

The Other Side of Silence ...

On the writings of George Eliot (she, her, hers)

I. In Medias Res (Daniel Deronda)

Men can do nothing, without the make-believe of a beginning...
Even science...is obliged to start with a make-believe unit...
And must fix on a point in the stars' unceasing journey...
And pretend that time is Nought. ...
Since science...reckons backwards as well as forward...
Divides his unit into billions...
and with his finger set at Nought ...sets off in medias res.

II. Harvest and Springtime (Daniel Deronda)

In the human experience, the seasons are all mingled together;
In the same moment the sickle is reaping
 And the seed is sprinkled: ...
Harvest and springtime,
In each of our lives,
Harvest and springtime
 Are continually one.
Harvest and springtime...
Gathers and sows us anew ...
Springtime and harvest and springtime.

III. Vanish (Adam Bede)

So much of our early gladness
Vanishes utterly from our memory.
We can never recall the joy
With which we laid our heads on our mother's bosom
Or road on our father's back in childhood.

Doubtless that joy ...is wrought up into our nature...
But it is gone forever
From our imagination,
And we can only BELIEVE
In the joy of childhood.

IV. Commonplace (Middlemarch)

We all must die...

Commonplace...

We all must die.

Suddenly, acute, transformed into consciousness.

“ I must die – and soon.”

Then death grapples us,
And his fingers are cruel;

Afterwards, death may come to fold us in his arms

As our mother did,

And our last moment of dim, earthly discerning

May be like the first.

V. True Seeing (Middlemarch)

After all, the true seeing is within.

If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life,

It would be like hearing the grass grow

And the squirrel's heart beat,

And we should die of that roar

Which lies on the other side

Of silence.