

Oroonoko (1696)

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FULL TEXT

Oroonoko:
A TRAGEDY

Front matter

—— *Quo fata trahunt, virtus secura sequetur.*
Lucan.

Virtus recludens immeritis mori
Cœlum, negatâ tentat iter viâ.
Hor. Od. 2. lib. 3.

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To His GRACE WILLIAM Duke of Devonshire, &c. Lord Steward of His Majesty's Houshold, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and One of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.

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PROLOGUE to Oroonoko. Sent by an Unknown Hand. And Spoken by Mr. Powell. [By unknown]

As when in Hostile Times two Neighbouring States
Strive by themselves, and their Confederates;
The War at first is made with awkward Skill,
And Soldiers clumsily each other kill:
Till time at length their untaught Fury tames,
And into Rules their heedless Rage reclaims:
Then every Science by degrees is made
Subservient to the Man-destroying Trade:
Wit, Wisdom, Reading, Observation, Art;

*A well-turn'd Head to guide a Generous Heart.
 So it may prove with our Contending Stages,
 If you will kindly but supply their Wages:
 Which you with ease may furnish, by retrenching
 Your Superfluities of Wine and Wenching.
 Who'd grudge to spare from Riot and hard Drinking,
 To lay it out on means to mend his thinking?
 To follow such Advice you shou'd have leisure,
 Since what refines your Sense, refines your Pleasure:
 Women grown tame by Vse each Fool can get,
 But Cuckolds all are made by Men of Wit.
 To Virgin Favours Fools have no pretence:
 For Maidenheads were made for Men of Sense.
 'Tis not enough to have a Horse well bred,
 To shew his Mettle, he must be well fed:
 Nor is it all in Provender and Breed,
 He must be try'd and strain'd, to mend his speed:
 A Favour'd Poet, like a Pamper'd Horse,
 Will strain his Eye-balls out to win the Course.
 Do you but in your Wisdoms vote it fit
 To yield due Succors to this War of Wit,
 The Buskin with more grace shall tread the Stage,
 Love sigh in softer Strains, Heroes less Rage:
 Satyr shall show a Triple Row of Teeth,
 And Comedy shall laugh your Fops to death:*

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*Wit shall refine, and Pegasus shall foam,
 And soar in search of Ancient Greece and Rome.
 And since the Nation's in the Conquering Fit,
 As you by Arms, we'll vanquish France in Wit:
 The Work were over, cou'd our Poets write
 With half the Spirit that our Soldiers fight.*

<i>Oroonoko, BY Mr. Verbruggen.</i>
<i>Aboan, BY Mr. Powell.</i>
<i>Lieutenant-Governor of Surinam, BY Mr. Williams.</i>
<i>Blanford, BY Mr. Harland.</i>
<i>Stanmore, BY Mr. Horden.</i>

<i>Jack Stanmore, BY Mr. Mills.</i>
<i>Capt. Driver, BY Mr. Ben. Johnson.</i>
<i>Daniel, Son to Widow Lackitt, BY Mr. Mich. Lee.</i>
<i>Hottman, BY Mr. Sympson.</i>
<i>Planters, Indians, Negroes, Men, Women, and Children.</i>
<i>Imoinda, BY Mrs. Rogers.</i>
<i>Widow Lackitt, BY Mrs. Knight.</i>
<i>Charlot Welldon, in Man's Cloaths, BY Mrs. Verbruggen.</i>
<i>Lucy Welldon, her Sister, BY Mrs. Lucas.</i>

The SCENE *Surinam*, a Colony in the *West-Indies*; at the Time of the Action of this Tragedy, in the Possession of the *English*.

Main text

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ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter Welldon following Lucia.

Luc.

What will this come to? What can it end in? You have persuaded me to leave dear *England*, and dearer *London*, the place of the World most worth living in, to follow you a Husband-hunting into *America*: I thought Husbands grew in these Plantations.

Well.

Why so they do, as thick as Oranges, ripening one under another. Week after week they drop into some Woman's mouth: 'Tis but a little patience, spreading your Apron in expectation, and one of 'em will fall into your Lap at last.

Luc.

Ay, so you say indeed.

Well.

But you have left dear *London*, you say: Pray what have you left in *London* that was very dear to you, that had not left you before?

Luc.

Speak for your self, Sister.

Well.

Nay, I'll keep you in countenance. The Young Fellows, you know, the dearest part of the Town, and without whom *London* had been a Wilderness to you and me, had forsaken us a great while.

Luc.

Forsaken us! I don't know that they ever had us.

Well.

Forsaken us the worst way, Child; that is, did not think us worth having; they neglected us, no longer design'd upon us, they were tir'd of us. Women in *London* are like

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[25] the Rich Silks, they are out of fashion a great while before they wear out.—

Luc.

The Devil take the Fashion, I say.

Well.

You may tumble 'em over and over at their first coming up, and never disparage their Price; but they fall upon wearing immediately, lower and lower in their value, till they come to the Broker at last.

Luc.

Ay, ay, that's the Merchant they deal with. The Men would have us at their own scandalous Rates: Their Plenty makes 'em wanton; and in a little time, I suppose, they won't know what they would have of the Women themselves.

Well.

O, yes, they know what they wou'd have. They wou'd have a Woman give the Town a Pattern of her Person and Beauty, and not stay in it so long to have the whole Piece worn out. They wou'd have the Good Face only discover'd, and not the Folly that commonly goes along with it. They say there is a vast Stock of Beauty in the Nation, but a great part of it lies in unprofitable hands; therefore for the good of the Publick, they wou'd have a Draught made once a Quarter, lend the decaying Beauties for Breeders into the Countrey, to make room for New Faces to appear, to countenance the Pleasures of the Town.

Luc.

'Tis very hard, the Men must be young as long as [50] they live, and poor Women be thought decaying and unfit for the Town at One or Two and twenty. I'm sure we were not Seven Years in *London*.

Well.

Not half the time taken notice of, Sister. The Two or Three last Years we could make nothing of it, even in a Vizard-Masque; not in a Vizard-Masque, that has cheated many a man into an old acquaintance. Our Faces began to be as familiar to the Men of Intrigue, as their Duns, and as much avoided. We durst not appear in Publick Places, and were almost grudg'd a Gallery in the Churches: Even there they had their Jest upon us, and cry'd, She's in the right on't, good Gentlewoman, since no man considers her Body, she does very well indeed to take care of her Soul.

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Luc.

Such unmannerly fellows there will always be.

Well.

Then, you may remember, we were reduc'd to the last necessity, the necessity of making silly Visits to our civil Acquaintance, to bring us into tolerable Company. Nay, the young Inns of Court Beaus, of but one Term's standing in the Fashion, who knew no body, but as they were shewn 'em by the Orange-Women, had Nicknames for us: How often have they laugh'd out, There goes my Landlady; Is not she come to let Lodgings yet?

Luc.

Young Coxcombs that knew no better.

Well.

And that we must have come to. For your part, what Trade cou'd you set up in? You wou'd never arrive at [75] the Trust and Credit of a Guinea-Bawd: You wou'd have too much Business of your own, ever to mind other Peoples.

Luc.

That is true indeed.

Well.

Then, as a certain sign that there was nothing more to be hop'd for, the Maids at the Chocolate-Houses found us out, and laugh'd at us: Our *Billet-doux* lay there neglected for Waste-Paper: We were cry'd down so low we cou'd not pass upon the City; and became so notorious in our galloping way, from one end of the Town to t'other, that at last we cou'd hardly compass a competent change of Petticoats to disguise us to the Hackney-Coachmen: And then it was near walking a-foot indeed.

Luc.

Nay, that I began to be afraid of.

Well.

To prevent which, with what Youth and Beauty was left, some Experience, and the small Remainder of Fifteen hundred Pounds apiece, which amounted to bare Two hundred between us both, I persuaded you to bring your Person for a Venture to the *Indies*. Every thing has succeeded in our Voyage: I pass for your Brother: One of the Richest Planters here happening to dye just as we landed, I have claim'd Kindred with him: So, without making his Will, he has left us the Credit of his Relation to trade upon: We pass for his Cousins, coming here to *Surinam* chiefly upon his [100] Invitation: We live in Reputation; have the best Acquaintance

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of the place; and we shall see our account in't, I warrant you.

Luc.

I must rely upon you—

Enter Widow Lackitt.

Wid.

Mr *Welldon*, your Servant. Your Servant, Mrs. *Lucy*. I am an Ill Visitor, but 'tis not too late, I hope, to bid you welcome to this side of the world.

[Salutes *Lucy*.

Well.

Gad so, I beg your Pardon, Widow, I shou'd have done the Civilities of my House before: but, as you say, 'tis not too late, I hope.—

[Going to kiss her.

Wid.

What! You think now this was a civil way of begging a Kiss; and by my Troth, if it were, I see no harm in't; 'tis a pitiful Favour indeed that is not worth asking for: Tho I have known a Woman speak plainer before now, and not understood neither.

Well.

Not under my Roof. Have at you, Widow.—

Wid.

Why, that's well said, spoke like a Younger Brother, that deserves to have a Widow.—

[He kisses her.]

You're a Younger Brother, I know, by your kissing.

Well.

How so, pray?

Wid.

Why, you kiss as if you expected to be paid for't. You have Birdlime upon your Lips. You stick so close, there's no getting rid of you.

Well.

I am a-kin to a Younger Brother.

Wid.

So much the better: We Widows are commonly the [125] better for Younger Brothers.

Luc.

Better, or worse, most of you. But you won't be much better for him, I can tell you.—

[aside.]

Well.

I was a Younger Brother; but an Uncle of my Mother's has maliciously left me an Estate, and, I'm afraid, spoil'd my Fortune.

Wid.

No, no; an Estate will never spoil your Fortune. I have a good Estate my self, thank Heaven, and a kind Husband that left it behind him.

Well.

Thank Heaven, that took him away from it, Widow, and left you behind him.

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Wid.

Nay, Heav'ns Will must be done; he's in a better place.

Well.

A better place for you, no doubt on't: Now you may look about you; chuse for your self, Mrs. *Lackitt*, that's your business; for I know you design to marry again.

Wid.

O dear! Not I, I protest and swear; I don't design it: But I won't swear neither; one does not know what may happen to tempt one.

Well.

Why, a lusty young Fellow may happen to tempt you.

Wid.

Nay, I'll do nothing rashly: I'll resolve against nothing. The Devil they say, is very busy upon these occasions; especially with the Widows. But if I am to be tempted, it must be with a Young Man, I promise you—Mrs. *Lucy*, [150]
Your Brother is a very pleasant Gentleman: I came about Business to him, but he turns every thing into Merriment.

Well.

Business, Mrs. *Lackitt*. Then, I know, you wou'd have me to your self. Pray leave us together, Sister.

[Exit Luc.

What am I drawing upon my self here?

[aside.

Wid.

You have taken a very pretty House here; every thing so neat about you already. I hear you are laying out for a Plantation.

Well.

Why, yes truly, I like the Countrey, and wou'd buy a Plantation, if I cou'd, reasonably.

Wid.

O! by all means, reasonably.

Well.

If I cou'd have one to my mind, I wou'd think of settling among you.

Wid.

O! you can't do better. Indeed we can't pretend to have so good company for you, as you had in *England*; but we shall make very much of you. For my own part, I assure you, I shall think my self very happy to be more particularly known to you.

Well.

Dear Mrs. *Lackitt*, you do me too much Honour.

Wid.

Then as to a Plantation, Mr. *Welldon*, you know I have several to dispose of. Mr. *Lackitt*, I thank him, has left me, though I say it, the Richest Widow upon the place; therefore I may afford to use you better than other

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people can. You shall have one upon any reasonable terms.

Well.

[175] That's a fair Offer indeed.

Wid.

You shall find me as easy as any body you can have to do with, I assure you. Pray try me, I wou'd have you try me, Mr. *Welldon*. Well, I like that Name of yours exceedingly, Mr. *Welldon*.

Well.

My Name!

Wid.

O exceedingly! If any thing cou'd persuade me to alter my own Name, I verily believe nothing in the world wou'd do it so soon, as to be call'd Mrs. *Welldon*.

Well.

Why, indeed *Welldon* does sound something better than *Lackitt*.

Wid.

O! a great deal better. Not that there is so much in a Name neither. But I don't know, there is something: I shou'd like mightily to be call'd Mrs. *Welldon*.

Well.

I'm glad you like my Name.

Wid.

Of all things. But then there's the misfortune; one can't change ones Name, without changing ones Condition.

Well.

You'll hardly think it worth that, I believe.

Wid.

Think it worth what, Sir? Changing my Condition? Indeed, Sir, I think it worth every thing. But, alas! Mr. *Welldon*, I have been a Widow but Six Months; 'tis too soon to think of changing ones Condition yet; indeed it is: Pray don't desire it of me: Not but that you may persuade me to any thing, sooner than any Person in the world.—

Well.

Who, I, Mrs. *Lackitt*?

Wid.

[200] Indeed you may, Mr. *Welldon*, sooner than any man living. Lord, there's a great deal in saving a Decency: I never minded it before: Well, I'm glad you spoke first to excuse my Modesty. But what, Modesty means nothing, and is the Virtue of a Girl, that does not know what she would be at: A Widow should be wiser. Now I will own to you; but I won't confess neither; I have had a great Respect for you a great while: I beg your Pardon, Sir, and I must declare to you, indeed I must, if you desire to dispose of all I have in the world, in an Honourable Way, which

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I don't pretend to be any way deserving your consideration, my Fortune and Person, if you won't understand me without telling you so, are both at your service. Gad so! another time—

Stanmore enters to 'em.

Stan.

So, Mrs. *Lackitt*, your Widowhood is waneing apace. I see which way 'tis going. *Welldon*, you're a happy man. The Women and their Favours come home to you.

Wid.

A fiddle of favour, Mr. *Stanmore*: I am a lone Woman, you know it, left in a great deal of Business; and Business must be followed or lost. I have several Stocks and Plantations upon my hands, and other things to dispose of, which Mr. *Welldon* may have occasion for.

Well.

We were just upon the brink of a Bargain, as you came in.

Stan.

[225] Let me drive it on for you.

Well.

So you must, I believe, you or somebody for me.

Stan.

I'll stand by you: I understand more of this business, than you can pretend to.

Well.

I don't pretend to't; 'tis quite out of my way indeed.

Stan.

If the Widow gets you to her self, she will certainly be too hard for you: I know her of old: She has no Conscience in a Corner; a very *Jew* in a bargain, and would circumcise you to get more of you.

Well.

Is this true, Widow?

Wid.

Speak as you find, Mr. *Welldon*: I have offer'd you very fair: Think upon't, and let me hear of you: The sooner the better, Mr. *Welldon*.—

[Exit.

Stan.

I assure you, my Friend, she'll cheat you if she can.

Well.

I don't know that; but I can cheat her, if I will.

Stan.

Cheat her? How?

Well.

I can marry her; and then I'm sure I have it in my power to chear her.

Stan.

Can you marry her?

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Well.

Yes, faith, so she says: Her pretty Person and Fortune (which, one with the other, you know, are not contemptible) are both at my service.

Stan.

Contemptible! very considerable, I'gad; very desirable: Why, she's worth Ten thousand Pounds, man; a clear Estate: No charge upon't, but a boobily Son: He indeed [250] was to have half; but his Father begot him, and she breeds him up, not to know or have more than she has a mind to: And she has a mind to something else, it seems.

Well.

There's a great deal to be made of this.—

[musing.

Stan.

A handsome Fortune may be made on't; and I advise you to't, by all means.

Well.

To marry her! an old, wanton Witch! I hate her.

Stan.

No matter for that: Let her go to the Devil for you. She'll cheat her Son of a good Estate for you: That's a Perquisite of a Widow's Portion always.

Well.

I have a design, and will follow her at least, till I have a Pen'worth of the Plantation.

Stan.

I speak as a friend, when I advise you to marry her. For 'tis directly against the Interest of my own Family. My Cousin *Jack* has belabour'd her a good while that way.

Well.

What! Honest *Jack!* Ill not hinder him. I'll give over the thoughts of her.

Stan.

He'll make nothing on't; she does not care for him. I'm glad you have her in your power.

Well.

I may be able to serve him.

Stan.

Here's a Ship come into the River; I was in hopes it had been from *England.*

Well.

From *England!*

Stan.

No, I was disappointed; I long to see this handsome Cousin of yours: The Picture you gave me of her has [275] charm'd me.

Well.

You'll see whether it has flatter'd her or no, in a little time. If she recover'd of that Illness that was the reason of her staying behind us, I know she will 'come with the first opportunity. We shall see her, or hear of her death.

Stan.

We'll hope the best. The Ships from *England* are expected every day.

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Well.

What Ship is this?

Stan.

A Rover, a Buccaneer, a Trader in Slaves: That's the Commodity we deal in, you know. If you have a curiosity to see our manner of marketing, I'll wait upon you.

Well.

We'll take my Sister with us.—

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

An Open Place.

