

**BEAUMONT FRANCIS, FLETCHER
JOHN**

THE MAIDS TRAGEDY

John Fletcher
Francis Beaumont
The Maids Tragedy

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The Maids Tragedy:

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Francis Beaumont The Maids Tragedy

THE MAIDS TRAGEDY

Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

Persons Represented in the Play

King.

Lysippus, *brother to the King.*

Amintor, *a Noble Gentleman.*

Evadne, *Wife to Amintor.*

Malantius }

Diphilius } *Brothers to Evadne.*

Aspatia, *troth-plight wife to Amnitor.*

Calianax, *an old humorous Lord, and
Father to Aspatia.*

Cleon }

Strato } *Gentlemen.*

Diagoras, *a Servant.*

Antiphila }

Olympias } *waiting Gentlewomen to Aspatia.*

Dula, *a Lady.*

Night }

Cynthia }

Neptune }

Eolus } *Masks.*

* * * * *

Actus primus. Scena prima

Enter *Cleon, Strato, Lysippus, Diphilus.*

Cleon. The rest are making ready Sir.

Strat. So let them, there's time enough.

Diph. You are the brother to the King, my Lord, we'll take your word.

Lys. Strato, thou hast some skill in Poetry, What thinkst thou of a Mask? will it be well?

Strat. As well as Mask can be.

Lys. As Mask can be?

Strat. Yes, they must commend their King, and speak in praise of the Assembly, bless the Bride and Bridegroom, in person of some God; th'are tyed to rules of flattery.

Cle. See, good my Lord, who is return'd!

Lys. Noble *Melantius!*

[Enter Melantius.

The Land by me welcomes thy vertues home to *Rhodes*, thou that with blood abroad buyest us our peace; the breath of King is like the breath of Gods; My brother wisht thee here, and thou art here; he will be too kind, and weary thee with often welcomes; but the time doth give thee a welcome above this or all the worlds.

Mel. My Lord, my thanks; but these scratcht limbs of mine have spoke my love and truth unto my friends, more than my tongue ere could: my mind's the same it ever was to you; where I find worth, I love the keeper, till he let it go, And then I follow it.

Diph. Hail worthy brother!

He that rejoyces not at your return
In safety, is mine enemy for ever.

Mel. I thank thee *Diphilus*: but thou art faulty;

I sent for thee to exercise thine armes
With me at *Patria*: thou cam'st not *Diphilus*: 'Twas
ill.

Diph. My noble brother, my excuse

Is my King's strict command, which you my Lord
Can witness with me.

Lys. 'Tis true *Melantius*,

He might not come till the solemnity
Of this great match were past.

Diph. Have you heard of it?

Mel. Yes, I have given cause to those that
 Envy my deeds abroad, to call me gamesome;
 I have no other business here at *Rhodes*.

Lys. We have a Mask to night,
 And you must tread a Soldiers measure.

Mel. These soft and silken wars are not for me;
 The Musick must be shrill, and all confus'd,
 That stirs my blood, and then I dance with armes:
 But is *Amintor* Wed?

Diph. This day.

Mel. All joyes upon him, for he is my friend:
 Wonder not that I call a man so young my friend,
 His worth is great; valiant he is, and temperate,
 And one that never thinks his life his own,
 If his friend need it: when he was a boy,
 As oft as I return'd (as without boast)
I brought home conquest, he would gaze upon me,
 And view me round, to find in what one limb
 The vertue lay to do those things he heard:
 Then would he wish to see my Sword, and feel
 The quickness of the edge, and in his hand
 Weigh it; he oft would make me smile at this;

His youth did promise much, and his ripe years
Will see it all perform'd.

[Enter Aspatia, passing by.]

Melan. Hail Maid and Wife!

Thou fair *Aspatia*, may the holy knot
That thou hast tyed to day, last till the hand
Of age undo't; may'st thou bring a race
Unto *Amintor* that may fill the world
Successively with Souldiers.

Asp. My hard fortunes

Deserve not scorn; for I was never proud
When they were good.

[Exit Aspatia.]

Mel. How's this?

Lys. You are mistaken, for she is not married.

Mel. You said *Amintor* was.

Diph. 'Tis true; but

Mel. Pardon me, I did receive

Letters at *Patria*, from my *Amintor*,

That he should marry her.

Diph. And so it stood,
In all opinion long; but your arrival
Made me imagine you had heard the change.

Mel. Who hath he taken then?

Lys. A Lady Sir,
That bears the light above her, and strikes dead
With flashes of her eye; the fair *Evadne* your
vertuous Sister.

