

THE
COMPLAINT
OF THE
Black Knight:
An ELEGIACK
POEM
FROM
CHAUCER.

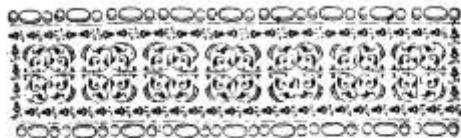
By Mr. D A R T.

*Ennius emeruit Calabris in Montibus hortos
Contiguos pene Scipio magne tibi.*

Ovid. de Art. Am. l. 3.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

THERE is no greater Difficulty than that which Writers labour under, in wanting Words to continue the Conveyance of their Thoughts to future Ages ; Such is the strange Imperfection

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perfection of our Language, and Revolution of our Customs, that if an Author is so happy as to please, and so fortunate as to gain Applause, that Fame, (which seldom happens 'till after Death) is quickly lost and obstructed, through the Alteration of Speech, and the intervening Novelties that every Age abounds with: This *Chaucer* plainly foresaw, when shewing an Apprehension that Words would change, and his Thoughts be lost in obsolete Phrases, he thus expresses himself,

I know that in fourm of Speech is change
Within a hundredth Peere and Words * tho
That hadde Peice now wonder int and straunge
Think we them, and pit they spake them so
And spid as well in loue as men now do.

* then

How far he was in the Right is evident, when for several Years he lay neglected, and even the admirable Mr. *Cowley* himself confess'd he had no Taste of him; he seems to laugh in vain, while we (frighted at an uncouth Word) look unconcernedly

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concernedly upon the finest Turn of his Wit as if insipid; He who doubtless was a Gentleman indu'd with all the Accomplishments that could oblige the Learned, and the Fair; He who was finely turn'd for the Court, and excellently form'd for Love, seems now a very unfashionable Courtier, and an antiquated Lover: This, (as it was his,) will certainly be the Fate of the most celebrated Moderns, thus intimated by the ingenious Mr. *Pope*.

*Our Sons their Fathers failing Language see,
And such as Chaucer is, shall Dryden be.*

And this Consideration perhaps induc'd Mr. *Dryden* to give an Example of continuing that Fame, and keeping off Ob'ivion longer, by supplying the Defects of Language, and lending a kind Hand to lead the Antients down to us: For this End moder-nizing several Parts of *Chaucer*; he discover'd such a World of Beauties in that

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Rubbish of Literature, that (desirous of being more familiar with the Author) he resolv'd to introduce him into the Acquaintance of his Contemporaries, but well knowing he would affright rather than please, were he to appear 'in his antique Gravity; he kindly stript him of the Hood and Hanscline, and made him a very fashioneerable Modern: Since him, Mr. *Pope*, and Mr. *Sewell* have lent a further Hand to recommend him, the first in his *Wife of Bath's Prologue*, and that excellent Story of *January and May*; and the Later in his *Cupid's Proclamation*; in which Pieces those Gentlemen have curiously exprest his Beauties, and the fine Turn and Genteel Sharpness of his Wit.

Incited by these Examples, I have (too adventurously, I fear) attempted to lend a Hand to the same Design: How I have succeeded, the World must judge; if well, 'twill be Incouragement to attempt some other Parts of him; if ill, I have this Satisfaction that the Design pleas'd me, and has

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has made me familiar with Beauties, to which I had else been a Stranger.

I chose this Piece as a Specimen of his Love Poetry, of which he was certainly a most excellent Master, not Second to *Ovid* himself, as is plain from his *Remant of the Rose*, *Troilus & Crescide*, *la Belle Dame sans mercie*, and this *Complaint*, which I think is the best design'd of any extant, either Ancient, or Modern, the Introduction (tho' long) just and beautiful, the Thoughts in the Speech natural, soft, and easy, and the Hint for Invoking *Venus*, and the Invocation inimitable; and if this Piece falls short (as certainly it must) of the Character I have given of the Original, it is intirely owing to my own Errors.

Whether under this Character of the *Black Knight*, he designs the *Duke of Lancaster*, (as he does in his *Dream*, occasion'd by the Death of *Blanch the Dutches*) is uncertain, but I am apt to think he rather veils himself, as seems plain from the Words in *l'envoy* to his Mistres: This Lady, (whose Name

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Name is not known) was Sister to the Lady *Catherine Swinford*, married to *John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster*; by Marriage with whom, our *Chaucer* came to be Brother to the Duke, and Uncle to *Henry IV.*

Some, perhaps, will be shocrt at the Romantick Title; and I must confess, that not only the Title but the Complaint carries with it a Spice of the Humour of those Times; nor is *Chaucer* to be blam'd for it, since he had indeavour'd to please in vain without it: And we may as well be surpriz'd at the noble Order and Habits of the Garter, which carries with it much more of King *Arthur's* Gallantry: But he is even sparing of that in this Piece, and has much more Chivalry in his *Knight's Tale*, which (notwithstanding) is reckon'd one of the best Epick Poems extant: No Wonder if three Hundred Years since that Humour was reigning, when it continues still in *Spain*; and the laborious Writers, or (as *Hudibras* calls them) Classic Authors of *France*, have lately taken not a little Pains, in their elaborate

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borate Romances, to pester the World, and bewilder the Ladies with their polite Trumpetry.

As for his bringing his Complainant in a Wood, *Virgil* introduces himself so in his *second Eclogue*, and his Favourite *Gallus*, (a Person of the same Quality with ours, a Knight) is brought to make his Complaint in the same Manner: And as to the Title of *Black Knight*, he had the Authority of *Homer's Memnon*.