Enter Lieutenant-Governor and Blandford.

Gov.

There's no resisting your Fortune, *Blandford*; you draw all the Prizes.

Blan.

I draw for our Lord Governor, you know; his Fortune favours me.

Gov.

I grudge him nothing this time; but if Fortune had favour'd me in the last Sale, the Fair Slave had been mine; *Clemene* had been mine.

Blan.

Are you still in love with her?

Gov.

Every day more in love with her.

Enter Capt. Driver, teaz'd and pull'd about by Widow Lackitt and several Planters. Enter at another door Welldon, Lucia, Stanmore.

Wid.

Here have I six Slaves in my Lot, and not a Man among 'em; all Women and Children; what can I do with 'em, Captain? Pray consider, I am a Woman my self, and can't get my own Slaves, as some of my Neighbours do.

1 Plan.

I have all Men in mine: Pray, Captain, let the Men and Women be mingled together, for Procreation-sake, and the good of the Plantation.

2 Plan.

Ay, ay, a Man and a Woman, Captain, for the good of the Plantation.

Capt.

Let 'em mingle together and be damn'd, what care I? Would you have me pimp for the good of the Plantation?

1 Plan.

I am a constant Customer, Captain.

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Wid.

I am always Ready Money to you, Captain.

1 Plan.

For that matter, Mistress, my Money is as ready as yours.

Wid.

Pray hear me, Captain.

Capt.

[25] Look you, I have done my part by you; I have brought the number of Slaves you bargain'd for; if your Lots have not pleas'd you, you must draw again among your selves.

3 Plan.

I am contented with my Lot.

4 Plan.

I am very well satisfied.

3 Plan.

We'll have no drawing again.

Capt.

Do you hear, Mistress? You may hold your tongue: For my part, I expect my Money.

Wid.

Captain, No body questions or scruples the Payment. But I won't hold my tongue; 'tis too much to pray and pay too: One may speak for ones own, I hope.

Capt.

Well, what wou'd you say?

Wid.

I say no more than I can make out.

Capt.

Out with it then.

Wid.

I say, things have not been so fair carry'd as they might have been. How do I know how you have juggled together in my absence? You drew the Lots before I came, I'm sure.

Capt.

That's your own fault, Mistress; you might have come sooner.

Wid.

Then here's a Prince, as they say, among the Slaves, and you set him down to go as a common Man.

Capt.

Have you a mind to try what a Man he is? You'll find him no more than a common Man at your business.

Wid.

[50] Sir, You're a scurvy Fellow to talk at this rate to me. If my Husband were alive, Gadsbodykins, you wou'd not use me so.

Capt.

Right, Mistress, I would not use you at all.

Wid.

Not use me! Your Betters every Inch of you, I wou'd have you to know, wou'd be glad to use me, Sirrah. Marry come up here, who are you, I trow? You begin to think your self a Captain, forsooth, because we call you so. You forget your self as fast as you can; but I remember

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you; I know you for a pitiful paltry Fellow, as you are; an Upstart to Prosperity; one that is but just come acquainted with Cleanliness, and that never saw Five Shillings of your own, without deserving to be hang'd for 'em.

Gov.

She has giv'n you a Broadside, Captain; You'll stand up to her.

Capt.

Hang her, Stink-pot, I'll come no near.

Wid.

By this good light, it wou'd make a Woman do a thing she never design'd; Marry again, tho she were sure to repent it, to be reveng'd of such a—

J. Stan.

What's the matter, Mrs. *Lackitt*? Can I serve you?

Wid.

No, no, you can't serve me: You are for serving your self, I'm sure. Pray go about your business, I have none for you: You know I have told you so. Lord! how can you be so troublesome? nay, so unconscionable, to think that every Rich Widow must throw her self away upon a [75] Young Fellow that has nothing?

Stan.

Jack, You are answer'd, I suppose.

J. Stan.

I'll have another pluck at her.

Wid.

Mr. *Welldon*, I am a little out of order; but pray bring your Sister to dine with me. Gad's my life, I'm out of all patience with that pitiful Fellow: My flesh rises at him: I can't stay in the place where he is.—

[Exit.

Blan.

Captain, You have us'd the Widow very familiarly.

Capt.

This is my way; I have no design, and therefore am not over civil. If she had ever a handsome Daughter to wheedle her out of: Or if I cou'd make any thing of her Booby Son.

Well.

I may improve that hint, and make something of him.

[aside.

Gov.

She's very Rich.

Capt.

I'm rich my self. She has nothing that I want: I have no Leaks to stop. Old Women are Fortune-Menders. I have made a good Voyage, and wou'd reap the fruits of my labour. We plow the deep, my Masters, but our Harvest is on shore. I'm for a Young Woman.

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Stan.

Look about, Captain, there's one ripe, and ready for the Sickle.

Capt.

A Woman indeed! I will be acquainted with her: Who is she?

Well.

My Sister, Sir.

Capt.

Wou'd I were a-kin to her: If she were my Sister, [100] she shou'd never go out of the Family. What say you, Mistress? You expect I should marry you, I suppose.

Luc.

I shan't be disappointed, if you don't.

[turning away.

Well.

She won't break her heart, Sir.

Capt.

But I mean—

[following her.]

Well.

And I mean—

[Going between him and Lucia.]

That you must not think of her without marrying.

Capt.

I mean so too.

Well.

Why then your meaning's out.

Capt.

You're very short.

Well.

I will grow, and be taller for you.

Capt.

I shall grow angry, and swear.

Well.

You'll catch no fish then.

Capt.

I don't well know whether he designs to affront me, or no.

Stan.

No, no, he's a little familiar; 'tis his way.

Cap.

Say you so? Nay, I can be as familiar as he, if that be it. Well, Sir, look upon me full: What say you? How do you like me for a Brother-in-law?

Well.

Why, yes, faith, you'll do my business,
[turning him about.

If we can agree about my Sister's.

Capt.

I don't know whether your Sister will like me, or not: I can't say much to her: But I have Money enough: And if you are her Brother, as you seem to be a-kin to her, I know that will recommend me to you.

Well.

[125] This is your Market for Slaves; my Sister is a Free Woman, and must not be dispos'd of in publick. You shall be welcome to my House, if you please: And, upon better acquaintance, if my Sister likes you, and I like your Offers,—

Capt.

Very well, Sir, I'll come and see her.

Gov.

Where are the Slaves, Captain? They are long coming.

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Blan.

And who is this Prince that's fallen to my Lot, for the Lord Governor? Let me know something of him, that I may treat him accordingly; who is he?

Capt.

He's the Devil of a Fellow, I can tell you; a Prince every Inch of him: You have paid dear enough for him, for all the good he'll do you: I was forc'd to clap him in Irons, and did not think the Ship safe neither. You are in hostility with the *Indians*, they say; they threaten you daily: You had best have an eye upon him.

Blan.

But who is he?

Gov.

And how do you know him to be a Prince?

Capt.

He is Son and Heir to the great King of *Angola*, a mischievous Monarch in those parts, who, by his good will, wou'd never let any of his Neighbours be in quiet. This Son was his General, a plaguy fighting Fellow: I have formerly had dealings with him for Slaves, which he took Prisoners, and have got pretty roundly by him: But the Wars being at an end, and nothing more to be got by the Trade of [150] that Countrey, I made bold to bring the Prince along with me.

Gov.

How could you do that?

Blan.

What! steal a Prince out of his own Countrey? Impossible!

Capt.

'Twas hard indeed; but I did it. You must know, this *Oroonoko*—

Blan.

Is that his Name?

Capt.

Ay, *Oroonoko*.

Gov.

Oroonoko.

Capt.

Is naturally inquisitive about the Men and Manners of the White Nations. Because I could give him some account of the other Parts of the World, I grew very much into his favour: In return of so great an Honour, you know I cou'd do no less upon my coming away, than invite him on board me: Never having been in a Ship, he appointed his time, and I prepared my Entertainment: He came the next Evening as privately as he cou'd, with about some Twenty along with him. The Punch went round; and as many of his Attendants as wou'd be dangerous, I sent dead drunk

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on shore; the rest we secur'd: And so you have the Prince *Oroonoko*.

1 Plan.

Gad-a-mercy, Captain, there you were with him, I'faith.

2 Plan.

Such men as you are fit to be employ'd in Publick [175] Affairs: The Plantation will thrive by you.

3 Plan.

Industry shou'd be encourag'd.

Capt.

There's nothing done without it, Boys. I have made my Fortune this way.

Blan.

Unheard-of Villany!

Stan.

Barbarous Treachery!

Blan.

They applaud him for't.

Gov.

But, Captain, methinks you have taken a great deal of pains for this Prince *Oroonoko*; why did you part with him at the common rate of Slaves?

Capt.

Why, Lieutenant-Governor, I'll tell you; I did design to carry him to *England*, to have show'd him there; but I found him troublesome upon my hands, and I'm glad I'm rid of him.—Oh, ho, here they come.

Black Slaves, Men, Women, and Children, pass across the Stage by two and two; Aboan, and others of Oroonoko's Attendants two and two; Oroonoko last of all in Chains.

Luc.

Are all these Wretches Slaves?

Stan.

All sold, they and their Posterity all Slaves.

Luc.

O miserable Fortune!

Blan.

Most of 'em know no better; they were born so, and only change their Masters. But a Prince, born only to Command, betray'd and sold! My heart drops blood for him.

Capt.

Now, Governor, here he comes, pray observe him.

Oro.

So, Sir, You have kept your Word with me.

Capt.

I am a better Christian, I thank you, than to keep it with a Heathen.

Oro.

[200] You are a Christian, be a Christian still:
If you have any God that teaches you
To break your Word, I need not curse you more:

[\[Page 15\]](#)

Let him cheat you, as you are false to me.
You faithful Followers of my better Fortune!
We have been Fellow-Soldiers in the Field;
[Embracing his Friends.]

Now we are Fellow-Slaves. This last farewell.
Be sure of one thing that will comfort us,
Whatever World we next are thrown upon,
Cannot be worse than this.
[All Slaves go off, but Oroonoko.]

Capt.

You see what a Bloody Pagan he is, Governor; but I took care that none of his Followers should be in the same Lot with him, for fear they shou'd undertake some desperate action, to the danger of the Colony.

Oro.

Live still in fear; it is the Villains Curse,

And will revenge my Chains: Fear ev'n me,
Who have no pow'r to hurt thee. Nature abhors,
And drives thee out from the Society
And Commerce of Mankind, for Breach of Faith.
Men live and prosper but in Mutual Trust,
A Confidence of one another's Truth:
That thou hast violated. I have done.
I know my Fortune, and submit to it.
Gov.

Sir, I am sorry for your Fortune, and wou'd help it, if I cou'd.

Blan.

[225] Take off his Chains. You know your condition; but you are fall'n into Honourable Hands: You are the Lord Governor's Slave, who will use you nobly: In his absence it shall be my care to serve you.

[Blanford applying to him.]

Oro.

I hear you, but I can believe no more.

Gov.

Captain, I'm afraid the world won't speak so honourably of this action of yours, as you wou'd have 'em.

Capt.

I have the Money. Let the world speak and be damn'd, I care not.

Oro.

I wou'd forget my self. Be satisfied,
[to Blanford.]

I am above the rank of common Slaves.
Let that content you. The Christian there, that knows me,
For his own sake will not discover more.

Capt.

I have other matters to mind. You have him, and much good may do you with your Prince.

[Exit.]

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The Planters pulling and staring at Oroonoko.

Blan.

What wou'd you have there? You stare as if you never saw a Man before. Stand further off.

[turns 'em away.

Oro.

Let 'em stare on. I am unfortunate, but not asham'd
Of being so: No, let the Guilty blush,
The White Man that betray'd me: Honest Black
Disdains to change its Colour. I am ready:
Where must I go? Dispose me as you please.
I am not well acquainted with my Fortune,
But must learn to know it better: So I know, you say:
Degrees make all things easy.

Blan.

[250] All things shall be easy.

Oro.

Tear off this Pomp, and let me know my self:
The slavish Habit best becomes me now.
Hard Fare, and Whips, and Chains may overpow'r
The frailer flesh, and bow my Body down.
But there's another, Nobler Part of Me,
Out of your reach, which you can never tame.

Blan.

You shall find nothing of this wretchedness
You apprehend. We are not Monsters all.
You seem unwilling to disclose your self:
Therefore for fear the mentioning your Name
Should give you new disquiets, I presume
To call you *Cæsar*.

Oro.

I am my self; but call me what you please.

Stan.

A very good Name, *Cæsar*.

Gov.

And very fit for his great Character.

Oro.

Was *Cæsar* then a Slave?

Gov.

I think he was; to Pirates too: He was a great Conqueror, but unfortunate in his Friends.—

Oro.

His Friends were Christians?

Blan.

No.

Oro.

No! that's strange.

Gov.

And murder'd by 'em.

Oro.

I wou'd be *Cæsar* there. Yet I will live.

Blan.

Live to be happier.

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Oro.

[275] Do what you will with me.

Blan.

I'll wait upon you, attend, and serve you.

[Exit with Oroonoko.]

Luc.

Well, if the Captain had brought this Prince's Countrey along with him, and wou'd make me Queen of it, I wou'd not have him, after doing so base a thing.

Well.

He's a man to thrive in the world, Sister: He'll make you the better Jointure.

Luc.

Hang him, nothing can prosper with him.

Stan.

Enquire into the great Estates, and you will find most of 'em depend upon the same Title of Honesty: The men who raise 'em first are much of the Captain's Principles.

Well.

Ay, ay, as you say, let him be damn'd for the good of his Family. Come, Sister, we are invited to dinner.

Gov.

Stanmore, You dine with me.

Exeunt Omnes.

ACT II.

Scene I.

Widow Lackitt's House.

Widow Lackitt, Welldon.

Well.

This is so great a Favour, I don't know how to receive it.

Wid.

O dear Sir! you know how to receive and how to return a Favour, as well as any body, I don't doubt it: 'Tis not the first you have had from our Sex, I suppose.

Well.

But this is so unexpected.

Wid.

Lord, how can you say so, Mr. *Welldon*? I won't believe you. Don't I know you handsome Gentlemen expect every thing that a Woman can do for you? And by my troth you're in the right on't: I think one can't do too much for a

Handsome Gentleman; and so you shall find it.

Well.

I shall never have such an Offer again, that's certain: What shall I do? I am mightily divided.—

[pretending a concern.

Wid.

Divided! O dear, I hope not so, Sir.

If I marry, truly I expect to have you to my self.

Well.

There's no danger of that, Mrs. *Lackitt*. I am divided in my thoughts. My Father upon his Death-bed oblig'd me to [\[Page 18\]](#)

see my Sister dispos'd of, before I married my self. 'Tis that sticks upon me. They say indeed Promises are to be broken or kept; and I know 'tis a foolish thing to be tied to a Promise; but I can't help it: I don't know how to get rid of it.

Wid.

Is that all?

Well.

All in all to me. The Commands of a dying Father, you know, ought to be obey'd.

Wid.

And so they may.

Well.

[25] Impossible, to do me any good.

Wid.

They shan't be your hindrance. You wou'd have a Husband for your Sister, you say: He must be very well to pass too in the world, I suppose?

Well.

I wou'd not throw her away.

Wid.

Then marry her out of hand to the Sea-Captain you were speaking of.

Well.

I was thinking of him, but 'tis to no purpose: She hates him.

Wid.

Does she hate him? Nay, 'tis no matter, an Impudent Rascal as he is, I wou'd not advise her to marry him.

Well.

Can you think of no body else?

Wid.

Let me see.

Well.

Ay, pray do: I shou'd be loth to part with my good fortune in you for so small a matter as a Sister: But you find how it is with me.

Wid.

Well remembred, I'saith: Well, if I though you wou'd like of it, I have a Husband for her: What do you think of my Son?

Well.

You don't think of it your self.

Wid.

I protest but I do: I am in earnest, if you are. He shall marry her within this half hour, if you'll give your consent to it.

Well.

I give my consent! I'll answer for my Sister, she shall have him: You may be sure I shall be glad to get over [50] the difficulty.

Wid.

No more to be said then, that difficulty is over. But I vow and swear you frightned me, Mr. *Welldon*. If I had not had a Son now for your Sister, what must I have done, do you think? Were not you an ill-natur'd thing to boggle at a Promise? I cou'd break twenty for you.

Well.

I am the more oblig'd to you: But his Son will save all.

[Page 19]

Wid.

He's in the house; I'll go and bring him my self.

[going.

You wou'd do well to break the business to your Sister: She's within, Ill send her to you.—

[going again, comes back.

Well.

Pray do.

Wid.

But d'you hear? Perhaps she may stand upon her Maidenly Behaviour, and blush, and play the fool, and delay: But don't be answer'd so: What! she is not a Girl at these years: Shew your Authority, and tell her roundly, she must be married immediately. I'll manage my Son, I warrant you.—

[goes out in haste.

Well.