Mel. Peace of heart betwixt them: but this is strange.

Lys. The King my brother did it
To honour you; and these solemnities
Are at his charge.

Mel. 'Tis Royal, like himself;
But I am sad, my speech bears so unfortunate
a sound

To beautiful *Aspatia*; there is rage
Hid in her fathers breast; *Calianax*
Bent long against me, and he should not think,
If I could call it back, that I would take
So base revenges, as to scorn the state
Of his neglected daughter: holds he still his greatness
with the King?

Lys. Yes; but this Lady

Walks discontented, with her watry eyes
Bent on the earth: the unfrequented woods
Are her delight; and when she sees a bank
Stuck full of flowers, she with a sigh will tell
Her servants what a pretty place it were
To bury lovers in, and make her maids
Pluck'em, and strow her over like a Corse.
She carries with her an infectious grief
That strikes all her beholders, she will sing
The mournful'st things that ever ear hath heard,
And sigh, and sing again, and when the rest
Of our young Ladies in their wanton blood,
Tell mirthful tales in course that fill the room
With laughter, she will with so sad a look
Bring forth a story of the silent death
Of some forsaken Virgin, which her grief
Will put in such a phrase, that ere she end,
She'l send them weeping one by one away.

Mel. She has a brother under my command

Like her, a face as womanish as hers,
But with a spirit that hath much out-grown
The number of his years.

[Enter Amintor.]

Cle. My Lord the Bridegroom!

Mel. I might run fiercely, not more hastily

Upon my foe: I love thee well *Amintor*,
My mouth is much too narrow for my heart;
I joy to look upon those eyes of thine;
Thou art my friend, but my disorder'd speech cuts off
my love.

Amin. Thou art *Melantius*;

All love is spoke in that, a sacrifice
To thank the gods, *Melantius* is return'd
In safety; victory sits on his sword
As she was wont; may she build there and dwell,
And may thy Armour be as it hath been,
Only thy valour and thy innocence.
What endless treasures would our enemies give,
That I might hold thee still thus!

Mel. I am but poor in words, but credit me young man,

Thy Mother could no more but weep, for joy
to see thee

After long absence; all the wounds I have,
Fetch not so much away, nor all the cries
Of Widowed Mothers: but this is peace;
And what was War?

Amin. Pardon thou holy God

Of Marriage bed, and frown not, I am forc't

In answer of such noble tears as those,
To weep upon my Wedding day.

Mel. I fear thou art grown too sick; for I hear
A Lady mourns for thee, men say to death,
Forsaken of thee, on what terms I know not.

Amin. She had my promise, but the King forbad it,
And made me make this worthy change, thy Sister
Accompanied with graces above her,
With whom I long to lose my lusty youth,
And grow old in her arms.

Mel. Be prosperous.

[Enter Messenger.

Messen. My Lord, the Maskers rage for you.

Lys. We are gone. *Cleon, Strata, Diphilus.*

Amin. Wee'll all attend you, we shall trouble you
With our solemnities.

Mel. Not so *Amintor*.
But if you laugh at my rude carriage
In peace, I'll do as much for you in War
When you come thither: yet I have a Mistress

To bring to your delights; rough though I am,
I have a Mistress, and she has a heart,
She saies, but trust me, it is stone, no better,
There is no place that I can challenge in't.
But you stand still, and here my way lies.

[Exit.

Enter Calianax with Diagoras.

Cal. *Diagoras*, look to the doors better for shame, you let in
all the world, and anon the King will rail at me; why very well
said, by *Jove* the King will have the show i'th' Court.

Diag. Why do you swear so my Lord? You know he'l have
it here.

Cal. By this light if he be wise he will not.

Diag. And if he will not be wise, you are forsworn.

Cal. One may wear his heart out with swearing, and get thanks
on no side, I'll be gone, look to't who will.

Diag. My Lord, I will never keep them out.

Pray stay, your looks will terrifie them.

Cal. My looks terrifie them, you Coxcomby Ass you! I'll be
judg'd by all the company whether thou hast not a worse face

than I—

Diag. I mean, because they know you and your Office.

Cal. Office! I would I could put it off, I am sure I sweat quite through my Office, I might have made room at my Daughters Wedding, they had near kill'd her among them. And now I must do service for him that hath forsaken her; serve that will. [*Exit Calianax.*]

Diag. He's so humourous since his daughter was forsaken:
hark, hark, there, there, so, so, codes, codes.
What now?

[*Within. knock within.*]

Mel. Open the door.

Diag. Who's there?

Mel. *Melantius.*

Diag. I hope your Lordship brings no troop with you,
for if you do, I must return them.

