

Badische Landesbibliothek Karlsruhe

Digitale Sammlung der Badischen Landesbibliothek Karlsruhe

Poems

Poems and fables

Gay, John

Edinburgh, 1773

Fable IV

[urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-263877](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-263877)

F A B L E IV.

The EAGLE, and the assembly of ANIMALS.

AS Jupiter's all-seeing eye
Survey'd the worlds beneath the sky,
From this small speck of earth were sent,
Murmurs and sounds of discontent :
For ev'ry thing alive complain'd,
That he the hardest life sustain'd.
Jove calls his Eagle. At the word
Before him stands the royal bird.
The bird, obedient, from heav'n's height,
Downward directs his rapid flight ;
Then cited ev'ry living thing,
To hear the mandates of his king.

Ungrateful creatures, whence arise
These murmurs which offend the skies ?
Why this disorder ? say the cause ;
For just are Jove's eternal laws.
Let each his discontent reveal.
To you four dog I first appeal.

Hard is my lot, the hound replies.
On what fleet nerves the greyhound flies !
While I, with weary step, and slow,
O'er plains, and vales, and mountains go.
The morning sees my chace begun,
Nor ends it till the setting sun.

When (says the greyhound) I pursue,
My game is lost, or caught in view ;
Beyond my sight the prey's secure.
The hound is slow, but always sure.
And had I his sagacious scent,
Jove ne'er had heard my discontent.

The lion crav'd the fox's art ;
The fox, the lion's force and heart :
The cock implor'd the pigeon's flight,
Whose wings were rapid, strong, and light :
The pigeon strength of wing despis'd,
And the cock's matchless valour priz'd :
The fishes wish'd to graze the plain ;
The beasts, to skim beneath the main,
Thus, envious of another's state,
Each blam'd the partial hand of Fate.

The bird of heav'n then cry'd aloud,
Jove bids disperse the murm'ring eroud ;
The god rejects your idle prayers.
Would ye, rebellious mutineers,
Entirely change your name and nature,
And be the very envy'd creature ?
What, silent all, and none consent ?
Be happy then, and learn content :
Nor imitate the restless mind,
And proud ambition of mankind.