The Widow's in haste, I see: I thought I had laid a rub in the road, about my Sister: But she has step't over that. She's making way for her self as fast as she can; but little thinks where she is going: I cou'd tell her she is going to play the fool: But people don't love to hear of their faults: Besides, that is not my business at present. So, Sister, I have a Husband for you.—

[Enter Lucia.

Luc.

[75] With all my heart: I don't know what Confinement Marriage may be to the Men, but I'm sure the Women have no liberty without it. I am for any thing that will deliver me from the care of a Reputation, which I begin to find impossible to preserve.

Well.

I'll ease you of that care: You must be married immediately.

Luc.

The sooner the better; for I am quite tir'd of setting up for a Husband. The Widow's foolish Son is the man, I suppose.

Well.

I consider'd your Constitution, Sister; and finding you wou'd have occasion for a Fool, I have provided accordingly.

Luc.

I don't know what occasion I may have for a Fool when I'm married: But I find none but Fools have occasion to marry.

Well.

Since he is to be a Fool then, I thought it better for you to have one of his Mother's making than your own; 'twill save you the trouble.

Luc.

I thank you; you take a great deal of pains for me: But, pray tell me, what are you doing for your self all this while?

Well.

You were never true to your own secrets, and therefore

[\[Page 20\]](#)

I won't trust you with mine. Only remember this, I am your elder Sister, and consequently laying my Breeches aside, have as much occasion for a Husband as you can have. I have a Man in my eye, be satisfied.

Enter Widow Lackitt, with her Son Daniel.

Wid.

[100] Come, *Daniel*, hold up thy head, Child: Look like a Man: You must not take it as you have done. Gad's my life! there's nothing to be done with twirling your Hat, Man.

Dan.

Why, Mother, what's to be done then?

Wid.

Why look me in the face, and mind what I say to you.

Dan.

Marry, who's the fool then? what shall I get by minding what you say to me?

Wid.

Mrs. *Lucy*, the Boy is bashful, don't discourage him: Pray come a little forward, and let him salute you.

[Going between Lucia and Daniel.

Luc.

A fine Husband I am to have truly.

[to Welldon.

Wid.

Come, *Daniel*, you must be acquainted with this Gentlewoman.

Dan.

Nay, I'm not proud, that is not my fault: I am presently acquainted when I know the Company; but this Gentlewoman is a stranger to me.

Wid.

She is your Mistress; I have spoke a good word for you; make her a Bow, and go and kiss her.

Dan.

Kiss her! Have a care what you say; I warrant she scorns your words. Such Fine Folk are not us'd to be slopt and kiss'd. Do you think I don't know that, Mother?

Wid.

Try her, try her, Man.

Why that's well done; go nearer her.

[Daniel bows, she thrusts him forward:

Dan.

Is the Devil in the Woman? Why so I can go nearer her, if you would let a body alone.

[To his Mother.

Cry you mercy, forsooth; my Mother is always shaming one [125] before company: She wou'd have me as unmannerly as her self, and offer to kiss you.

[To Lucia.

Well.

Why, won't you kiss her?

Dan.

Why, pray, may I?

Well.

Kiss her, Kiss her, Man.

Dan.

Marry, and I will.

[Kisses her.]

Gadsooks! she kisses rarely! An' please you, Mistress, and seeing my Mother

[\[Page 21\]](#)

will have it so, I don't much care if I kiss you again, forsooth.

[Kisses her again.]

Luc.

Well, how do you like me now?

Dan.

Like you! marry, I don't know. You have bewitch'd me, I think: I was never so in my born days before.

Wid.

You must marry this Fine Woman, *Daniel*.

Dan.

Hey day! marry her! I was never married in all my life. What must I do with her then, Mother?

Wid.

You must live with her, eat and drink with her, go to bed with her, and sleep with her.

Dan.

Nay, marry, if I must go to bed with her, I shall never sleep, that's certain: She'll break me of my rest, quite and clean, I tell you before-hand. As for eating and drinking with her, why I have a good stomach, and can play my part in any company. But how do you think I can go to bed to a Woman I don't know?

Well.

You shall know her better.

Dan.

Say you so, Sir?

Well.

Kiss her again.

[Daniel kisses Lucy.]

Dan.

[150] Nay, kissing I find will make us presently acquainted. We'll steal into a Corner to practise a little, and then I shall be able to do any thing.

Well.

The Young Man mends apace.

Wid.

Pray don't baulk him.

Dan.

Mother, Mother, if you'll stay in the room by me, and promise not to leave me, I don't care for once if I venture to go to bed with her.

Wid.

There's a good Child; go in and put on thy best Cloaths; pluck up a spirit: I'll stay in the room by thee. She won't hurt thee, I warrant thee.

Dan.

Nay, as to that matter, I'm not afraid of her: I'll give her as good as she brings: I have a *Rowland* for her *Oliver*, and so you may tell her.

[Exit.]

Wid.

Mrs *Lucy*, we shan't stay for you: You are in a readiness, I suppose.

Well.

She's always ready to do what I wou'd have her, I must say that for my Sister.

Wid.

'Twill be her own another day. Mr. *Welldon*, we'll marry 'em out of hand, and then—

Well.

And then, Mrs. *Lackitt*, look to your self.—

[Exeunt.]

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SCENE II.

Oroonoko and Blanford.

Oro.

You grant I have good reason to suspect
All the professions you can make to me.

Blan.

Indeed you have.

Oro.

The Dog that sold me did profess as much
As you can do.—But yet I know not why,—
Whether it is because I'm fall'n so low,
And have no more to fear.—That is not it:
I am a Slave no longer than I please.
'Tis something nobler.—Being just my self,
I am inclining to think others so:
'Tis that prevails upon me to believe you.

Blan.

You may believe me.

Oro.

I do believe you.

From what I know of you, you are no Fool:
Fools only are the Knaves, and live by Tricks:
Wise men may thrive without 'em, and be honest.

Blan.

They won't all take your counsel.—

[aside.

Oro.

You know my Story, and you say you are
A Friend to my Misfortunes: Thats a name
Will teach you what you owe your self and me.

Blan.

I'll study to deserve to be your Friend.
When once our Noble Governor arrives,
With him you will not need my Interest:
He is too generous not to feel your wrongs.
[25] But be assur'd I will employ my pow'r,
And find the means to send you home again.

Oro.

I thank you, Sir.—My honest, wretched Friends!
Their Chains are heavy: They have hardly found

[sighing.

So kind a Master. May I ask you, Sir,
What is become of 'em? Perhaps I shou'd not.
You will forgive a Stranger.

Blan.

I'll enquire, and use my best endeavours, where they are,
To have 'em gently us'd.

Oro.

Once more I thank you.
You offer every Cordial that can keep
My Hopes alive, to wait a better day.

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What Friendly Care can do, you have apply'd.
But, Oh! I have a Grief admits no Cure.

Blan.

You do not know, Sir,—

Oro.

Can you raise the dead?
Pursue and overtake the Wings of Time?
And bring about again the Hours, the Days,
The Years that made me happy.

Blan.

That is not to be done.

Oro.

No, there is nothing to be done for me.

[Kneeling and kissing the Earth.]

Thou God ador'd! thou ever-glorious Sun!
If she be yet on Earth, send me a Beam
Of thy All-seeing Power to light me to her.
Or if thy Sister Goddess has preferr'd
[50] Her Beauty to the skies to be a Star;
O tell me where she shines, that I may stand
Whole Nights, and gaze upon her.

Blan.

I am rude, and interrupt you.

Oro.

I am troublesome:

But pray give me your Pardon. My swoll'n Heart
Bursts out its passage, and I must complain.
O! can you think of nothing dearer to me?
Dearer than Liberty, my Countrey, Friends,
Much dearer than my Life? that I have lost.
The tend'rest, best belov'd, and loving Wife.

Blan.

Alas! I pity you.

Oro.

Do, pity me:

Pity's a-kin to Love; and every thought
Of that soft kind is welcome to my Soul.
I wou'd be pity'd here.

Blan.

I dare not ask more than you please to tell me: but if you
Think it convenient to let me know
Your Story, I dare promise you to bear
A part in your Distress, if not assist you.

Oro.

Thou honest-hearted man! I wanted such,
Just such a Friend as thou art, that would sit
Still as the night, and let me talk whole days

Of my *Imoinda*. O! Ill tell thee all
From first to last; and pray observe me well.

Blan.

[75] I will most heedfully.

Oro.

There was a Stranger in my Father's Court,

[Page 24]

Valu'd and honour'd much: He was a White,
The first I ever saw of your Complexion:
He chang'd his gods for ours, and so grew great;
Of many Virtues, and so fam'd in Arms,
He still commanded all my Father's Wars.
I was bred under him. One Fatal Day,
The Armies joining, he before me stept,
Receiving in his breast a Poyson'd Dart
Levell'd at me; He dy'd within my Arms.
I've tir'd you already.

Blan.

Pray go on.

Oro.

He left an only Daughter, whom he brought
An Infant to *Angola*. When I came
Back to the Court, a happy Conqueror;
Humanity oblig'd me to condole
With this sad Virgin for a Father's Loss,
Lost for my safety. I presented her
With all the Slaves of Battel to attone
Her Father's Ghost. But when I saw her Face,
And heard her speak, I offer'd up my self
To be the Sacrifice. She bow'd and blush'd;
I wonder'd and ador'd. The Sacred Pow'r
That had subdu'd me, then inspir'd my Tongue,
[100] Inclin'd her Heart; and all our Talk was Love.

Blan.

Then you were happy.

Oro.

O! I was too happy.
I marry'd her: And though my Countrey's Custom
Indulg'd the Privilege of many Wives,
I swore my self never to know but her.

She grew with Child, and I grew happier still.
O my *Imoinda!* but it cou'd not last.
Her fatal Beauty reach'd my Father's Ears:
He sent for her to Court, where, cursed Court!
No Woman comes, but for his Amorous Use.
He raging to possess her, she was forc'd
To own her self my Wife. The furious King
Started at Incest: But grown desperate,
Not daring to enjoy what he desir'd,
In mad Revenge, which I cou'd never learn,
He Poyson'd her, or sent her far, far off,
Far from my hopes ever to see her more.

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Blan.

Most barbarous of Fathers! the sad Tale
Has struck me dumb with wonder.

Oro.

I have done.
I'll trouble you no farther: now and then,
A Sigh will have its way; that shall be all.

[Enter Stanmore.

Stan.

Blandford, the Lieutenant Governour is gone to your Plantation.
He desires you wou'd bring the Royal Slave with you.
[125] The sight of his fair Mistriss, he says, is an Entertainment
For a Prince; he wou'd have his opinion of her.

Oro.

Is he a Lover?

Blan.

So he says himself: he flatters a beautifull
Slave, that I have, and calls her Mistress.

Oro.

Must he then flatter her to call her Mistriss?
I pity the proud Man, who thinks himself
Above being in love: what, tho' she be a Slave,
She may deserve him.

Blan.

You shall judge of that, when you see her, Sir.

Oro.

I go with you.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

A Plantation.

[L. Governour following Imoinda.]

Gov.

I have disturb'd you, I confess my fault,
My fair *Clemene*, but begin again,
And I will listen to your mournfull Song,
Sweet as the soft complaining Nightingales.
While every Note calls out my trembling Soul,
And leaves me silent, as the Midnight Groves,
Only to shelter you, sing, sing agen,
And let me wonder at the many ways
You have to ravish me.

Imo.

O! I can weep
Enough for you, and me, if that will please you.

Gov.

You must not weep: I come to dry your Tears,
And raise you from your Sorrow. Look upon me:

[\[Page 26\]](#)

Look with the Eyes of kind indulging Love,
That I may have full cause for what I say:
I come to offer you your liberty,
And be my self the Slave. You turn away.

[Following her.]

But every thing becomes you. I may take
This pretty hand: I know your Modesty
Wou'd draw it back: but you wou'd take it ill,
If I shou'd let it go, I know you wou'd.
You shall be gently forc'd to please your self;
That you will thank me for.

[She struggles, and gets her hand from him, then he offers to kiss her.]

Nay if you struggle with me, I must take—

Imo.

[25] You may, my life, that I can part with freely.

[Exit.

[Enter Blanford, Stanmore, Oroonoko to him.]

Blan.

So, Governour, we don't disturb you, I hope: your Mistriss has left you: you were making Love, she's thankful for the Honour, I suppose.

Gov.

Quite insensible to all I say, and do:
When I speak to her, she sighs, or weeps,
But never answers me as I wou'd have her.

Stan.

There's something nearer than her Slavery, that touches her.

Blan.

What do her fellow Slaves say of her? can't they find the cause?

Gov.

Some of 'em, who pretend to be wiser than the rest, and hate her, I suppose, for being us'd better than they are, will needs have it that she's with Child.

Blan.

Poor wretch! if it be so, I pity her:
She has lost a husband, that perhaps was dear
To her, and then you cannot blame her.

Oro.

If it be so, indeed you cannot blame her.

[Sighing.

Gov.

No, no, it is not so: if it be so,
I still must love her: and desiring still,
I must enjoy her.

Blan.

Try what you can do with fair means, and wellcome.

Gov.

I'll give you ten Slaves for her.

Blan.

You know she is our Lord Governour's: but if I could
Dispose of her, I wou'd not now, especially to you.

[Page 27]

Gov.

Why not to me?

Blan.

I mean against her Will. You are in love with her.
[50] And we all know what your desires wou'd have:
Love stops at nothing but possession.
Were she within your pow'r, you do not know
How soon you wou'd be tempted to forget
The Nature of the Deed, and, may be, act
A violence, you after wou'd repent.
Oro.

'Tis Godlike in you to protect the weak.

Gov.

Fye, fye, I wou'd not force her. Tho' she be
A Slave, her Mind is free, and shou'd consent.
Oro.

Such Honour will engage her to consent:
And then, if you'r in love, she's worth the having.
Shall we not see this wonder?
Gov.

Have a care;
You have a Heart, and she has conquering Eyes.
Oro.

I have a Heart: but if it cou'd be false
To my first Vows, ever to love agen,
These honest Hands shou'd tear it from my Breast,
And throw the Traytor from me. O! *Imoinda!*
Living or dead, I can be only thine.
Blan.

Imoinda was his Wife: she's either dead,

Or living, dead to him: forc't from his Arms
By an inhuman Father. Another time
I'll tell you all.

[To Gov. and Stanmore.]

Stan.

Hark! the Slaves have done their work;
And now begins their Evening merriment.

Blan.

[75] The Men are all in love with fair *Clemene*
As much as you are: and the Women hate her,
From an instinct of natural jealousy.
They sing, and dance, and try their little tricks
To entertain her, and divert her sadness.
May be she is among 'em: shall we see?

[Exeunt.]

*The Scene drawn shews the Slaves, Men, Women, and Children upon the Ground, some rise
and dance, others sing the following Songs.*

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*A SONG. [By an unknown hand.] Sett by Mr. Courteville, and sung by the
Boy
to Miss Cross.*

I.

*A Lass there lives upon the Green,
Cou'd I her Picture draw;
A brighter Nymph was never seen,
That looks, and reigns a little Queen,
And keeps the Swains in awe.*

II.

*Her Eyes are Cupid's Darts, and Wings,
Her Eyebrows are his Bow;
Her Silken Hair the Silver-Strings,
Which sure and swift destruction brings
To all the Vale below.*

III.

*If Pastorella's dawning Light
Can warm, and wound us so:
Her Noon will shine so piercing bright,
Each glancing beam will kill outright,
And every Swain subdue.*

[Page 29]

A SONG, by Mr. Cheek. Sett by Mr. Courtevell, and sung by Mr. Leveridge.

I.

*Bright Cynthia's Pow'r divinely great,
What Heart is not obeying?
A thousand Cupids on her wait,
And in her Eyes are playing.*

II.

*[100] She seems the Queen of Love to reign,
For She alone dispences
Such Sweets, as best can entertain
The Gust of all the Senses.*

III.

*Her Face a charming prospect brings;
Her Breath gives balmy Blisses:
I hear an Angel, when she sings,
And taste of Heaven in Kisses.*

IV.

*Four Senses thus she feasts with joy,
From Nature's richest Treasure:
Let me the other Sense employ,
And I shall dye with pleasure.*

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*During the Entertainment, the Governour, Blanford, Stanmore, Oroonoko, enter as Spectators;
that ended, Captain, Driver, Jack Stanmore, and several Planters enter with their Swords drawn.*

[A Bell rings.

Capt.

Where are you, Governour? make what hast you can
To save your self, and the whole Colony.
I bid 'em ring the Bell.
Gov.

What's the matter?
J. Stan.

The *Indians* are come down upon us:
They have plunder'd some of the Plantations already,
And are marching this way, as fast as they can.
Gov.

What can we do against 'em?
Blan.

We shall be able to make a stand,
Till more Planters come in to us.
J. Stan.

There are a great many more without,
If you wou'd show your self, and put us in order.
Gov.

There's no danger of the White Slaves, they'll not stir:
[125] *Blanford*, and *Stanmore* come you along with me:
Some of you stay here to look after the Black Slaves.