[*Enter Melantius.*]

Mel. None but this Lady Sir. [*And a Lady.*]

Diag. The Ladies are all plac'd above, save those that
come in the Kings Troop, the best of *Rhodes* sit there,
and there's room.

Mel. I thank you Sir: when I have seen you plac'd
Madam, I must attend the King; but the Mask
done, I'll
wait on you again.

Diag. Stand back there, room for my Lord *Melantius*, pray
bear back, this is no place for such youths and their Truls, let the
doors shut agen; I, do your heads itch? I'll scratch them for you:
so now thrust and hang: again, who is't now? I cannot blame my
Lord *Calianax* for going away; would he were here, he would run
raging among them, and break a dozen wiser heads than his own
in the twinkling of an eye: what's the news now?

[Within.

I pray can you help me to the speech of the Master Cook?

Diag. If I open the door I'll cook some of your Calvesheads.
Peace Rogues.—again,—who is't?

Mel. *Melantius* within. Enter *Calianax* to *Melantius*.

Cal. Let him not in.

Diag. O my Lord I must; make room there for my
Lord; is your Lady plac't?

Mel. Yes Sir, I thank you my Lord *Calianax*: well met,
Your causless hate to me I hope is buried.

Cal. Yes, I do service for your Sister here, That brings my own
poor Child to timeless death; She loves your friend *Amintor*, such
another false-hearted Lord as you.

Mel. You do me wrong, A most unmanly one, and I am slow
In taking vengeance, but be well advis'd.

Cal. It may be so: who placed the Lady there so near the
presence of the King?

Mel. I did.

Cal. My Lord she must not sit there.

Mel. Why?

Cal. The place is kept for women of more worth.

Mel. More worth than she? it mis-becomes your Age
And place to be thus womanish; forbear;
What you have spoke, I am content to think
The Palsey shook your tongue to.

Cal. Why 'tis well if I stand here to place mens wenches.

Mel. I shall forget this place, thy Age, my safety, and through all, cut that poor sickly week thou hast to live, away from thee.

Cal. Nay, I know you can fight for your Whore.

Mel. Bate the King, and be he flesh and blood, He lyes that saies it, thy mother at fifteen Was black and sinful to her.

Diag. Good my Lord!

Mel. Some god pluck threescore years from that fond man,
That I may kill him, and not stain mine honour;
It is the curse of Souldiers, that in peace
They shall be brain'd by such ignoble men,
As (if the Land were troubled) would with tears
And knees beg succour from 'em: would that blood
(That sea of blood) that I have lost in fight,
Were running in thy veins, that it might make thee
Apt to say less, or able to maintain,
Shouldst thou say more,—This *Rhodes* I see is nought
But a place priviledg'd to do men wrong.

Cal. I, you may say your pleasure.

[Enter Amintor.]

Amint. What vilde injury

Has stirr'd my worthy friend, who is as slow
To fight with words, as he is quick of hand?

Mel. That heap of age which I should reverence

If it were temperate: but testy years
Are most contemptible.

Amint. Good Sir forbear.

Cal. There is just such another as your self.

Amint. He will wrong you, or me, or any man,

And talk as if he had no life to lose
Since this our match: the King is coming in,
I would not for more wealth than I enjoy,
He should perceive you raging, he did hear
You were at difference now, which hastned him.

Cal. Make room there.

Hoboyes play within.

Enter King, Evadne, Aspatia, Lords and Ladies.

King. *Melantius*, thou art welcome, and my love Is with thee still; but this is not a place To brabble in; *Calianax*, joyn hands.

Cal. He shall not have my hand.

King. This is no time

To force you to't, I do love you both:

Calianax, you look well to your Office;

And you *Melantius* are welcome home; begin
the Mask.

Mel. Sister, I joy to see you, and your choice,

You lookt with my eyes when you took that man;

Be happy in him.

[Recorders.]

Evad. O my dearest brother! Your presence is more joyful
than this day can be unto me.

The Mask.

Night rises in mists.

Nigh. Our raign is come; for in the raging Sea

The Sun is drown'd, and with him fell the day:

Bright *Cynthia* hear my voice, I am the Night

For whom thou bear'st about thy borrowed light;

Appear, no longer thy pale visage shrowd,

But strike thy silver horn through a cloud,

And send a beam upon my swarthy face,

By which I may discover all the place

And persons, and how many longing eyes
Are come to wait on our solemnities.

[Enter Cinthia.

