering but hollow and abject world. She is the pivot around whom the gay world of vanity and luxury move with its show men and women, leading lives of ostentatious dainties. Belinda is compared to the sun. Pope suggests that the sun recognises in Belinda "the rival of his beams" and fear her. The sun god 'Sol' pours into Belinda's bedroom "a tim'rous Ray" through the white curtains, suggesting her chastity. The brilliance of her eyes makes the sun rays shy. This hyperbole is introduced to give the poet an opportunity to mock at the polite cliché. Belinda's comparison to the sun again occurs in the poem, in the opening of Canto 2, where we find an instance of Elizabethan hyperbole. She set forth "on the Bosom of the Silver Thames", bestowed with greater glory than the sun rising over the crimson horizon. She is like the sun not only because of her bright eyes and domination over her special world, but because of her generous munificence, with which she "shine[s] on all alike". Pope's manner here is of a compliment but there is an ionic tone where he reflects the inconsistency of her character. She is a coquette who desires to be admired but is never willing to give her heart to anyone. As Belinda rouses, her lap dogs too shake off their drowsiness and move their limbs. Belinda rises from slumber, like "sleepless lovers" who spends sleepless nights, at midday, rings her hand bell thrice to call her maids at her service and strikes a slipper against the floor impatient not getting any response. Belinda pressed the repeater clock again to know the time, thinking that it is too early for her to be up. Waking up so late. she does not disdain to supplement the extended hours of her sleep by an additional dose; she presses her soft cosy pillow and falls back to the embrace of slumber. Pope here suggests that this is not merely her laziness but the pervading influence of a Guardian Sylph, Ariel, who "prolong'd the balmy rest". Ariel figures in her dream in disguise, calculated to interest Belinda, as a fashionable and aristocratic gallant, dressed up as for a ceremonious occasion, such that Belinda blushes even in her slumber. Ariel lowers his seductive lips on her ear and

undermine. Contemporary critic, Dennis, found fault in Pope's delineation of Belinda's character, saying that she is no character but a Chimaera in its derogatory sense, however this can well be converted to a compliment because Belinda is indeed a Chimaera, an imaginary comic heroine, out of a real-life woman, Arabella Fermor.

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