All go out but the Captain, and 6 Planters, who all at once seize Oroonoko.

1. Plan.

Ay, ay, let us alone.
Capt.

In the first place we secure you, Sir,
As an Enemy to the Government.
Oro.

Are you there, Sir, you are my constant Friend.
1 Plan.

You will be able to do a great deal of mischief.
Capt.

But we shall prevent you: bring the Irons hither.
He has the malice of a Slave in him, and wou'd be glad to be cutting his Masters Throats, I know him. Chain his

hands and feet, that he may not run over to 'em: if they have him, they shall carry him on their backs, that I can tell 'em.

[As they are chaining him, Blanford enters, runs to 'em.]

Blan.

What are you doing there?

Capt.

Securing the main chance: this is a bosom enemy.

Blan.

Away you Brutes: I'll answer with my life for his behaviour; so tell the Governour.

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Capt., Plan.

Well, Sir, so we will.

Exeunt Capt. and Planters.

Oro.

Give me a Sword and I'll deserve your trust.

A Party of Indians enter, hurrying Imoinda among the Slaves; another Party of Indians sustains 'em retreating, follow'd at a distance by the Governour with the Planters: Blanford, Oroonoko joyn 'em.

Blan.

Hell, and the Devil! they drive away our Slaves before our Faces. Governour, can you stand tamely by, and suffer this? *Clemene*, Sir, your Mistriss is among 'em.

Gov.

We throw our selves away, in the attempt to rescue 'em.

Oro.

A Lover cannot fall more glorious,
Than in the cause of Love. He that deserves
His Mistress's favour wonnot stay behind:
[150] I'll lead you on, be bold, and follow me.

Oroonoko at the head of the Planters, falls upon the Indians with a great shout, beats 'em off.

Imoinda enters.

Imo.

I'm tost about by my tempestuous Fate,
And no where must have rest; *Indians, or English!*
Whoever has me, I am still a Slave.
No matter whose I am, since I am no more,
My Royal Masters; Since I'm his no more.
O I was happy! nay, I will be happy,
In the dear thought that I am still his Wife,
Tho' far divided from him.

[Draws off to a corner of the Stage.

After a shout, enter the Governour with Oroonoko, Blanford, Stanmore, and the Planters.

Gov.

Thou glorious Man! thou something greater sure
Than *Cæsar* ever was! that single Arm
Has sav'd us all: accept our general thanks.
All bow to Oroonoko.

And what we can do more to recompense

[\[Page 32\]](#)

Such noble services, you shall command.
Clemene too shall thank you,—she is safe—
Look up, and bless your brave deliverer.

[Brings Clemene forward, looking down on the ground.

Oro.

Bless me indeed!

Blan.

You start!

Oro.

O all you Gods!
Who govern this great World, and bring about
Things strange, and unexpected, can it be?

Gov.

What is't you stare at so?

Oro.

Answer me some of you, you who have power,
And have your Senses free: or are you all
Struck thro' with wonder too?

[Looking still fixt on her.

Blan.

[175] What wou'd you know?

Oro.

My Soul steals from my Body thro' my Eyes:
All that is left of life, I'll gaze away,
And die upon the Pleasure.

Gov.

This is strange!

Oro.

If you but mock me with her Image here:
If she be not *Imoinda*—
Ha! she faints!

She looks upon him, and falls into a Swoon, he runs to her.

Nay, then it must be she: it is *Imoinda*:
My Heart confesses her, and leaps for joy,
To welcome her to her own Empire here.
I feel her all, in every part of me.
O! let me press her in my eager Arms,
Wake her to life, and with this kindling Kiss
Give back that Soul, she only sent to me.

[Kisses her.

Gov.

I am amaz'd!

Blan.

I am as much as you.

Oro.

Imoinda! O! thy *Oroonoko* calls.

[Imoinda coming to life.

Imo.

My *Oroonoko*! O! I can't believe
What any Man can say. But if I am
To be deceiv'd, there's something in that Name,
That Voice, that Face,

[Staring on him,

O! if I know my self, I cannot be mistaken.

[Runs, and embraces Oroonoko.

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Oro.

Never here;
You cannot be mistaken: I am yours,
[200] Your *Oroonoko*, all that you wou'd have,
Your tender loving Husband.

Imo.

All indeed
That I wou'd have: my Husband! then I am
Alive, and waking to the Joys I feel:
They were so great, I cou'd not think 'em true.
But I believe all that you say to me:
For Truth it self, and everlasting Love
Grows in this Breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oro.

Take, take me all: enquire into my heart,
(You know the way to every secret there)
My Heart, the sacred treasury of Love:
And if, in absence, I have mis-employ'd
A Mite from the rich store: if I have spent
A Wish, a Sigh, but what I sent to you:
May I be curst to wish, and sigh in vain,
And you not pity me.

Imo.

O! I believe,
And know you by my self. If these sad Eyes,
Since last we parted, have beheld the Face
Of any Comfort; or once wish'd to see
The light of any other Heaven, but you:
May I be struck this moment blind, and lose
Your blessed sight, never to find you more.

Oro.

Imoinda! O! this separation
[225] Has made you dearer, if it can be so,
Than you were ever to me. You appear
Like a kind Star to my benighted Steps,
To guide me on my way to happiness:
I cannot miss it now. Governour, Friend,
You think me mad: but let me bless you all,
Who, any way, have been the Instruments
Of finding her again. *Imoinda's* found!
And every thing, that I wou'd have in her.
[Embracing her in the most passionate Fondness.]

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Stan.

Where's your Mistriss now, Governour?

Gov.

Why, where most Men's Mistrisses are forc'd to be sometimes,
With her Husband, it seems: but I won't lose her so.

[Aside.]

Stan.

He has fought lustily for her, and deserves her, I'll say that for him.

Blan.

Sir we congratulate your happiness: I do most heartily.

Gov.

And all of us: but how it comes to pass—

Oro.

That will require more precious time than I can spare you now.

I have a thousand things to ask of her,
And she as many more to know of me.
But you have made me happier, I confess,
Acknowledge it, much happier, than I
Have words, or pow'r to tell you. Captain, you,
Ev'n you, who most have wrong'd me, I forgive.

I won't say you have betray'd me now:

I'll think you but the minister of Fate,

To bring me to my lov'd *Imoinda* here.

Imo.

[250] How, how shall I receive you? how be worthy

Of such Endearments, all this tenderness?
These are the Transports of Prosperity,
When Fortune smiles upon us.
Oro.

Let the Fools, who follow Fortune, live upon her smiles.
All our Prosperity is plac'd in Love.
We have enough of that to make us happy.
This little spot of Earth you stand upon,
Is more to me, than the extended Plains
Of my great Father's Kingdom. Here I reign
In full delights, in Joys to Pow'r unknown;
Your Love my Empire, and your Heart my Throne.
[Exeunt.]

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ACT III.

SCENE I.

[Aboan with several Slaves, Hottman.]

Hott.

What! to be Slaves to Cowards! Slaves to Rogues!
Who can't defend themselves!
Abo.

Who is this Fellow? he talks as if he were acquainted
With our design: is he one of us?
[Aside to his own Gang.]

Slav.

Not yet: but he will be glad to make one, I believe.
Abo.

He makes a mighty noise.
Hott.

Go, sneak in Corners; whisper out your Griefs,
For fear your Masters hear you: cringe and crouch
Under the bloody whip, like beaten Currs,
That lick their Wounds, and know no other cure.
All, wretches all! you feel their cruelty,
As much as I can feel, but dare not groan.
For my part, while I have a Life and Tongue,
I'll curse the Authors of my Slavery.

Abo.

Have you been long a Slave?

Hott.

Yes, many years.

Abo.

And do you only curse?

Hott.

Curse? only curse? I cannot conjure,
To raise the Spirits of other Men:
I am but one. O! for a Soul of fire,
To warm, and animate our common Cause,
And make a body of us: then I wou'd
Do something more than curse.

Abo.

That body set on Foot, you wou'd be one,
[25] A limb, to lend it motion.

Hott.

I wou'd be the Heart of it: the Head, the Hand, and Heart.
Wou'd I cou'd see the day:

Abo.

You will do all your self.

Hott.

I wou'd do more, than I shall speak: but I may find a time.

Abo.

The time may come to you; be ready for't.

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Methinks he talks too much: I'll know him more,
Before I trust him farther.

Slav.

If he dares half what he says, he'll be of use to us.

[Enter Blanford to 'em.]

Blan.

If there be any one among you here,
That did belong to *Oroonoko*, speak,

I come to him.

Abo.

I did belong to him: *Aboan*; my Name.

Blan.

You are the Man I want; pray, come with me.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

[Oroonoko and Imoinda.]

Oro.

I do not blame my Father for his Love:
(Tho' that had been enough to ruine me)
'Twas Nature's fault, that made you like the Sun,
The reasonable worship of Mankind:
He cou'd not help his Adoration.
Age had not lock'd his Sences up so close,
But he had Eyes, that open'd to his Soul,
And took your Beauties in: he felt your pow'r,
And therefore I forgive his loving you.
But when I think on his Barbarity,
That cou'd expose you to so many Wrongs;
Driving you out to wretched Slavery,
Only for being mine; then I confess,
I wish I cou'd forget the Name of Son,
That I might curse the Tyrant.

Imo.

I will bless him, for I have found you here: Heav'n only knows
What is reserv'd for us: but if we gness
The future by the past, our Fortune must
Be wonderfull, above the common Size
Of good or ill; it must be in extreams:
Extreamly happy, or extreamly wretched.
Oro.

'Tis in our pow'r to make it happy now.

Imo.

But not to keep it so.

[Enter Blanford and Aboan.]

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Blan.

My Royal Lord! I have a Present for you.

Oro.

[25] *Aboan!*

Abo.

Your lowest Slave.

Oro.

My try'd and valu'd Friend.

This worthy Man always prevents my wants:

I only wish'd, and he has brought thee to me.

Thou art surpriz'd: carry thy duty there;

[Aboan goes to Imoinda and falls at her Feet.]

While I acknowledge mine, how shall I thank you.

Blan.

Believe me honest to your interest,

And I am more than paid. I have secur'd,

That all your Followers shall be gently us'd.

This Gentleman, your chiefest Favourite,

Shall wait upon your Person, while you stay among us.

Oro.

I owe every thing to you.

Blan.

You must not think you are in Slavery.

Oro.

I do not find I am.

Blan.

Kind Heaven has miraculously sent

Those Comforts, that may teach you to expect

Its farther care, in your deliverance.

Oro.

I sometimes think my self, Heav'n is concern'd:

For my deliverance.

Blan.

It will be soon:

You may expect it. Pray, in the mean time,

Appear as chearfull as you can among us.
You have some Enemies, that represent
You dangerous, and wou'd be glad to find
[50] A Reason, in your discontent, to fear:
They watch your looks. But there are honest Men,
Who are your Friends: You are secure in them.
Oro.

I thank you for your caution.
Blan.

I will leave you:
And be assur'd, I wish your liberty.
[Exit.

Abo.

He speaks you very fair.
Oro.

He means me fair.
Abo.

If he should not, my Lord.
Oro.

If, he should not.
I'll not suspect his Truth: but if I did,
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What shall I get by doubting?
Abo.

You secure, not to be disappointed: but besides,
There's this advantage in suspecting him:
When you put off the hopes of other men,
You will rely upon your God-like self:
And then you may be sure of liberty.
Oro.

Be sure of liberty! what dost thou mean;
Advising to rely upon my self?
I think I may be sure on't: we must wait:
'Tis worth a little patience.
[Turning to Imoinda

Abo.

O my Lord!

Oro.

What dost thou drive at?

Abo.

Sir, another time,

You wou'd have found it sooner: but I see

[75] Love has your Heart, and takes up all your thoughts,

Oro.

And canst thou blame me?

Abo.

Sir, I must not blame you.

But as our fortune stands there is a Passion

(Your pardon Royal Mistriss, I must speak:)

That wou'd become you better than your Love:

A brave resentment; which inspir'd by you,

Might kindle, and diffuse a generous rage

Among the Slaves, to rouze and shake our Chains,

And struggle to be free.

Oro.

How can we help-our selves?

Abo.

I knew you, when you wou'd have found a way.

How, help our selves! the very *Indians* teach us:

We need but to attempt our Liberty,

And we may carry it. We have Hands sufficient,

Double the number of our Masters force,

Ready to be employ'd. What hinders us.

To set 'em then at work? we want but you,

To head our enterprize, and bid us strike.

Oro.

What wou'd you do?

Abo.

Cut our Oppressors Throats.

Oro.

And you wou'd have me joyn in your design of Murder?

Abo.

It deserves a better Name:

But be it what it will, 'tis justified

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By self-defence, and natural liberty.

Oro.

[100] I'll hear no more on't.

Abo.

I am sorry for't.

Oro.

Nor shall you think of it.

Abo.

Not think of it!

Oro.

No, I command you not.

Abo.

Remember Sir,

You are a Slave your self, and to command,

Is now anothers right. Not think of it!

Since the first moment they put on my Chains,

I've thought of nothing but the weight of 'em,

And how to throw 'em off: can yours sit easie?

Oro.

I have a sense of my condition,

As painfull, and as quick, as yours can be.

I feel for my *Imoinda* and my self;

Imoinda much the tenderest part of me.

But though I languish for my liberty,

I wou'd not buy it at the Christian Price

Of black Ingratitude: they shannot say,

That we deserv'd our Fortune by our Crimes.

Murder the Innocent!

Abo.

The Innocent!

Oro.

These men are so, whom you wou'd rise against:

If we are Slaves, they did not make us Slaves;

But bought us in an honest way of trade:

As we have done before 'em, bought and sold
[125] Many a wretch, and never thought it wrong.
They paid our Price for us, and we are now
Their Property, a part of their Estate,
To manage as they please. Mistake me not,
I do not tamely say, that we should bear
All they could lay upon us: but we find
The load so light, so little to be felt,
(Considering they have us in their power,
And may inflict what grievances they please)
We ought not to complain.
Abo.

My Royal Lord!
You do not know the heavy Grievances,
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The Toyls, the Labours, weary Drudgeries,
Which they impose; Burdens, more fit for Beasts,
For senseless Beasts to bear, than thinking Men.
Then if you saw the bloody Cruelties,
They execute on every slight offence;
Nay sometimes in their proud, insulting sport:
How worse than Dogs, they lash their fellow Creatures:
Your heart wou'd bleed for 'em. O cou'd you know
How many Wretches lift their Hands and Eyes
To you, for their Relief.
Oro.

I pity 'em,
And wish I cou'd with honesty do more.
Abo.

You must do more, and may, with honesty.
[150] O Royal Sir, remember who you are,
A Prince, born for the good of other Men:
Whose God-like Office is to draw the Sword
Against Oppression, and set free Mankind:
And this, I'm sure, you think Oppression now.
What tho' you have not felt these miseries,
Never believe you are oblig'd to them:
They have their selfish reasons, may be, now,
For using of you well: but there will come
A time, when you must have your share of 'em.
Oro.

You see how little cause I have to think so:

Favour'd in my own Person, in my Friends;
Indulg'd in all that can concern my care,
In my *Imoinda's* soft Society.

[Embracing her.

Abo.

And therefore wou'd you lye contented down,
In the forgetfulness, and arms of Love,
To get young Princes for 'em?

Oro.

Say'st thou! ha!

Abo.

Princes, the Heirs of Empire, and the last
Of your illustrious Lineage, to be born
To pamper up their Pride, and be their Slaves?

Oro.

Imoinda! save me, save me from that thought.

Imo.

There is no safety from it: I have long
Suffer'd it with a Mother's labouring pains;
And can no longer. Kill me, kill me now,

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[175] While I am blest, and happy in your love;
Rather than let me live to see you hate me:
As you must hate me; me, the only cause;
The Fountain of these flowing miseries:
Dry up this Spring of Life, this pois'nous Spring,
That swells so fast, to overwhelm us all.

Oro.

Shall the dear Babe, the eldest of my hopes,
Whom I begot a Prince, be born a Slave?
The treasure of this Temple was design'd
T'enrich a Kingdoms Fortune: shall it here
Be seiz'd upon by vile unhallow'd hands,
To be employ'd in uses most prophane?

Abo.

In most unworthy uses; think of that;
And while you may, prevent it. O my Lord!
Rely on nothing that they say to you.

They speak you fair, I know, and bid you wait.
But think what 'tis to wait on promises:
And promises of Men, who know no tye
Upon their words, against their interest:
And where's their interest in freeing you?
Imo.

O! where indeed, to lose so many Slaves?
Abo.

Nay grant this Man, you think so much your Friend,
Be honest, and intends all that he says:
He is but one; and in a Government,
Where, he confesses, you have Enemies,
[200] That watch your looks: what looks can you put on,
To please these men, who are before resolv'd
To read 'em their own own way? alas! my Lord!
If they incline to think you dangerous,
They have their knavish Arts to make you so.
And then who knows how far their cruelty
May carry their revenge?
Imo.