How dull and black am I! I could not find
This beauty without thee, I am so blind;
Methinks they shew like to those Eastern streaks
That warn us hence before the morning breaks;
Back my pale servant, for these eyes know how
To shoot far more and quicker rayes than thou.

Cinth. Great Queen, they be a Troop for whom alone
One of my clearest moons I have put on;
A Troop that looks as if thy self and I
Had pluckt our rains in, and our whips laid by
To gaze upon these Mortals, that appear
Brighter than we.

Night. Then let us keep 'em here,
And never more our Chariots drive away,
But hold our places, and out-shine the day.

Cinth. Great Queen of shadows, you are
pleas'd to speak
Of more than may be done; we may not break
The gods decrees, but when our time is come,
Must drive away and give the day our room.
Yet whil'st our raign lasts, let us stretch our power
To give our servants one contented hour,

With such unwonted solemn grace and state,
As may for ever after force them hate
Our brothers glorious beams, and wish the night
Crown'd with a thousand stars, and our cold light:
For almost all the world their service bend
To *Phoebus* and in vain my light I lend,
Gaz'd on unto my setting from my rise
Almost of none, but of unquiet eyes.

Nigh. Then shine at full, fair Queen, and by thy power
Produce a birth to crown this happy hour;
Of Nymphs and Shepherds let their songs discover,
Easie and sweet, who is a happy Lover;
Or if thou woot, then call thine own *Endymion*
From the sweet flowry bed he lies upon,
On *Latmus* top, thy pale beams drawn away,
And of this long night let him make a day.

Cinth. Thou dream'st dark Queen, that fair boy was not mine,
Nor went I down to kiss him; ease and wine
Have bred these bold tales; Poets when they rage,
Turn gods to men, and make an hour an age;
But I will give a greater state and glory,
And raise to time a noble memory
Of what these Lovers are; rise, rise, I say,
Thou power of deeps, thy surges laid away,
Neptune great King of waters, and by me
Be proud to be commanded.

[Neptune rises.]

Nep. *Cinthia*, see, Thy word hath fetcht me hither, let me know why I ascend.

Cinth. Doth this majestick show
Give thee no knowledge yet?

Nep. Yes, now I see.
Something intended (*Cinthia*) worthy thee;
Go on, I'll be a helper.

Cinth. Hie thee then,
And charge the wind flie from his Rockie Den.
Let loose thy subjects, only *Boreas*
Too foul for our intention as he was;
Still keep him fast chain'd; we must have none here
But vernal blasts, and gentle winds appear,
Such as blow flowers, and through the glad
Boughs sing
Many soft welcomes to the lusty spring.
These are our musick: next, thy watry race
Bring on in couples; we are pleas'd to grace
This noble night, each in their richest things
Your own deeps or the broken vessel brings;
Be prodigal, and I shall be as kind,
And shine at full upon you.

Nep. Ho the wind
Commanding *Eolus*!

[Enter Eolus out of a Rock.

Eol. Great *Neptune*!

Nep. He.

Eol. What is thy will?

Nep. We do command thee free *Favonius* and thy milder winds to wait Upon our *Cinthia*, but tye *Boreas* straight; He's too rebellious.

Eol. I shall do it.

Nep. Do, great master of the flood, and all below,
Thy full command has taken.

Eol. Ho! the main;
Neptune.

Nep. Here.

Eol. *Boreas* has broke his chain,
And struggling with the rest, has got away.

Nep. Let him alone, I'll take him up at sea;
He will not long be thence; go once again
And call out of the bottoms of the Main,
Blew *Proteus*, and the rest; charge them put on
Their greatest pearls, and the most sparkling stone
The bearing Rock breeds, till this night is done
By me a solemn honour to the Moon;
Flie like a full sail.

Eol. I am gone.

Cin. Dark night,
Strike a full silence, do a thorow right
To this great *Chorus*, that our Musick may
Touch high as heaven, and make the East break day
At mid-[n]ight.

[Musick.

SONG

*Cinthia to thy power, and them we obey.
Joy to this great company, and no day
Come to steal this night away,
Till the rites of love are ended,
And the lusty Bridegroom say,
Welcome light of all befriended.*

*Pace out you watry powers below, let your feet
Like the Gallies when they row, even beat.
Let your unknown measures set
To the still winds, tell to all
That Gods are come immortal great,
To honour this great Nuptial.*

The Measure. Second Song.

*Hold back thy hours dark night, till we have done,
The day will come too soon;
Young Maids will curse thee if thou steal'st away,
And leav'st their blushes open to the day.
Stay, stay, and hide the blushes of the Bride.
Stay gentle night, and with thy darkness cover
The kisses of her Lover.
Stay, and confound her tears, and her shrill cryings,
Her weak denials, vows, and often dyings;
Stay and hide all, but help not though she
call.*

Nep. Great Queen of us and Heaven,
Hear what I bring to make this hour a full one,
If not her measure.