To every thing,
That does belong to you; your Friends, and me;
I shall be torn from you, forc't away,
Helpless, and miserable: shall I live
To see that day agen?
Oro.

That day shall never come.

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Abo.

I know you are perswaded to believe
The Governour's arrival will prevent
These mischiefs, and bestow your liberty:
But who is sure of that? I rather fear
More mischiefs from his coming: he is young,
Luxurious, passionate, and amorous:
Such a Complexion, and made bold by power,
To countenance all he is prone to do;
Will know no bounds, no law against his Lusts:
If, in a fit of his Intemperance,
With a strong hand, he should resolve to seize,

And force my Royal Mistress from your Arms,
[225] How can you help your self?
Oro.

Ha! thou hast rouz'd
The Lion in his den, he stalks abroad,
And the wide Forrest trembles at his roar.
I find the danger now: my Spirits start
At the alarm, and from all quarters come
To Man my Heart, the Citadel of love
It there a power on Earth to force you from me?
And shall I not resist it? not strike first
To keep, to save you? to prevent that curse?
This is your Cause, and shall it not prevail?
O! you were born all ways to conquer me.
Now I am fashion'd to thy purpose: speak,
What Combination, what Conspiracy,
Woud'st thou engage me in? Ile undertake
All thou woud'st have me now for liberty,
For the great Cause of Love and Liberty.
Abo.

Now, my great Master, you appear your self.
And since we have you joyn'd in our design,
It cannot fail us. I have muster'd up
The choicest Slaves, Men who are sensible
Of their condition, and seem most resolv'd:
They have their several parties.
Oro:

Summon 'em,
Assemble 'em: I will come forth, and shew
[250] My self among 'em: if they are resolv'd,
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I'll lead their formost resolutions.
Abo.

I have provided those will follow you.
Oro.

With this reserve in our proceeding still,
The means that lead us to our liberty,
Must not be bloody.
Abo.

You command in all.

We shall expect you, Sir.

Oro.

You shannot long.

Exeunt Oroonoko and Imoinda at one Door, Aboan at another.

SCENE III.

[Weldon coming in before Mrs. Lackit.]

Wid.

These unmannerly *Indians* were something unseasonable, to disturb us just in the nick, Mr. *Weldon*: but I have the Parson within call still, to doe us the good turn.

Well.

We had best stay a little I think, to see things settled agen, had not we? Marriage is a serious thing you know.

Wid.

What do you talk of a serious thing, Mr. *Weldon*? I think you have found me sufficiently serious: I have marry'd my Son to your Sister, to pleasure you: and now I come to claim your promise to me, you tell me marriage is a serious thing.

Well.

Why, is it not?

Wid.

Fidle fadle, I know what it is: 'tis not the first time I have been marry'd, I hope: but I shall begin to think, you don't design to do fairly by me, so I shall.

Well.

Why indeed, Mrs. *Lackit*, I am afraid I can't do as fairly as I wou'd by you. 'Tis what you must know, first or last; and I shou'd be the worst man in the world to conceal it any longer; therefore I must own to you, that I am marry'd already.

Wid.

Marry'd! you don't say so I hope! how have you the Conscience to tell me such a thing to my face! have you abus'd me then, fool'd and cheated me? What do you take me for, Mr. *Weldon*? do you think I am to be serv'd at this rate? but

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you shan't find me the silly creature, you think me: I wou'd have you to know, I understand better things, than to ruine [25] my Son without a valuable consideration. If I can't have you, I can keep my Money. Your Sister shan't

have the catch of him, she expected: I won't part with a Shilling to 'em.

Well.

You made the match your self, you know, you can't blame me.

Wid.

Yes, yes, I can, and do blame you:

You might have told me before you were marry'd.

Well.

I wou'd not have told you now; but you follow'd me so close, I was forc'd to't: indeed I am marry'd in *England*; but 'tis, as if I were not; for I have been parted from my Wife a great while: and to do reason on both sides, we hate one another heartily. Now I did design, and will marry you still, if you'll have a little patience.

Wid.

A likely business truly.

Well.

I have a Friend in *England* that I will write to, to poyson my Wife, and then I can marry you with a good Conscience, if you love me, as you say you do; you'll consent to that, I'm sure.

Wid.

And will he do it, do you think?

Well.

At the first word, or he is not the Man I take him to be.

Wid.

Well, you are a dear Devil, Mr. *Weldon*:

And wou'd you poyson your Wife for me?

Well.

I wou'd do any thing for you.

Wid.

Well, I am mightily oblig'd to you.

[50] But 'twill be a great while before you can have an answer of your Letter.

Well.

'Twill be a great while indeed.

Wid.

In the mean time, Mr. *Weldon*—

Well.

Why in the mean time—

Here's company: we'll settle that within.

I'll follow you.

[Exit Widow.]

[Enter Stanmore.]

Stan.

So, Sir, you carry your business swimmingly:

You have stolen a Wedding, I hear.

Well.

Ay, my Sister is marry'd: and I am very near being run away with my self.

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Stan.

The Widow will have you then.

Well.

You come very seasonably to my rescue:

Jack Stanmore is to be had, I hope.

Stan.

At half an hours warning.

Well.

I must advise with you.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

[Oroonoko with Aboan, Hottman, Slaves.]

Oro.

Impossible! nothing's impossible:

We know our strength only by being try'd.

If you object the Mountains, Rivers, Woods

Unpassable, that lie before our March:
Woods we can set on fire: we swim by nature:
What can oppose us then, but we may tame?
All things submit to vertuous industry:
That we can carry with us, that is ours.
Slave.

Great Sir, we have attended all you said,
With silent joy and admiration:
And, were we only-Men, wou'd follow such,
So great a Leader, thro' the untry'd World.
But, oh! consider we have other Names,
Husbands and Fathers, and have things more dear
To us, than Life, our Children, and our Wives,
Unfit for such an expedition:
What must become of them?
Oro.

We wonnot wrong
The virtue of our Women, to believe
There is a Wife among 'em, wou'd refuse
To share her Husband's fortune. What is hard,
We must make easie to 'em in our Love: while we live,
And have our Limbs, we can take care for them;
Therefore I still propose to lead our march
[25] Down to the Sea, and plant a Colony:
Where, in our native innocence, we shall live
Free, and be able to defend our selves;
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Till stress of weather, or some accident
Provide a Ship for us.
Abo.

An accident! the luckiest accident presents it self:
The very Ship, that brought and made us Slaves,
Swims in the River still; I see no cause
But we may seize on that.
Oro.

It shall be so:
There is a justice in it pleases me.
Do you agree to it?

[To the Slaves.

Omn.

We follow you.

Oro.

You do not relish it.

[To Hottman.

Hott.

I am afraid

You'll find it difficult, and dangerous.

Abo.

Are you the Man to find the danger first?

You shou'd have giv'n example. Dangerous!

I thought you had not understood the word;

You, who wou'd be the Head, the Hand, and Heart:

Sir, I remember you, you can talk well;

I wonnot doubt but you'll maintain your word.

Oro.

This Fellow is not right, I'll try him further.

[To Aboan.

The danger will be certain to us all:

And Death most certain in miscarrying.

[50] We must expect no mercy, if we fail:

Therefore our way must be not to expect:

We'll put it out of expectation,

By Death upon the place, or Liberty.

There is no mean, but Death or Liberty.

There's no Man here, I hope, but comes prepar'd

For all that can befall him.

Oro.

Death is all:

In most conditions of humanity

To be desir'd but to be shun'd in none:

The remedy of many; wish of some;

And certain end of all.

If there be one among us, who can fear

The face of Death appearing like a Friend,

As in this cause of Honour Death must be:

How will he tremble, when he sees him drest

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In the wild fury of our Enemies,

In all the terrors of their cruelty?

For now if we shou'd fall into their hands,
Cou'd they invent a thousand murd'ring ways,
By racking Torments, we shou'd feel 'em all.

Hott.

What will become of us?

Oro.

Observe him now.

[To Aboan concerning Hottman.]

I cou'd die altogether, like a Man:

As you, and you, and all of us may do:

[75] But who can promise for his bravery

Upon the Rack? where fainting, weary life,

Hunted thro' every Limb, is forc'd to feel

An agonizing death of all its parts?

Who can bear this? resolve to be empal'd?

His Skin flead off, and roasted yet alive?

The quivering flesh torn from his broken Bones,

By burning Pincers? who can bear these Pains?

Hott.

They are not to be born.

[Discovering all the confusion of fear.]

Oro.

You see him now, this Man of mighty words!

Abo.

How his Eyes roul!

Oro.

He cannot hide his fear:

I try'd him this way, and have found him out.

Abo.

I cou'd not have believ'd it. Such a Blaze,

And not a spark of Fire!

Oro.

His violence,

Made me suspect him first: now I'm convinc'd.

Abo.

What shall we do with him?

Oro.

He is not fit—

Abo.

Fit! hang him, he is only fit to be
Just what he is, to live and die a Slave:
The base Companion of his servile Fears.

Oro.

We are not safe with him.

Abo.

Do you think so?

Oro.

He'll certainly betray us.

Abo.

[100] That he shan't:
I can take care of that: I have a way
To take him off his evidence.

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Oro.

What way?

Abo.

I'll stop his mouth before you, stab him here,
And then let him inform.

[Going to stab Hottman, Oroonoko holds him.]

Oro.

Thou art not mad?

Abo.

I wou'd secure our selves.

Oro.

It shannot be this way; nay cannot be:
His Murder wou'd alarm all the rest,
Make 'em suspect us of Barbarity,
And, may be, fall away from our design.
We'll not set out in Blood: we have, my Friends,

This Night to furnish what we can provide,
For our security, and just defence.
If there be one among us, we suspect
Of baseness, or vile fear, it will become
Our common care, to have our Eyes on him:
I wonnot name the Man.
Abo.

You gness at him.

[To Hottman.]

Oro.

To morrow, early as the breaking day,
We rendezvous behind the Citron Grove.
That Ship secur'd, we may transport our selves
To our respective homes: my Fathers Kingdom
Shall open her wide arms to take you in,
[125] And nurse you for her own, adopt you all,
All, who will follow me.
Omn.

All, all follow you.

Oro.

There I can give you all your liberty;
Bestow its Blessings, and secure 'em yours.
There you shall live with honour, as becomes
My Fellow-sufferers, and worthy Friends:
This if we do succeed: But if we fall
In our attempt, 'tis nobler still to dye,
Than drag the galling yoke of slavery.
[Exeunt Omnes.]

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.

[Welldon and Jack Stanmore.]

Well.

You see, honest *Jack*, I have been industrious for you: you must take some pains now to serve your self.

J. Stan.

Gad, Mr. *Welldon*, I have taken a great deal of pains: And if the Widow speaks honestly, faith and troth, She'll tell

you what a pains-taker I am.

Well.

Fie, fie, not me: I am her Husband you know:
She won't tell me what pains you have taken with her:
Besides, she takes you for me.

J. Stan.

That's true: I forgot you had marry'd her.
But if you knew all—

Well.

'Tis no matter for my knowing all: if she does—

J. Stan.

Ay, ay, she does know, and more than ever she knew since she was a woman, for the time; I will be bold to say: for I have done—

Well.

The Devil take you, you'll never have done.

J. Stan.

As old as she is, she has a wrinkle behind more than she had, I believe—

For I have taught her, what she never knew in her life before.

Well.

What care I what wrinkles she has? or what you have taught her? If you'll let me advise you, you may; if not, you may prate on, and ruine the whole design.

J. Stan.

Well, well, I have done.

Well.

No body, but your Cozin, and you, and I, know any

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thing of this matter. I have marry'd Mrs. *Lackit*; and put you [25] to bed to her, which she knows nothing of, to serve you: in two or three days I'll bring it about so, to resign up my claim, with her consent, quietly to you.

J. Stan.

But how will you do it?

Well.

That must be my business: in the mean time, if you should make any noise, 'twill come to her Ears, and be impossible to reconcile her.

J. Stan.

Nay, as for that, I know the way to reconcile her, I warrant you.

Well.

But how will you get her Money? I am marry'd to her.

J. Stan.

That I don't know indeed.

Well.

You must leave it to me, you find, all the pains I shall put you to, will be to be silent: you can hold your Tongue for two or three days?

J. Stan.

Truly, not well, in a matter of this nature: I should be very unwilling to lose the reputation of this nights work, and the pleasure of telling.

Well.

You must mortifie that vanity a little: you will have time enough to brag, and lie of your Manhood, when you have her in a bare-fac'd condition to disprove you.

J. Stan.

Well, I'll try what I can do: the hopes of her Money must do it.

Well.

You'll come at night again? 'tis your own business.

J. Stan.

But you have the credit on't.

Well.

'Twill be your own another day, as the Widow says. [50] Send your Cozin to me: I want his advise.

J. Stan.

I want to be recruited, I'm sure, a good Breakfast, and to Bed: She has rock'd my Cradle sufficiently.

[Exit.

Well.

She wou'd have a Husband; and if all be, as he says, she has no reason to complain: but there's no relying on what the Men say upon these occasions: they have the benefit of their bragging, by recommending their abilities to other Women: theirs is a trading Estate, that lives upon credit, and increases by removing it out of one Bank into another. Now poor Women have not these opportunities: we must keep our stocks

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dead by us, at home, to be ready for a purchase, when it comes, a Husband, let him be never so dear, and be glad of him: or venture our Fortunes abroad on such rotten security, that the principal and interest, nay very often our persons are in danger. If the Women wou'd agree (which they never will) to call home their Effects, how many proper Gentlemen wou'd sneak into another way of living, for want of being responsible in this? then Husbands wou'd be cheaper. Here comes the Widow, she'll tell truth: she'll not bear false Witness against her own interest, I know.

[Enter Widow Lackit.]

Well.

Now, Mrs. *Lackit*.

Wid.

Well, well, *Lackit*, or what you will now; now I am marry'd to you: I am very well pleas'd with what I have done, I assure you.

Well.

And with what I have done too, I hope.

Wid.

[75] Ah! Mr. *Welldon*! I say nothing, but you're a dear Man, and I did not think it had been in you.

Well.

I have more in me than you imagine.

Wid.

No, no, you can't have more than I imagine: 'tis impossible to have more: you have enough for any Woman, in an honest way, that I will say for you.

Well.

Then I find you are satisfied.

Wid.

Satisfied! no indeed; I'm not to be satisfied, with you or without you: to be satisfied, is to have enough of you; now, 'tis a folly to lye: I shall never think I can have enough of you. I shall be very fond of you: wou'd you have me fond of you? What do you do to me, to make me love you so well?

Well.

Can't you tell what?

Wid.

Go; there's no speaking to you: you bring all the Blood of ones body into ones face, so you do: why do you talk so?

Well.

Why, how do I talk?

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Wid:

You know how: but a little colour becomes me,
I believe: how do I look to day?

Well.

O! most lovingly, most amiably.

Wid.

Nay, this can't be long a secret, I find,
I shall discover it by my Countenance.

Well.

The Women will find you out, you look so cheerfully.

Wid.

But do I, do I really look so cheerfully, so amiably? [100] there's no such paint in the World as the natural glowing of a Complexion. Let 'em find me out, if they please, poor Creatures, I pity 'em: they envy me, I'm sure, and wou'd be

glad to mend their looks upon the same occasion. The young jil-flirting Girls, forsooth, believe nobody must have a Husband, but themselves; but I wou'd have 'em to know there are other things to be taken care of, besides their green Sickness:

Well.

Ay, sure, or the Physicians wou'd have but little practise.

Wid.

Mr. *Welldon*, what must I call you: I must have some pretty fond name or other for you: what shall I call you?

Well.

I thought you lik'd my own name.

Wid.

Yes, yes, I like it, but I must have a nick-name for you: most Women have nick-names for their Husbands—

Well.

Cuckold.

Wid.

No, no, but 'tis very pretty before company;
It looks negligent, and is the fashion, you know.

Well.

To be negligent of their Husbands, it is indeed.

Wid.

Nay then, I won't be in the fashion; for I can never be negligent of dear Mr. *Welldon*: and to convince you, here's something to encourage you not to be negligent of me.

[Gives him a Purse and a little Casket.]

Five hundred pounds in Gold in this; and Jewels to the value of five hundred pounds more in this.

[Welldon opens the Casket.]

Well.

Ay, marry, this will encourage me indeed.

Wid.

there are comforts in marrying an elderly Woman, Mr. *Welldon*. Now a young Woman wou'd have fancy'd she had

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[125] paid you with her person, or had done you the favour.

Well.

What do you talk of young Women? you are as young as any of'em, in every thing, but their folly and ignorance.

Wid.

And do you thing me so? but I have no reason to suspect you. Was not I seen at your house this Morning, do you think?

Well.

You may venture again: you'll come at night, I suppose.

Wid.

O dear! at night? so soon?

Well.

Nay, if you think it so soon.

Wid.

O! no, it is not for that Mr. *Welldon*, but—

Well.

You won't come then.

Wid.

Won't! I don't say, I won't: that is not a word for a Wife:

If you command me—

Well.

To please your self.

Wid.

I will come to please you.

Well.

To please your self, own it.

Wid.

Well, well, to please my self then, you're the strangest Man in the world, nothing can scape you: you'll to the bottom of every thing.

[Enter Daniel, Lucia following.]

Dan.

What wou'd you have? what do you follow me for?

Luc.

Why, may'nt I follow you? I must follow you now all the World over.

Dan.

Hold you, hold you there: not so far by a mile or two; I have enough of your Company already, byrlady; and something to spare: you may go home to your Brother, an you [150] will, I have no farther to do with you.

Wid.

Why, *Daniel*, Child, thou art not out of thy wits sure, art thou?

Dan.

Nay, marry, I don't know; but I am very near it, I believe:
I am alter'd for the worse mightily since you saw me;
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And she has been the cause of it there.

Wid.

How so, Child?

Dan.

I told you before what wou'd come on't, of putting me to bed to a strange Woman: but you wou'd not be said nay.

Wid.

She is your Wife now, Child, you must love her.

Dan.

Why, so I did, at first.

Wid.

But you must love her always.

Dan.

Always! I lov'd her as long as I cou'd, Mother, and as long as loving was good, I believe, for I find now I don't care a

fig for her.

Luc.

Why, you lubberly, slovenly, misbegotten Blockhead—

Wid.

Nay, Mistriss *Lucy*, say any thing else, and spare not: but as to his begetting, that touches me, he is as honestly begotten, tho' I say it, that he is the worse agen.

Luc.

I see all good nature is thrown away upon you—

Wid.

It was so with his Father before him: he takes after him.

Luc.

And therefore I will use you, as you deserve, you Tony.

Wid.

[175] Indeed he deserves bad enough; but don't call him out of his name, his name is *Daniel*, you know.

Dan.

She may call me Hermophrodite, if she will,
For I hardly know whether I'm a Boy or a Girl.

Well.

A Boy, I warrant thee, as long as thou liv'st.

Dan.

Let her call me what she pleases, Mother,
'Tis not her Tongue that I am afraid of.

Luc.

I will make such a Beast of thee, such a Cuckold!

Wid.

O, pray, no, I hope; do nothing rashly, Mrs. *Lucy*.

Luc.

Such a Cuckold will I make of thee!

Dan.

I had rather be a Cuckold, than what you wou'd make of me in a week, I'm sure: I have no more Manhood left in me already, than there is, saving the mark, in one of my Mothers old under Petticoats here.

Wid.

Sirrah, Sirrah, meddle with your Wife's Petticoats,

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and let your Mother's alone, you ungracious Bird, you.

[Beats him.

Dan.

Why is the Devil in the Woman? what have I said now?

Do you know, if you were ask'd, I trow? but you are all of a bundle; ev'n hang together; he that unties you, makes a Rod for his own tail; and so he will find it, that has any thing to do with you.

Wid.

Ay, Rogue enough, you shall find it: I have a Rod for your Tail still.

Dan.

No, Wife and I care not.

Wid.

I'll swinge you into better manners, you Booby.

[Beats him off, Exit.

Well.

[200] You have consummated our project upon him.

Luc.

Nay, if I have a limb of the Fortune,

I care not who has the whole body of the Fool.

Well.

That you shall, and a large one, I promise you.

Luc.

Have you heard the news? they talk of an English Ship in the River.

Well.

I have heard on't: and am preparing to receive it, as fast as I can.

Luc.

There's something the matter too with the Slaves,
Some disturbance or other; I don't know what 'tis.

Well.

So much the better still:

We fish in troubled waters:

We shall have fewer Eyes upon us.

Pray, go you home, and be ready to assist me in your part of the design.

Luc.

I can't fail in mine.

[Exit

Well.

The Widow has furnish'd me, I thank her, to carry it on.

Now I have got a Wife, 'tis high time to think of getting a Husband.

I carry my fortune about me;

A thousand Pounds in Gold and Jewels.

Let me see—

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'Twill be a considerable trust:

And I think, I shall lay it out to advantage.

[Enter Stanmore.]

Stan.

So *Welldon, Jack* has told me his success; and his hopes of marrying the Widow by your means.

Well.

I have strain'd a point, *Stanmore*, upon your account,

[225] To be serviceable to your Family.

Stan.

I take it upon my account; and am very much oblig'd to you.

But here we are all in an uproar.

Well.

So they say, what's the matter?

Stan.

A Mutiny among the Slaves:

Oroonoko is at the head of 'em,
Our Governour is gone out with his rascally Militia against 'em,
What it may come to no body knows.
Well.

For my part, I shall do as well as the rest: but I'm concern'd for my Sister, and Cozen, whom I expect in the Ship from *England*.

Stan.

There's no danger of 'em.

Well.

I have a thousand pounds here, in Gold and Jewels, for my Cozens use, that I wou'd more particularly take care of: 'tis too great a summ to venture at home; and I wou'd not have her wrong'd of it: therefore, to secure it, I think my best way will be, to put it into your keeping.

Stan.

You have a very good opinion of my honesty.

[Takes the Purse and Casket.

Well.

I have indeed, if any thing shou'd happen to me, in this bustle, as no body is secure of accidents, I know you will take my Cozen into your protection and care.

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Stan.

You may be sure on't.

Well.

If you hear she is dead, as she may be, then I desire you to accept of the Thousand Pound, as a Legacy, and Token of my Friendship; my Sister is provided for.

Stan.

[250] Why, you amaze me: but you are never the nearer dying, I hope, for makeing your Will?

Well.

Not a jot; but I love to be before-hand with Fortune. If she comes safe; this is not a place for a single Woman, you know;

Pray see her married as soon as you can.

Stan.

If she be as handsom as her Picture, I can promise her a Husband.

Well.

If you like her, when you see her, I wish nothing so much as to have you marry her your self.

Stan.

From what I have heard of her, and my Engagements to you, it must be her Fault, if I don't:

I hope to have her from your own Hand.

Well.

And I hope to give her to you, for all this.

Stan.

Ay, ay, hang these melancholy Reflections.

Your Generosity has engag'd all my Services.

Well.

I always thought you worth making a Friend.

Stan.

You shan't find your good Opinion thrown away upon me: I am in your Debt, and shall think so as long as I live.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter on one side of the Stage Oroonoko, Aboan, with the Slaves, Imoinda with a Bow and Quiver, the Women, some leading, others carrying their Children upon their Backs.

Oro.

The Women, with their Children, fall behind.

Imoinda you must not expose your self:

Retire, my Love: I almost fear for you.

Imo.

I fear no Danger: Life, or Death, I will enjoy with you.

Oro.

My Person is your Guard.

Abo.

Now, Sir, blame your self: if you had not prevented my

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cutting his Throat, that Coward there had not discover'd us; He comes now to upbraid you.

Enter on the other side Governour, talking to Hottman, with his Rabble.

Gov.

This is the very thing I would have wisht.

Your honest Service to the Government

[To Hottman.

Shall be rewarded with your Liberty.

Abo.

His honest Service! call it what it is,

His Villany, the Service of his Fear:

If he pretends to honest Services,

Let him stand out, and meet me, like a Man.

[Advancing.

Oro.

Hold, you: And you who come against us, hold;

I charge you in a general good to all,

And wish I cou'd command you, to prevent

The bloody Havock of the murdering Sword.

I wou'd not urge Destruction uncompell'd:

But if you follow Fate, you find it here.

The Bounds are set, the Limits of our Lives:

Between us lyes the gaping Gulph of Death,

To swallow all: who first advances—

[Enter the Capt. with his Crew.

Capt.

[25] Here, here, here they are, Governour:

What! seize upon my Ship!

Come, Boys, fall on—

[Advancing first, Oroonoko kills him.

Oro.

Thou art fall'n indeed. Thy own Blood be upon thee.

Gov.

Rest it there: he did deserve his Death.

Take him away.

[the Body remov'd.]

You see, Sir, you and those mistaken Men

Must be our Witnesses, we do not come

As Enemies, and thirsting for your Blood.

If we desir'd your Ruin, the Revenge

Of our Companions Death, had pusht it on.

But that we over-look, in a Regard

To common Safety, and the publick Good.

Oro.

Regard that publick good: draw off your Men,

And leave us to our Fortune: We're resolv'd.

Gov.

Resolv'd, on what? your Resolutions

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Are broken, overturn'd, prevented, lost:

What Fortune now can you raise out of 'em?

Nay, grant we shou'd draw off, what can you do?

Where can you move? What more can you resolve?

Unless it be to throw your selves away.

Famine must eat you up, if you go on.

You see, our Numbers cou'd with Ease compel

What we request: And what do we request?

Only to save your selves?

[The Women with their Children gathering about the Men.]

Oro.

[50] I'll hear no more.

Women.

Hear him, hear him. He takes no care of us.

Gov.

To those poor wretches who have been seduc'd,

And led away, to all, and every one,

We offer a full Pardon—

Oro.

Then fall on.

[Preparing to Engage.]

Gov.

Lay hold upon't, before it be too late,
Pardon and Mercy.

[The Women clinging about the Men, they leave Oroonoko, and fall upon their Faces crying out for Pardon.]

Slaves.

Pardon, Mercy, Pardon.

Oro.

Let 'em go all: now, Governour, I see,
I own the Folly of my Enterprise,
The Rashness of this Action, and must blush
Quite thro' this Vail of Night, a whitely Shame,
To think I cou'd design to make those free,
Who were by Nature Slaves; Wretches design'd
To be their Masters Dogs, and lick their Feet.
Whip, whip 'em to the Knowledge of your Gods,
Your Christian Gods, who suffer you to be
Unjust, dishonest, cowardly, and base,
And give 'em your Excuse for being so.
I wou'd not live on the same Earth with Creatures,
That only have the Faces of their Kind:
Why shou'd they look like Men, who are not so?
When they put off their Noble Natures, for
The groveling qualities of down-cast Beasts,
[75] I wish they had their Tails.

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Abo.

Then we shou'd know 'em.

Oro.

We were too few before for Victory:
We're still enow to dye.

[To Imoinda, Aboan.]

Blanford Enters.

Gov.

Live, Royal Sir;
Live, and be happy long on your own Terms:
Only consent to yield, and you shall have
What Terms you can propose, for you, and yours.
Oro.

Consent to yield! shall I betray my self?
Gov.

Alas! we cannot fear, that your small Force,
The Force of two, with a weak Womans Arm,
Shou'd Conquer us. I speak in the regard
And Honour of your Worth, in my desire
And forwardness to serve so great a Man.
I wou'd not have it lie upon my Thoughts,
That I was the occasion of the fall
Of such a Prince, whose Courage carried on
In a more Noble Cause, wou'd well deserve
The Empire of the World.
Oro.

You can speak fair.
Gov.

Your Undertaking, tho' it wou'd have brought
So great a loss to us, we must all say
Was generous, and noble; and shall be
Regarded only as the Fire of Youth,
That will break out sometimes in Gallant So
[100] We'll think it but the Natural Impulse,
A rash impatience of Liberty:
No otherwise.
Oro.

Think it what you will.
I was not born to render an Account
Of what I do, to any but my self.
[Blanford comes forward.]

Blan.

I'm glad you have proceeded by fair means.
[To the Governour.]

I came to be a Mediator.
Gov.

Try what you can work upon him.

Oro.

Are you come against me too?

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Blan.

Is this to come against you?

[Offering his Sword to Oroon.

Unarm'd to put my self into your Hands?

I come, I hope, to serve you.

Oro.

You have serv'd me;

I thank you for't: And I am pleas'd to think

You were my Friend, while I had need of one:

But now 'tis past; this farewell; and be gone.

[Embraces him.

Blan.

It is not past, and I must serve you still.

I wou'd make up these Breaches, which the Sword

Will widen more; and close us all in Love.

Oro.

I know what I have done, and I shou'd be

A Child to think they ever can Forgive:

Forgive! Were there but that, I wou'd not live

To be Forgiven: Is there a Power on Earth,

That I can ever need forgiveness from?

Blan.

[125] You sha' not need it.

Oro.

No, I wonnot need it.

Blan.

You see he offers you your own Conditions,

For you, and yours.

Oro.

I must Capitulate?

Precariously Compound, on stinted Terms,
To save my Life?

Blan.

Sir, he Imposes none.

You make 'em for your own Security.

If your great Heart cannot descend to treat,

In adverse Fortune, with an Enemy:

Yet sure, your Honour's safe, you may accept

Offers of Peace, and Safety from a Friend.

Gov.

He will rely on what you say to him:

[To Blanford.]

Offer him what you can, I will confirm,

And make all good: Be you my Pledge of Trust.

Blan.

I'll answer with my Life for all he says.

Gov.

Ay, do, and pay the Forfeit if you please.

[Aside.]

Blan.

Consider, Sir, can you consent to throw

That Blessing from you, you so hardly found,

[Of Imoinda.]

And so much valu'd once?

Oro.

Imoinda! Oh!

'Tis She that holds me on this Argument

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Of tedious Life: I cou'd resolve it soon,

Were this curst Being only in Debate.

[150] But my *Imoinda* struggles in my Soul:

She makes a Coward of me: I Confess

I am afraid to part with Her in Death:

And more afraid of Life to lose Her here.

Blan.

This way you must lose her, think upon
The weakness of her Sex, made yet more weak
With her Condition, requiring Rest,
And soft Indulging Ease, to nurse your Hopes,
And make you a glad Father.

Oro.

There I feel a Father's Fondness, and a Husband's Love.
They seize upon my Hart, strain all its strings,
To pull me to 'em, from my stern resolve.
Husband, and Father! All the melting Art
Of Eloquence lives in those softning Names.
Methinks I see the Babe, with Infant Hands,
Pleading for Life, and begging to be born:
Shall I forbid his Birth? Deny him Light?
The Heavenly Comforts of all-cheering Light?
And make the Womb the Dungeon of his Death?
His Bleeding Mother his sad Monument?
These are the Calls of Nature, that call loud,
They will be heard, and Conquer in their Cause:
He must not be a Man, who can resist 'em.
No, my *Imoinda!* I will venture all
To save thee, and that little Innocent:
[175] The World may be a better Friend to him,
Than I have found it. Now I yield my self:

[Gives up his Sword.

The Conflict's past, and we are in your Hands.

[Several Men get about Oronooko, and Aboan, and seize 'em.

Gov.

So you shall find you are: Dispose of them,
As I commanded you.

Blan.

Good Heaven forbid! You cannot mean—

Gov.

This is not your Concern.

[To Blanford who goes to Oroonoko.

I must take care of you.

[To Imoinda.

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Imo.

I'm at the end

Of all my Care: Here I will die with him.

[Holding Oroonoko.

Oro.

You shall not force her from me.

[he holds her.

Gov.

Then I must

[they force her from him.

Try other means, and Conquer Force by Force:

Break, cut off his Hold, bring her away.

Imo.

I do not ask to Live, kill me but here.

Oro.

O Bloody Dogs! Inhumane Murderers.

[Imoinda forct out of one Door by the Governour, and others. Oroonoko and Aboan hurried out of another.

[Exeunt Omnes.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter Stanmore, Lucia, Charlott.

Stan.

'Tis strange we cannot hear of him: Can no body give an account of him?

Luc.

Nay, I begin to despair: I give him for gone.

Stan.

Not so I hope.

Luc.

There are so many disturbances in this devilish Country! Wou'd we had never seen it.

Stan.

This is but a cold welcome for you, Madam, after so troublesome a Voyage.

Char.

A cold Welcome indeed, Sir, without my Cousin *Welldon*, He was the best Friend I had in the World.

Stan.

He was a very good Friend of yours indeed, Madam.

Luc.

They have made him away, Murder'd him so this Mony, I believe, he took a considerable Sum out with him, I know, that has been his Ruin.

Stan.

That has done him no Injury, to my knowledge: For this Morning he put into my Custody what you speak of, I suppose a Thousand Pounds, for the use of this Lady.

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Char.

I was always oblig'd to him: and he has shown his Care of me, in placing my little Affairs in such Honourable Hands.

Stan.

He gave me a particular charge of you, Madam, very particular, so particular, that you will be surpriz'd when I tell you.

Char.

What, pray Sir.

Stan.

I am engag'd to get you a Husband, I promis'd that before [25] I saw you; and now I have seen you, you must give me leave to offer you my self.

Luc.

Nay, Cozen, never be coy upon the matter, to my Knowledge my Brother always design'd you for this Gentleman.

Stan.

You hear, Madam, he has given me his Interest, and 'tis the Favour! I wou'd have begg'd of him. Lord! you are so like him—

Char.

That you are oblig'd to say you like me for his Sake.

Stan.

I shou'd be glad to love you for your own.

Char.

If I shou'd consent to the fine things you can say to me, how wou'd you look at last, to find 'em thrown away upon an old Acquaintance?

Stan.

An old Acquaintance!