Cinth. Speak Seas King.

Nep. Thy tunes my *Amphitrite* joyes to have,
When they will dance upon the rising wave,

And court me as the sails, my *Trytons* play
Musick to lead a storm, I'll lead the way.

Song. Measure.

_To bed, to bed; come Hymen, lead the Bride,
And lay her by her Husbands side:
Bring in the Virgins every one
That grieve to lie alone:
That they may kiss while they may say, a maid,
To morrow 'twill be other, kist and said:
Hesperus be long a shining,
Whilst these Lovers are a twining_.

Eol. Ho! *Neptune!*

Nept. *Eolus!*

Eol. The Seas go hie,
Boreas hath rais'd a storm; go and applie
Thy trident, else I prophesie, ere day
Many a tall ship will be cast away:
Descend with all the Gods, and all their power to
strike a cal[m].

Cin. A thanks to every one, and to gratulate
So great a service done at my desire,
Ye shall have many floods fuller and higher
Than you have wisht for; no Ebb shall dare

To let the day see where your dwellings are:
Now back unto your Government in haste,
Lest your proud charge should swell above the waste,
And win upon the Island.

Nep. We obey.

[Neptune descends, and the Sea-gods.

Cinth. Hold up thy head dead night; seest thou not day?
The East begins to lighten, I must down
And give my brother place.

Nigh. Oh! I could frown
To see the day, the day that flings his light
Upon my Kingdoms, and contemns old Night;
Let him go on and flame, I hope to see
Another wild-fire in his Axletree;
And all false drencht; but I forgot, speak Queen.
The day grows on I must no more be seen.

Cin. Heave up thy drowsie head agen, and see
A greater light, a greater Majestie,
Between our sect and us; whip up thy team;
The day breaks here, and you some flashing stream
Shot from the South; say, which way wilt thou go?

Nigh. I'll vanish into mists. [*Exeunt.*

Cin. I into day. [*Finis Mask.*

King. Take lights there Ladies, get the Bride to bed;
We will not see you laid, good night *Amintor*,
We'l ease you of that tedious ceremony;
Were it [my] case, I should think time run slow.
If thou beest noble, youth, get me a boy,
That may defend my Kingdom from my foes.

Amin. All happiness to you.

King. Good night *Melantius*. [*Exeunt.*

Actus Secundus

Enter Evadne, Aspatia, Dula, and other Ladies.

Dul. Madam, shall we undress you for this fight?
The Wars are nak'd that you must make to night.

Evad. You are very merry *Dula*.

Dul. I should be far merrier Madam, if it were with me as it is with you.

Eva. Why how now wench?

Dul. Come Ladies will you help?

Eva. I am soon undone.

Dul. And as soon done: Good store of Cloaths will trouble you at both.

Evad. Art thou drunk *Dula*?

Dul. Why here's none but we.

Evad. Thou think'st belike, there is no modesty When we are alone.

Dul. I by my troth you hit my thoughts aright.

Evad. You prick me Lady.

Dul. 'Tis against my will,

Anon you must endure more, and lie still.
You're best to practise.

Evad. Sure this wench is mad.

Dul. No faith, this is a trick that I have had Since I was fourteen.

Evad. 'Tis high time to leave it.

Dul. Nay, now I'll keep it till the trick leave me;

A dozen wanton words put in your head,
Will make you lively in your Husbands bed.

Evad. Nay faith, then take it.

Dul. Take it Madam, where? We all I hope will take it that are here.

Evad. Nay then I'll give you o're.

Dul. So will I make

The ablest man in *Rhodes*, or his heart to ake.

Evad. Wilt take my place to night?

Dul. I'll hold your Cards against any two I know.

Evad. What wilt thou do?

Dul. Madam, we'll do't, and make'm leave play too.

Evad. *Aspatia*, take her part.

Dul. I will refuse it.

She will pluck down a side, she does not use it.

Evad. Why, do.

Dul. You will find the play

Quickly, because your head lies well that way.

Evad. I thank thee *Dula*, would thou could'st instill

Some of thy mirth into *Aspatia*:

Nothing but sad thoughts in her breast do dwell,

Methinks a mean betwixt you would do well.

Dul. She is in love, hang me if I were so,

But I could run my Country, I love too

To do those things that people in love do.

Asp. It were a timeless smile should prove my cheek,

It were a fitter hour for me to laugh,
When at the Altar the Religious Priest
Were pacifying the offended powers
With sacrifice, than now, this should have been
My night, and all your hands have been employed
In giving me a spotless offering
To young *Amintors* bed, as we are now
For you: pardon *Evadne*, would my worth
Were great as yours, or that the King, or he,
Or both thought so, perhaps he found me worthless,
But till he did so, in these ears of mine,
(These credulous ears) he pour'd the sweetest words
That Art or Love could frame; if he were false,
Pardon it heaven, and if I did want
Vertue, you safely may forgive that too,
For I have left none that I had from you.

Evad. Nay, leave this sad talk Madam.

Asp. Would I could, then should I leave the cause.

Evad. See if you have not spoil'd all *Dulas* mirth.

Asp. Thou think'st thy heart hard, but if thou beest caught,
remember me; thou shalt perceive a fire shot suddenly into thee.

Dul. That's not so good, let'm shoot any thing but fire, I fear'm
not.

Asp. Well wench, thou mayst be taken.

Evad. Ladies good night, I'll do the rest my self.

Dul. Nay, let your Lord do some.

Asp. Lay a Garland on my Hearse of the dismal Yew.

Evad. That's one of your sad songs Madam.

Asp. Believe me, 'tis a very pretty one.

Evad. How is it Madam?

SONG

Asp_. Lay a Garland on my Hearse of the dismal yew;
Maidens, Willow branches bear; say I died true:
My Love was false, but I was firm from my
hour of birth;
Upon my buried body lay lightly gentle earth_.

Evad. Fie on't Madam, the words are so strange, they are able
to make one Dream of Hobgoblins; *I could never have the power,*
Sing that *Dula.*

Dula_. I could never have the power
To love one above an hour,
But my heart would prompt mine eye
On some other man to flie;_
Venus, fix mine eyes fast,

Or if not, give me all that I shall see at last.

Evad. So, leave me now.

Dula. Nay, we must see you laid.

Asp. Madam good night, may all the marriage joys
That longing Maids imagine in their beds,
Prove so unto you; may no discontent
Grow 'twixt your Love and you; but if there do,
Enquire of me, and I will guide your moan,
Teach you an artificial way to grieve,
To keep your sorrow waking; love your Lord
No worse than I; but if you love so well,
Alas, you may displease him, so did I.
This is the last time you shall look on me:
Ladies farewell; as soon as I am dead,
Come all and watch one night about my Hearse;
Bring each a mournful story and a tear
To offer at it when I go to earth:
With flattering Ivie clasp my Coffin round,
Write on my brow my fortune, let my Bier
Be born by Virgins that shall sing by course

The truth of maids and perjuries of men.

Evad. Alas, I pity thee. [*Exit Evadne.*

Omnes. Madam, goodnight.

I Lady. Come, we'll let in the Bridegroom.

Dul. Where's my Lord?

I Lady. Here take this light.

[Enter Amintor.

Dul. You'll find her in the dark.

I Lady. Your Lady's scarce a bed yet, you must help her.

Asp. Go and be happy in your Ladies love;
May all the wrongs that you have done to me,
Be utterly forgotten in my death.
I'll trouble you no more, yet I will take
A parting kiss, and will not be denied.
You'll come my Lord, and see the Virgins weep
When I am laid in earth, though you your self
Can know no pity: thus I wind my self
Into this willow Garland, and am prouder
That I was once your Love (though now refus'd)

Than to have had another true to me.
So with my prayers I leave you, and must try
Some yet unpractis'd way to grieve and die.

Dul. Come Ladies, will you go? [*Exit Aspatia.*

Om. Goodnight my Lord.

Amin. Much happiness unto you all.

[*Exeunt Ladies.*

I did that Lady wrong; methinks I feel
Her grief shoot suddenly through all my veins;
Mine eyes run; this is strange at such a time.
It was the King first mov'd me to't, but he
Has not my will in keeping—why do I
Perplex my self thus? something whispers me,
Go not to bed; my guilt is not so great
As mine own conscience (too sensible)
Would make me think; I only brake a promise,
And 'twas the King that forc't me: timorous flesh,
Why shak'st thou so? away my idle fears.

[*Enter Evadne.*

Yonder she is, the lustre of whose eye
Can blot away the sad remembrance

Of all these things: Oh my *Evadne*, spare
That tender body, let it not take cold,
The vapours of the night will not fall here.
To bed my Love; *Hymen* will punish us
For being slack performers of his rites.
Cam'st thou to call me?

Evad. No.