Char.

Lord, how easily are you Men to be impos'd upon! I am no Cozen newly arriv'd from *England*, not I; but the very *Welldon* you wot of.

Stan.

Welldon!

Char.

Not murdered, nor made away, as my Sister wou'd have you believe, but am in very good Health, your old friend in Breeches that was, and now your humble Servant in Petticoats.

Stan.

I'm glad we have you agen.

But what service can you do me in Petticoats, pray?

Char.

Can't you tell what?

Stan.

Not I, by my troth: I have found my Friend, and lost my Mistress, it seems, which I did not expect from your Petticoats.

Char.

[50] Come, come, you have had a Friend of your Mistress long enough, 'tis high time now to have a Mistress of your Friend.

Stan.

What do you say?

Char.

I am a Woman, Sir.

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Stan.

A Woman!

Char.

As arrant a Woman as you wou'd have had me.

But now, I assure you.

Stan.

And at my Service?

Char.

If you have any for me in Petticoats.

Stan.

Yes, yes, I shall find you employment.

Char.

You wonder at my proceeding, I believe.

Stan.

'Tis a little extraordinary, indeed.

Char.

I have taken some pains to come into your Favour.

Stan.

You might have had it cheaper a great deal.

Char.

I might have marry'd you in the Person of my English Cozen, but cou'd not consent to cheat you, ev'n in the thing I had a mind to.

Stan.

'Twas done as you do every thing.

Char.

I need not tell you, I made that little Plot, and carry'd it on only for this Opportunity. I was resolv'd to see whether you lik't me as a Woman, or not: if I had found you indifferent, I wou'd have indeavour'd, to have been so too: but you say you like me, and therefore I have ventur'd to discover the truth.

Stan.

Like you! I like you so well, that I'm afraid you won't think Marriage a proof on't: shall I give you any other?

Char.

[75] No, no, I'm inclin'd to believe you, and that shall convince me. At more leisure I'lle satisfie you how I came to be in Mans Cloaths, for no ill I assure you, tho' I have happen'd to play the Rogue in 'em: They have assisted me in marrying my Sister, and have gone a great way in befriending your Cozen *Jack* with the Widow. Can you forgive me for pimping for your Family?

Enter Jack Stanmore.

Stan.

So, *Jack*, what News with you?

J. Stan.

I am the forepart of the Widow, you know, She's coming after with the body of the Family, the young Squire in her hand, my Son-in-Law that is to be, with the Help of Mr. *Weldon*.

Char.

Say you so, Sir?

[Clapping Jack upon the back.]

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Enter Widow Lackitt with her Son Daniel.

Wid.

So, Mrs. *Lucy*, I have brought him about agen, I have Chastis'd him, I have made him as supple as a Glove for your wearing, to pull on, or throw off, at your pleasure. Will you ever Rebell again? Will you, Sirrah? But come, come, down on your Marrow Bones, and ask her forgiveness.

[Daniel Kneels.

Say after me, pray forsooth Wife.

Dan.

Pray, forsooth Wife.

Luc.

Well, well, this is a Day of good Nature, and so I take you into Favour: But first take the Oath of Allegiance.

[He kisses her Hand, and rises.

If ever you do so agen—

Dan.

Nay Marry if I do, I shall have the worst on't.

Luc.

Here's a Stranger, forsooth, wou'd be glad to be known [100] to you, a Sister of mine, pray salute her.

[starts at Charlott.

Wid.

Your Sister! Mrs. *Lucy*! what do you mean? This is your Brother, Mr. *Weldon*; do you think I do not know Mr. *Weldon* ?

Luc.

Have a care what you say: This Gentleman's about Marrying her: You may spoil all.

VVid.

Fiddle faddle, what! You wou'd put a trick upon me.

Char.

No faith, Widow, the Trick is over, it has taken sufficiently, and now I will teach you the Trick,

To prevent your being Cheated another time.

VVid.

How! Cheated, Mr. *VVeldon*!

Char.

Why, ay, you will always take things by the wrong Handle, I see you will have me Mr. *VVeldon*: I grant you, I was Mr. *VVeldon* a little while to please you, or so: But Mr. *Stanmore* here has perswaded me into a Woman agen.

VVid.

A Woman! Pray let me speak with you.

[drawing her aside.

You are not in earnest, I hope? A Woman!

Char.

Really a Woman.

VVid.

Gads my Life! I could not be cheated in every thing: I know a Man from a Woman at these Years, or the Devil's in't.

Pray, did not you marry me?

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Char.

You wou'd have it so.

Wid.

And did not I give you a Thousand Pounds this Morning?

Char.

[125] Yes indeed, 'twas more than I deserv'd: But you had your Penniworth for your Penny, I suppose: You seem'd to be pleas'd with your Bargain.

Wid.

A rare Bargain I have made on't, truly. I have laid out my Money to fine purpose upon a Woman.

Char.

You wou'd have a Husband, and I provided for you as well as I cou'd.

Wid.

Yes, yes, you have provided for me.

Char.

And you have paid me very well for't, I thank you.

Wid.

'Tis very well; I may be with Child too, for ought I know, and may go look for the Father.

Char.

Nay, if you think so, 'tis time to look about you indeed. Ev'n make up the matter as well as you can, I advise you as a Friend, and let us live Neighbourly and Lovingly together.

Wid.

I have nothing else for it, that I know now.

Char.

For my part, Mrs. *Lackit*, your Thousand Pounds will Engage me not to laugh at you. Then my Sister is Married to your Son, he is to have half your Estate, I know; and indeed they may live upon it, very comfortably to themselves, and very creditably to you.

Wid.

Nay, I can blame no body but my self.

Char.

You have enough for a Husband still,
And that you may bestow upon honest *Jack Stanmore*.

Wid.

Is he the Man then?

Char.

He is the Man you are oblig'd to.

J. Stan.

[150] Yes, Faith, Widow, I am the Man: I have done fairly by you, you find, you know what you have to trust to before hand.

Wid.

Well, well, I see you will have me, ev'n Marry me, and make an end of the business.

Stan.

Why, that's well said, now we are all agreed, and all provided for.

[A Servant Enters to Stanmore.]

Serv.

Sir, Mr. *Blandford* desires you to come to him, and bring as many of your Friends as you can with you.

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Stan.

I come to him. You'll all go along with me.
Come, young Gentleman, Marriage is the fashion, you see, you must like it now.

Dan.

If I don't, how shall I help my self?

Luc.

Nay, you may hang your self in the Noose, if you please,
But you'll never get out on't with struggling.

Dan.

Come then, let's ev'n jogg on in the old Road.
Cuckold, or worse, I must be now contented:
I'm not the first has marry'd, and repented.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter Governour with Blanford, and Planters.

Blan.

Have you no Reverence of future Fame?
No awe upon your actions, from the Tongues,
The censuring Tongues of Men, that will be free?
If you confess Humanity, believe
There is a God, or Devil, to reward
Our doings here, do not provoke your Fate.
The Hand of Heaven is arm'd against these Crimes,
With hotter Thunder-Bolts, prepar'd to shoot,
And Nail you to the Earth, a sad Example;
A Monument of Faithless Infamy.

Enter Stanmore, J. Stanmore, Charlott, Lucy, Widow, and Daniel.

So, *Stanmore*, you I know, the Women too
Will join with me: 'Tis *Oroonoko's* Cause,
A Lover's Cause, a wretched Woman's Cause,
That will become your Intercession.

[To the Women.]

1. *Plan.*

Never mind 'em, Governour; he ought to be made an Example for the good of the Plantation.

2. *Plan.*

Ay, ay, 'twill frighten the Negroes from Attempting the like agen.

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1. *Plan.*

What rise against their Lords and Masters!
At this rate no Man is safe from his own Slaves.

2. *Plan.*

No, no more he is. Therefore, one and all, Governour, we declare for Hanging.

Om. Plan.

Ay, ay, hang him, hang him.

Wid.

What! Hang him! O! forbid it, Governour.

Char., Lucy.

[25] We all Petition for him.

J. Stan.

They are for a Holy-Day; Guilty or not,
Is not the Business, hanging is their Sport.

Blan.

We are not sure so wretched, to have these,
The Rabble, judge for us; the changing Croud;
The Arbitrary Guard of Fortune's Power,
Who wait to catch the Sentence of her Frowns,
And hurry all to ruine she Condemns.

Stan.

So far from farther Wrong, that 'tis a shame
He shou'd be where he is: Good Governour
Order his Liberty: He yielded up
Himself, his all, at your discretion.

Blan.

Discretion! no, he yielded on your word;
And I am made the cautionary Pledge,
The Gage, and Hostage of your keeping it.
Remember, Sir, he yielded on your word;
Your Word! which honest Men will think should be
The last resort of Truth, and trust on Earth:
There's no Appeal beyond it, but to Heaven:
An Oath is a recognisance to Heaven,
Binding us over, in the Courts above,
To plead to the Indictment of our Crimes.
That those who 'scape this World should suffer there.
But in the common Intercourse of Men,
(Where the dread Majesty is not Invoak'd,
[50] His Honour not immediately concern'd,
Not made a Party in our Interests,)
Our Word is all to be rely'd upon.

Wid.

Come, come, You'l be as good as your Word, we know.

Stan.

He's out of all power of doing any harm now,
If he were dispos'd to it.

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Char.

But he is not dispos'd to it.

Blan.

To keep him, where he is, will make him soon
Find out some desperate way to Liberty:
He'll hang himself, or dash out his mad Brains.

Char.

Pray try him by gentle Means:

We'll all be Sureties for him.

Om.

All, all.

Luc.

We will all answer for him now.

Gov.

Well, you will have it so, do what you please,
Just what you will with him, I give you leave.

[Exit.

Blan.

We thank you, Sir; this way, pray come with me.

[Exeunt.

The Scene drawn shews Oroonoko upon his Back, his Legs and Arms stretcht out, and chain'd to the Ground.

Enter Blanford, Stanmore. &c.

Blan.

O miserable Sight! help every one,
Assist me all to free him from his Chains.

[They help him up, and bring him forward, looking down.

Most injur'd Prince! how shall we clear our selves?
We cannot hope you will vouchsafe to hear,
Or credit what we say in the Defence,
And Cause of our suspected Innocence.

Stan.

We are not guilty of your Injuries,
No way consenting to 'em; but abhor,
[75] Abominate, and loath this Cruelty.

Blan.

It is our Curse, but make it not our Crime.
A heavy curse upon us, that we must
Share any thing in common, ev'n the Light,
The Elements, and Seasons, with such Men,
Whose Principles, like the fam'd Dragons Teeth,
Scatter'd, and fown, wou'd shoot a Harvest up
Of fighting Mischiefs, to confound themselves,
And ruin all about 'em.

Stan.

Profligates!

Whose bold *Titanian* In piety

Wou'd once agen pollute their Mother Earth,
Force her to teem with her old monstrous Brood
Of Gyants, and forget the Race of Men.

Blan.

We are not so: believe us innocent.
We come prepar'd with all our Services,
To offer a Redress of your base Wrongs.
Which way shall we employ 'em?

Stan.

Tell us, Sir, if there is any thing that can attone;
But nothing can; that may be some amends—
Oro.

If you wou'd have me think you are not all
Confederates, all accessory to
The base Injustice of your Governour:
If you wou'd have me live, as you appear
Concern'd for me, if you wou'd have me live
[100] To thank, and bless you, there is yet a Way
To tye me ever to your honest Love:
Bring my *Imoinda* to me; give me her,
To charm my Sorrows, and, if possible,
I'll sit down with my Wrongs; never to rise
Against my Fate, or think of Vengeance more.

Blan.

Be satisfi'd, you may depend upon us,
We'll bring her safe to you, and suddenly.

Char.

We wonnot leave you in so good a work.

Wid.

No, no, we'll go with you.

Blan.

In the mean time
Endeavour to forget, Sir, and forgive:
And hope a better Fortune.

[Exeunt.]

Oroonoko alone.

Oro.

Forget! forgive! I must indeed forget,
When I forgive: but while I am a Man,
In Flesh, that bears the living mark of Shame,
The print of his dishonourable Chains,
My Memory still rousing up my Wrongs,
I never can forgive this Governour;
This Villain; the disgrace of Trust, and Place,
And just Contempt of delegated Power.
What shall I do? If I declare my self,
I know him, he will sneak behind his Guard

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Of Followers, and brave me in his Fears.
Else, Lyon like, with my devouring Rage,
[125] I wou'd rush on him, fasten on his Throat,
Tear wide a Passage to his treacherous Heart,
And that way lay him open to the World.

[Pausing.

If I shou'd turn his Christian Arts on him,
Promise him, speek him fair, flatter, and creep,
With fawning Steps, to get within his Faith,
I cou'd betray him then, as he has me.
But am I sure by that to right my self?
Lying's a certain Mark of Cowardise:
And when the Tongue forgets its Honesty,
The Heart and Hand may drop their functions too,
And nothing worthy be resolv'd, or done.
The Man must go together, bad, or good:
In one part frail, he soon grows weak in all.
Honour shou'd be concern'd in Honour's Cause,
That is not to be cur'd by Contraries,
As Bodies are, whose Health is often drawn
From rankest Poysons. Let me but find out
An honest Remedy, I have the Hand,
A ministring Hand, that will apply it Home.

Exit.

Scene

SCENE the Governour's House.

Enter Governour.

Gov.

I wou'd not have her tell me, she consents:
In Favour of the Sexes Modesty,
That still shou'd be presum'd, because there is
A greater Impudence in owning it,
Than in allowing all that we can do.
[150] This Truth I know, and yet against my self,
(So unaccountable are Lovers ways)
I talk, and lose the Opportunities,
Which Love, and she expects I shou'd employ:
Ev'n she expects: for when a Man has said
All that is fit, to save the Decency,
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The Women know the rest is to be done.
I wonnot disappoint her.

[Going

Enter to him Blanford, the Stanmores, Daniel, Mrs. Lackit, Charlot, and Lucy.

Wid.

O Governour! I'm glad we have lit upon you.
Gov.

Why! what's the Matter?
Char.

Nay, nothing extraordinary. But one good Action
Draws on another. You have given the Prince his Freedom:
Now we come a begging for his Wife:
You won't refuse us.
Gov.

Refuse you. No, no, what have I to do to refuse you?
Wid.

You won't refuse to send her to him, she means.
Gov.

I send her to him!
Wid.

We have promis'd him to bring her.
Gov.

You do very well; 'tis Kindly done of you:
Ev'n carry her to him, with all my Heart.

Luc.

You must tell us where she is.

Gov.

I tell you! why, don't you know?

Blan.

Your Servants say she's in the House.

Gov.

No, no, I brought her home at first indeed; but I thought it wou'd not look well to keep her here: I remov'd her [175] in the Hurry, only to take care of her. What! she belongs to you: I have nothing to do with her.

Char.

But where is she now, Sir?

Gov.

Why, Faith, I can't say certainly: you'll hear of her at *Parham* House, I suppose: there, or thereabouts: I think I sent her there.

Blan.

I'll have an Eye on him.

[Aside.

[Exeunt all but the Governour.

Gov.

I have ly'd my self into a little Time;
And must employ it: they'll be here agen;
But I must be before 'em.

[Going out, he meets Imoinda, and seises her.

Are you come!

I'll court no longer for a Happiness
That is in mine own keeping: you may still

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Refuse to grant, so I have Power to take.
The Man that asks deserves to be deny'd.

[She disengages one hand, and draws his Sword from his side upon him, Governour starts and retires, Blanford enters behind him.

Imo.

He does indeed, that asks unworthily.

Blan.

You hear her, Sir, that asks unworthily.

Gov.

You are no Judge.

Blan.

I am of my own Slave.

Gov.

Begone, and leave us.

Blan.

When you let her go.

Gov.

To fasten upon you.

Blan.

I must defend my self.

Imo.

Help, Murder, help.

[Imoinda retreats towards the door, favour'd by Blanford, when they are clos'd, she throws down the Sword, and runs out. Governour takes up the Smord, they fight, close, and fall, Blanford upon him. Servants enter, and part 'em.

Gov.

She shannot scape me so. I've gone too far,

[200] Not to go farther. Curse on my delay:

But yet she is, and shall be in my Power.

Blan.

Nay then it is the War of Honesty:

I know you, and will save you from your self.

Gov.

All come along with me.

[Exeunt.

Scene

SCENE the last.

Oroonoko Enters.

Oro.

To Honour bound! and yet a Slave to Love!
I am distracted by their rival Powers,
And both will be obey'd. O great Revenge!
Thou Raiser, and Restorer of faln Fame!
Let me not be unworthy of thy Aid,
For stopping in thy course: I still am thine:
But can't forget I am *Imoinda's* too.
She calls me from my Wrongs to rescue her.
No man condemn me, who has never felt

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A womans Power, or try'd the Force of Love:
All tempers yield, and soften in those fires:
Our Honours, Interests resolving down,
Run in the gentle Current of our Joys:
But not to sink, and drown our Memory:
We mount agen to Action, like the Sun,
That rises from the Bosom of the Sea,
To run his glorious Race of Light anew,
And carry on the World. Love, Love will be
My first Ambition, and my Fame the next.
Aboan enters bloody.