Amin. Come, come my Love, And let us lose our selves to one
another. Why art thou up so long?

Evad. I am not well.

Amint. To bed then let me wind thee in these arms, Till I have
banisht sickness.

Evad. Good my Lord, I cannot sleep.

Amin. *Evadne*, we'l watch, I mean no sleeping.

Evad. I'll not go to bed.

Amin. I prethee do.

Evad. I will not for the world.

Amin. Why my dear Love?

Evad. Why? I have sworn I will not.

Amin. Sworn!

Evad. I.

Amint. How? Sworn *Evadne*?

Evad. Yes, Sworn *Amintor*, and will swear again If you will wish to hear me. O *Amin.* To whom have you Sworn this?

Evad. If I should name him, the matter were not great.

Amin. Come, this is but the coyness of a Bride.

Evad. The coyness of a Bride?

Amin. How prettily that frown becomes thee!

Evad. Do you like it so?

Amin. Thou canst not dress thy face in such a look But I shall like it.

Evad. What look likes you best?

Amin. Why do you ask?

Evad. That I may shew you one less pleasing to you.

Amin. How's that?

Evad. That I may shew you one less pleasing to you.

Amint. I prethee put thy jests in milder looks. It shews as thou wert angry.

Evad. So perhaps I am indeed.

Amint. Why, who has done thee wrong?

 Name me the man, and by thy self I swear,
 Thy yet unconquer'd self, I will revenge thee.

Evad. Now I shall try thy truth; if thou dost love me,
 Thou weigh'st not any thing compar'd with me;
 Life, Honour, joyes Eternal, all Delights
 This world can yield, or hopeful people feign,
 Or in the life to come, are light as Air
 To a true Lover when his Lady frowns,
 And bids him do this: wilt thou kill this man?
 Swear my *Amintor*, and I'll kiss the sin off from
 thy lips.

Amin. I will not swear sweet Love,
 Till I do know the cause.

Evad. I would thou wouldst;
 Why, it is thou that wrongest me, I hate thee,

Thou shouldst have kill'd thy self.

Amint. If I should know that, I should quickly kill
The man you hated.

Evad. Know it then, and do't.

Amint. Oh no, what look soe're thou shalt put on,
To try my faith, I shall not think thee false;
I cannot find one blemish in thy face,
Where falsehood should abide: leave and to bed;
If you have sworn to any of the Virgins
That were your old companions, to preserve
Your Maidenhead a night, it may be done without this
means.

Evad. A Maidenhead *Amintor* at my years?

Amint. Sure she raves, this cannot be
Thy natural temper; shall I call thy maids?
Either thy healthful sleep hath left thee long,
Or else some Fever rages in thy blood.

Evad. Neither *Amintor*; think you I am mad,
Because I speak the truth?

Amint. Will you not lie with me to night?

Evad. To night? you talk as if I would hereafter.

Amint. Hereafter? yes, I do.

Evad. You are deceiv'd, put off amazement, and with patience mark

What I shall utter, for the Oracle
Knows nothing truer, 'tis not for a night
Or two that I forbear thy bed, but for ever.

Amint. I dream,—awake *Amintor*!

Evad. You hear right,

I sooner will find out the beds of Snakes,
And with my youthful blood warm their cold flesh,
Letting them curl themselves about my Limbs,
Than sleep one night with thee; this is not feign'd,
Nor sounds it like the coyness of a Bride.

Amin. Is flesh so earthly to endure all this?

Are these the joyes of Marriage? *Hymen* keep
This story (that will make succeeding youth
Neglect thy Ceremonies) from all ears.
Let it not rise up for thy shame and mine
To after ages; we will scorn thy Laws,
If thou no better bless them; touch the heart
Of her that thou hast sent me, or the world
Shall know there's not an Altar that will smok
In praise of thee; we will adopt us Sons;
Then vertue shall inherit, and not blood:

If we do lust, we'll take the next we meet,
Serving our selves as other Creatures do,
And never take note of the Female more,
Nor of her issue. I do rage in vain,
She can but jest; Oh! pardon me my Love;
So dear the thoughts are that I hold of thee,
That I must break forth; satisfie my fear:
It is a pain beyond the hand of death,
To be in doubt; confirm it with an Oath, if this
be true.

Evad. Do you invent the form:

Let there be in it all the binding words
Devils and Conjurers can put together,
And I will take it; I have sworn before,
And here by all things holy do again,
Never to be acquainted with thy bed.
Is your doubt over now?