My Eyes are turn'd against me, and combine
[225] With my sworn Enemies, to represent
This spectacle of Honour. *Aboan!*
My ever faithful Friend!
Abo.

I have no Name,
That can distinguish me from the vile Earth,
To which I'm going: a poor, abject worm,
That crawl'd awhile upon a bustling World,
And now am trampled to my Dust agen.
Oro.

I see thee gasht, and mangled.
Abo.

Spare my shame
To tell how they have us'd me: but believe
The Hangman's Hand wou'd have been merciful.

Do not you scorn me, Sir, to think I can
Intend to live under this Infamy.
I do not come for pity, to complain.
I've spent an honourable Life with you;
The earliest Servant of your rising Fame,
And wou'd attend it with my latest care:
My life was yours, and so shall be my death.
You must not live.
Bending and sinking, I have dragg'd my Steps
Thus far, to tell you that you cannot live:
To warn you of those Ignominious wrongs,
Whips, Rods, and all the Instruments of death,
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Which I have felt, and are prepar'd for you.
[250] This was the Duty that I had to pay.
'Tis done, and now I beg to be discharg'd.
Oro.

What shall I do for thee?
Abo.

My Body tires,
And wonnot bear me off to Liberty:
I shall agen be taken, made a Slave.
A Sword, a Dagger yet wou'd rescue me.
I have not Strength to go to find out Death:
You must direct him to me.
Oro.

Here he is,
[Gives him a Daggar.]

The only present I can make thee now:
And next the honourable means of Life,
I wou'd bestow the honest means of Death.
Abo.

I cannot stay to thank you. If there is
A Being after this, I shall be yours
In the next World, your faithful Slave agen.
This is to try
[Stabs himself.]
I had a living Sense
Of all your royal Favours, but this last
Strikes through my Heart. I wonnot say farewell,
For you must follow me.

[dyes.

Oro.

In Life, and death,
The Guardian of my Honour! follow thee!
I shou'd have gone before thee: then perhaps
Thy Fate had been prevented. All his Care
Was to preserve me from the barbarous Rage
[275] That wrong'd him, only for being mine.
Why, why, you Gods! Why am I so accurst,
That it must be a Reason of your Wrath,
A Guilt, a Crime sufficient to the Fate
Of any one, but to belong to me?
Ny Friend has sound it, and my Wife will soon:
My Wife! the very Fear's too much for Life:
I can't support it. Where? *Imoinda!* Oh!

[Going out, she meets him, running into his Arms.

Thou bosom Softness! Down of all my Cares!
I cou'd recline my thoughts upon this Breast
To a forgetfulness of all my Griefs,
[\[Page 77\]](#)

And yet be happy: but it wonnot be.
Thou art disorder'd, pale, and out of Breath!
If Fate pursues thee, find a shelter here.
What is it thou woud'st tell me?
Imo.

'Tis in vain to call him Villain.
Oro.

Call him Governour: is it not so?
Imo.

There's not another sure.
Oro.

Villain's the common name of Mankind here:
But his most properly. What! what of him?
I fear to be resolv'd, and must enquire.
He had thee in his Power.
Imo.

I blush to think it.
Oro.

Blush! to think what?

Imo.

That I was in his Power.

Oro.

[300] He cou'd not use it?

Imo.

What can't such men do?

Oro.

But did he? durst he?

Imo.

What he cou'd, he dar'd.

Oro.

His own Gods damn him then: for ours have none,
No Punishment for such unheard-of Crimes.

Imo.

This Monster, cunning in his Flatteries,
When he had weary'd all his useless Arts,
Leapt out, fierce as a beast of prey, to seize me.
I trembled, fear'd.

Oro.

I fear, and tremble now.

What cou'd preserve thee? what deliver thee?

Imo.

That worthy Man, you us'd to call your Friend—

Oro.

Blanford.

Imo.

Came in, and sav'd me from his Rage.

Oro.

He was a Friend indeed to rescue thee!
And for his sake, I'll think it possible
A Christian may be yet an honest man.

Imo.

O! did you know what I have struggl'd through,
To save me yours, sure you wou'd promise me
Never to see me forc't from you agen.

Oro.

To promise thee! O! do I need to promise?
But there is now no farther use of Words.
Death is security for all our fears.

[Shews Aboan's body on the floor.

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And yet I cannot trust him.

Imo.

[325] *Aboan!*

Oro.

Mangled, and torn, resolv'd to give me time
To fit my self for what I must expect,
Groan'd out a warning to me, and expir'd.

Imo.

For what you must expect?

Oro.

Wou'd that were all.

Imo.

What! to be butcher'd thus—

Oro.

Just as thou see'st.

Imo.

By barbarous Hands, to fall at last their Prey!

Oro.

I have run the Race with Honour, shall I now
Lag, and be overtaken at the Goal?

Imo.

No.

Oro.

I must look back to thee.

[Tenderly.

Imo.

You shannot need.

I'm always present to your purpose, say,
Which way wou'd you dispose me?

Oro.

Have a care,
Thou'rt on a Precipice, and dost not see
Whither that question leads thee. O! too soon
Thou dost enquire what the assembled Gods
Have not determin'd, and will latest doom.
Yet this I know of Fate, this is most certain,
I cannot, as I wou'd, dispose of thee:
And, as I ought, I dare not. Oh *Imoinda!*
Imo.

Alas! that sigh! why do you tremble so?
[350] Nay then 'tis bad indeed, if you can weep.
Oro.

My Heart runs over, if my gushing Eyes
Betray a weakness which they never knew,
Believe, thou, only thou cou'dst cause these tears.
The Gods themselves conspire with faithless Men
To our destruction.
Imo.

Heaven and Earth our Foes!
Oro.

It is not always granted to the great,
To be most happy: If the angry Pow'rs
Repent their Favours, let 'em take 'em back:
The hopes of Empire, which they gave my youth,
By making me a Prince, I here resign.

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Let 'em quench in me all those glorious Fires,
Which kindled at their beams: that lust of Fame,
That Fevor of Ambition, restless still,
And burning with the sacred Thirst of Sway,
Which they inspir'd, to qualifie my Fate,
And make me fit to govern under them,
Let 'em extinguish. I submit my self
To their high pleasure, and devoted Bow

Yet lower, to continue still a Slave;
Hopeless of liberty: and if I cou'd
Live after it, wou'd give up Honour too,
To satisfie their Vengeance, to avert
This only Curse, the curse of losing thee.

Imo.

[375] If Heav'n cou'd be appeas'd, these cruel Men
Are not to be entreated, or believ'd:
O! think on that, and be no more deceiv'd.

Oro.

What can we do?

Imo.

Can I do any thing?

Oro.

But we were born to suffer.

Imo.

Suffer both,
Both die, and so prevent 'em.

Oro.

By thy Death!

O! let me hunt my travel'd Thoughts again;
Range the wide waste of desolate despair;
Start any hope. Alas! I lose my self,
'Tis Pathless, Dark, and Barren all to me.
Thou art my only guide, my light of Life,
And thou art leaving me: Send out thy Beams
Upon the Wing; let 'em fly all around,
Discover every way: Is there a dawn,
A glimmering of comfort? the great God,
That rises on the World, must shine on us.

Imo.

And see us set before him.

Oro.

Thou bespeak'st, and goes before me.

Imo.

So I wou'd, in Love:

In the dear unsuspected part of Life,
In Death for Love. Alas! what hopes for me?

I was preserv'd but to acquit my self,

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[400] To beg to die with you.

Oro.

And can'st thou ask it?

I never durst enquire into my self

About thy fate, and thou resolv'st it all.

Imo.

Alas! my Lord! my Fate's resolv'd in yours.

Oro.

O! keep thee there: Let not thy Virtue shrink

From my support, and I will gather strength,

Fast as I can to tell thee—

Imo.

I must die.

I know 'tis fit, and I can die with you.

Oro.

O! thou hast banisht hence a thousand fears,

Which sickned at my Heart, and quite unman'd me.

Imo.

Your fear's for me, I know you fear'd my strength,

And cou'd not overcome your tenderness,

To pass this Sentence on me: and indeed

There you were kind, as I have always found you,

As you have ever been: for tho' I am

Resign'd, and ready to obey my doom,

Methinks it shou'd not be pronounc'd by you.

Oro.

O! that was all the labour of my grief.

My heart, and tongue forsook me in the strife:

I never cou'd pronounce it.

Imo.

I have for you, for both of us.

Oro.

Alas! for me! my death

I cou'd regard as the last Scene of life,

[425] And act it thro' with joy, to have it done.

But then to part with thee—

Imo.

'Tis hard to part.

But parting thus, as the most happy must,

Parting in death, makes it the easier.

You might have thrown me off, forsaken me,

And my misfortunes: that had been a death

Indeed of terror, to have trembled at.

Oro.

Forsaken! thrown thee off!

Imo.

But 'tis a pleasure more than life can give,

That with unconquer'd Passion to the last,

You struggle still, and fain wou'd hold me to you.

Oro.

Ever, ever, and let those stars, which are my Enemies,

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Witness against me in the other World,

If I wou'd leave this Mansion of my Bliss,

To be the brightest Ruler of their Skies.

O! that we cou'd incorporate, be one,

[Embracing her.]

One Body, as we have been long one Mind:

That blended so, we might together mix,

And losing thus our Beings to the World,

Be only found to one anothers Joys.

Imo.

Is this the way to part?

Oro.

Which is the way?

Imo.

The God of Love is blind, and cannot find it.

But quick, make haste, our Enemies have Eyes

[450] To find us out, and shew us the worst way

Of parting; think on them.

Oro.

Why dost thou wake me?

Imo.

O! no more of Love.
For if I listen to you, I shall quite
Forget my Dangers, and desire to live.
I can't live yours.

[Takes up the Dagger.

Oro.

There all the Stings of Death
Are shot into my Heart—what shall I do?
Imo.

This Dagger will instruct you.

[Gives it him

Oro.

Ha! this Dagger!
Like Fate, it points me to the horrid Deed.
Imo.

Strike, strike it home, and bravely save us both.
There is no other Safety,
Oro.

It must be—
But first a dying Kiss—

[Kisses her.

This last Embrace—

[Embracing her.

And now—

Imo.

I'm ready.

Oro.

O! where shall I strike?
Is there a smallest grain of that lov'd Body
That is not dearer to me than my Eyes,
My bosom'd Heart, and all the live Blood there?
Bid me cut off these Limbs, hew off these Hands,
Dig out these Eyes, tho' I wou'd keep them last
[475] To gaze upon thee: but to murder thee!

The Joy, and Charm of every ravisht Sense,
My Wife! forbid it Nature.

Imo.

Tis your Wife,
Who on her knees conjures you. O! in time
Prevent those Mischeifs that are falling on us.
You may be hurry'd to a shameful Death,
And I too drag'd to the vile Governour:
Then I may cry aloud: when you are gone,
Where shall I find a Friend agen to save me?

Oro.

It will be so. Thou unexampled Virtue!
Thy Resolution has recover'd mine:
And now prepare thee.

Imo.

Thus with open Arms,
I welcome you, and Death.

[He drops his Dagger as he looks on her, and throws himself on the Ground.]

Oro.

I cannot bear it.
O let me dash against this Rock of Fate.
Dig up this Earth, tear, tear her Bowels out,
To make a Grave, deep as the Center down,
To swallow wide, and bury us together.
It wonnot be. O! then some pitying God
(If there be one a Friend to Innocence)
Find yet a way to lay her Beauties down
Gently in Death, and save me from her Blood.

Imo.

O rise, 'tis more than Death to see you thus.
[500] I'll ease your Love, and do the Deed my self—

[She takes up the Dagger, he rises in haste to take it from her.]

Oro.

O! hold, I charge thee, hold.

Imo.

Tho' I must own

It wou'd be nobler for us both from you.

Oro.

O! for a Whirlwind's Wing to hurry us
To yonder Clif, which frowns upon the Flood:
That in Embraces lockt we might plunge in,
And perish thus in one anothers Arms.

Imo.

Alas! what shout is that?

Oro.

I see 'em coming.
They shannot overtake us. This last Kiss.

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And now farewell.

Imo.

Farewel, farewell for ever.

Oro.

I'le turn my Face away, and do it so.
Now, are you ready?

Imo.

Now. But do not grudge me
The Pleasure in my Death of a last look,
Pray look upon me—Now I'm satisfied.

Oro.

So Fate must be by this

[Going to stab her, he stops short, she lays her hands on his, in order to give the blow.]

Imo.

Nay then I must assist you.
And since it is the common Cause of both,
'Tis just that both shou'd be employ'd in it.
Thus, thus 'tis finisht, and I bless my Fate,
[Stabs her self.]

That where I liv'd, I die, in these lov'd Arms.

[Dyes.]

Oro.

She's gone. And now all's at an End with me.

[525] Soft, lay her down. O we will part no more.

[Throws himself by her.

But let me pay the tribute of my Grief,
A few sad Tears to thy lov'd Memory,
And then I follow—

[Weeps over her.

But I stay too long.

[A noise agen.

The Noise comes nearer. Hold, before I go,
There's something wou'd be done. It shall be so.
And then, *Imoinda*, I'll come all to thee.

[Rises.

[Blanford, and his party, enters before the Governour and his party, Swords drawn on both sides.

Gov.

You strive in vain to save him, he shall die.

Blan.

Not while we can defend him with our lives.

Gov.

Where is he?

Oro.

Here's the Wretch whom you wou'd have.

Put up your Swords, and let civil broils
Engage you in the cursed cause of one,
Who cannot live, and now entreats to die.
This object will convince you.

Blan.

'Tis his Wife!

[They gather about the Body.

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Alas! there was no other Remedy.

Gov.

Who did the bloody Deed?

Oro.

The Deed was mine:

Bloody I know it is, and I expect

Your Laws shou'd tell me so. Thus self-condemn'd,

I do resign my self into your Hands,

The Hands of Justice—But I hold the Sword

For you—and for my self.

[Stabs the Governour, and himself, then throws himself by Imoinda's Body.]

Stan.

[550] He has kill'd the Governour, and stab'd himself.

Oro.

'Tis as it shou'd be now. I have sent his Ghost

To be a Witness of that Happiness

In the next World, which he deny'd us here.

[Dyes.]

Blan.

I hope there is a place of Happiness

In the next World for such exalted Virtue.

Pagan, or Unbeliever, yet he liv'd

To all he knew: And if he went astray,

There's Mercy still above to set him right.

But Christians guided by the Heavenly Ray,

Have no excuse if we mistake our Way.

Back matter

FINIS.

[Page]

EPILOGE, Written by Mr. Congreve, and Spoken by Mrs. Verbruggen. [By Congreve, Mr.]

You see, we try all Shapes, and Shifts, and Arts,

To tempt your Favours, and regain your Hearts.

We weep, and laugh, joyn mirth and grief together,

Like Rain and Sunshine mixt, in April weather.

Your different tastes divide our Poet's Cares:

One foot the Sock, t'other the Buskins wears:

Thus, while he strives to please, he's forc'd to do't,

Like Volscius, hip-hop, in a single Boot.
Criticks, he knows, for this may damn his Books:
But he makes Feasts for Friends, and not for Cooks.
Tho' Errant-Knights of late no favour find,
Sure you will be to Ladies-Errant kind.
To follow Fame, Knights-Errant make profession:
We Damsels flye, to save our Reputation:
So they, their Valour show, we, our Discretion.
To Lands of Monsters, and fierce Beasts they go:
Wee, to those Islands, where Rich Husbands grow:
Tho' they're no Monsters, we may make 'em so.
If they're of English growth, they'll bear't with patience
But save us from a Spouse of Oroonoko's Nations!
Then bless your Stars, you happy London Wives,
Who love at large, each day, yet keep your lives:
[\[Page \]](#)

Nor envy poor Imoinda's doating blindness,
Who thought her Husband kill'd her out of kindness.
Death with a Husband ne'er had shewn such Charms,
Had she once dy'd within—Lover's Arms.
Her error was from ignorance proceeding:
Poor Soul! she wanted some of our Town Breeding.
Forgive this Indians fondness of her Spouse;
Their Law no Christian Liberty allows:
Alas! they make a Conscience of their Vows!
If Virtue in a Heathen be a fault;
Then Damn the Heathen School, where she was taught.
She might have learn'd to Cuckold, Jilt, and Sham,
Had Covent-Garden been in Surinam.

FINIS.

NOTES

1 1 PLAN 1. PLAN 2 PLAN 2. PLAN 3 PLAN 4 PLAN ABO BLAN BOY CAP CAPT CAPT., PLAN CHAR CHAR., LUCY
 DAN GOV HOTT IMO J. STAN LUC OM OM. PLAN OMN ORO SERV SLAV SLAVE SLAVES STAN VVID WELL WID
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