Amint. I know too much, would I had doubted still;
Was ever such a marriage night as this!
You powers above, if you did ever mean
Man should be us'd thus, you have thought a way
How he may bear himself, and save his honour:
Instruct me in it; for to my dull eyes
There is no mean, no moderate course to run,
I must live scorn'd, or be a murderer:
Is there a third? why is this night so calm?
Why does not Heaven speak in Thunder to us,

And drown her voice?

Evad. This rage will do no good.

Amint. Evadne, hear me, thou hast ta'ne an Oath,
But such a rash one, that to keep it, were
Worse than to swear it; call it back to thee;
Such vows as those never ascend the Heaven;
A tear or two will wash it quite away:
Have mercy on my youth, my hopeful youth,
If thou be pitiful, for (without boast)
This Land was proud of me: what Lady was there
That men call'd fair and vertuous in this Isle,
That would have shun'd my love? It is in thee
To make me hold this worth—Oh! we vain men
That trust out all our reputation,
To rest upon the weak and yielding hand
Of feeble Women! but thou art not stone;
Thy flesh is soft, and in thine eyes doth dwell
The spirit of Love, thy heart cannot be hard.
Come lead me from the bottom of despair,
To all the joyes thou hast; I know thou wilt;
And make me careful, lest the sudden change
O're-come my spirits.

Evad. When I call back this Oath, the pains of hell environ me.

Amin. I sleep, and am too temperate; come to bed, or by Those

hairs, which if thou hast a soul like to thy locks, Were threads
for Kings to wear about their arms.

Evad. Why so perhaps they are.

Amint. I'll drag thee to my bed, and make thy tongue
Undo this wicked Oath, or on thy flesh
I'll print a thousand wounds to let out life.

Evad. I fear thee not, do what thou dar'st to me;
Every ill-sounding word, or threatning look
Thou shew'st to me, will be reveng'd at full.

Amint. It will not sure *Evadne*.

Evad. Do not you hazard that.

Amint. Ha'ye your Champions?

Evad. Alas *Amintor*, thinkst thou I forbear
To sleep with thee, because I have put on
A maidens strictness? look upon these cheeks,
And thou shalt find the hot and rising blood
Unapt for such a vow; no, in this heart
There dwels as much desire, and as much will
To put that wisht act in practice, as ever yet
Was known to woman, and they have been shown
Both; but it was the folly of thy youth,
To think this beauty (to what Land soe're

It shall be call'd) shall stoop to any second.
I do enjoy the best, and in that height
Have sworn to stand or die: you guess the man.

Amint. No, let me know the man that wrongs me so,
That I may cut his body into motes,
And scatter it before the Northern wind.

Evad. You dare not strike him.

Amint. Do not wrong me so;
Yes, if his body were a poysonous plant,
That it were death to touch, I have a soul
Will throw me on him.

Evad. Why 'tis the King.

Amint. The King!

Evad. What will you do now?

Amint. 'Tis not the King.

Evad. What, did he make this match for dull *Amintor*?

Amint. Oh! thou hast nam'd a word that wipes away
All thoughts revengeful: in that sacred name,
The King, there lies a terror: what frail man
Dares lift his hand against it? let the Gods

Speak to him when they please;
Till then let us suffer and wait.

Evad. Why should you fill your self so full of heat,
And haste so to my bed? I am no Virgin.

Amint. What Devil put it in thy fancy then
To marry me?

Evad. Alas, I must have one
To Father Children, and to bear the name
Of Husband to me, that my sin may be more
honourable.

Amint. What a strange thing am I!

Evad. A miserable one; one that my self am sorry for.

Amint. Why shew it then in this,
If thou hast pity, though thy love be none,
Kill me, and all true Lovers that shall live
In after ages crost in their desires,
Shall bless thy memory, and call thee good,
Because such mercy in thy heart was found,
To rid a lingring Wretch.

Evad. I must have one
To fill thy room again, if thou wert dead,
Else by this night I would: I pity thee.

Amint. These strange and sudden injuries have faln
So thicke upon me, that I lose all sense
Of what they are: methinks I am not wrong'd,
Nor is it ought, if from the censuring World
I can but hide it—Reputation,
Thou art a word, no more; but thou hast shown
An impudence so high, that to the World
I fear thou wilt betray or shame thy self.

Evad. To cover shame I took thee, never fear
That I would blaze my self.

Amint. Nor let the King
Know I conceive he wrongs me, then mine honour
Will thrust me into action, that my flesh
Could bear with patience; and it is some ease
To me in these extreames, that I knew this
Before I toucht thee; else had all the sins
Of mankind stood betwixt me and the King,
I had gone through 'em to his heart and thine.

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