The next Objection will be, that he dwells too long upon Descriptions; and I must confess, when *Chaucer* takes a Walk into a Wood, he is a long while e'er he gets out again: But then on the other Hand, he never takes us out of the way, but to oblige us with some pleasing Prospect or other, and we are at worst but agreeably lost; by those curious Images he raises the Fancy, that it may the better receive what comes after: This kind of Landskape Painting *Hirace* seems to blame, when the Painter can design nothing else, but

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but *Chaucer* whose Talent commanded every part of humane Life, and could draw Nature in every Form, might be allow'd this Liberty, especially when his Descriptions are so just and natural; and if he dwells too long 'tis a glorious Fault, and a beauteous Extravagance since he has left Materials of that Kind enough for all that come after, who are (I'm sure) much oblig'd to him, for an agreeable Variety of which they may select what they please; Mr. *Dryden* thought no Trouble to take one of these Forrest-Circuits with him, in his Tale of the *Flower and the Leaf*, or the *Lady in the Arbour*; the Introduction of which Story is very little different from this.

And now speaking of his Descriptions, I cannot but observe that they are so just and natural, that I verily believe he wrote in the Places he describes, happily for that Purpose possessing two of the pleasantest Seats in *England*, *Donnington-Castle* in a Park in *Berkshire* (since demolished

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molish'd by the Parliament Forces;) and *Woodstock*, (granted him by *Jane Queen to Henry the Fourth*) in the first of which he wrote this Piece. As he was a very temperate Man, so he seem'd to devote the Morning to his Study, and the Fields to his Amusement; where with an unclouded Head, and uninterrupted Quiet he survey'd that Nature, which he so well describes: There is, or lately was at *Dunnington-Castle*, an Oak call'd *Chaucer's*, under which ('tis reported) he wrote many of his Things; and a very worthy and ingenuous Gentleman of my Acquaintance assur'd me, that when he was formerly familiar at Mr. *Evelin's*, at *Say's-Court in Deptford*, they reserv'd with great Respect a Tree, the common Place of Mr. *Cowley's* Studies, when he resided there during the Troubles.

I shall conclude, that as the VWorks of this great and excellent Man are now in the Press at *Oxford*, in their genuine Language, so I could wish that Gentlemen would

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would unite their Endeavours to dress
him intirely in a more refin'd Habit, by
lending every one a Hand, that he may be
fashionable to keep Company with the
Ladies, who otherwise are depriv'd of
Conversing with the greatest Poet that
England (or perhaps the *World*) ever
produc'd.

I N



In that Time when Nature youthful grows,
And over Hills, and Vales, profusely throws
Fresh Flow'rs, of various Colours, white and red;
When balmy Gales fleet smoothly o'er the Mead:
Where Venus Dances, and the Graces lead,
Her shining Cistus deck with glowing Flow'rs,
While smiling Spring leads on the painted Hours.
The Su ascending shot a warmer Ray;
In larger Circles wheel'd his shining Way
Through Taurus lightsome Realms, and bore the Day.
One Morn, when the West appear'd afar
(To chace the Night) to drive the Sleep away,
And call the early Vot'ries of the Day;

To glad their Souls, with his returning Light,
And purge the dreary Visions of the Night:

Waking I sigh'd and left my weary Bed,
To walk the Fields, and seek the Green-Wood Shade,
To hear the early Birds their Matins try.
When Morning clears, and hazy Vapours fly;
The shining Dew diffus'd a balmy Sweet,
The Rising-Sun display'd his kindly Heat,
Around the Morn his streaming Glories shed,
And every Flow'r that grac'd the motly Mead,
With Pleasure to his Rays unveil'd his bloom'y Head;
Like Gold resplendent seem'd the Lamp of Day;
Through the blue Sky he rowl'd his glowing Way,
Smote the warm Earth, and with his Beams did play.
O a still River's Verge my Way I led,
Amus'd to see the sportive finny Breed;
The wanton Fry all o'er the Surface throng,
And the still Waters gently rowl'd along.
Pensive and thoughtful, on its Banks I strad'd,
'Till thence diverted b a neigb'ring Shade,
A pleasing Park, and circularly made:
A Wall of Stone inclos'd the lovely Scene,
Rev'rend with Age, and cloth'd with mossy Green,
In this a Gate Acccess to all allow'd,
Through which I pass'd and enter'd in the Wood;
To hear the Birds the blossom'd Branches fill,

With various Notes, thro' every Vale and Hill;
A thousand Sounds at once my Ears invade,
Ring through the sounding Wood, and shake the
trembling Shade.

But most the Nightingale with eager Throat
Express'd her Woe in a superior Note:
Gazing around the new transporting Sight,
With Pleasure stroke My Heart, and vast Delight,
The Soil with rising Grass was smoothly spread,
Cloth'd with a Carpet verdant Nature made,
O'er which high shading Trees their Branches throw,
To screen from Heat the rising Flow'rs below,
Least sultry Beams their beauty should impair.
With cooling Shades they veil their fav'rite Care.

Mild was the Air, and glad Favonius Breeze,
The Bloosoms kist, and wanton'd in the Trees;
Smooth was his Way, ad with a downy Wing
He fann'd the Earth, and bare along the Spring;
Softer'd with pleasing Breath the bloomy Care,
And gave the Promise of a fruitful Year.
Hear Lawrel ever green it Branches rears,
There Med'cine Pine, and Myrrha's weeping Tears,
The upright Cedars almost Heav'n invade,
And Filberts sweep the Grass with humble Shade;
Fresh springing Hawthorn of a Motley Hew
Gave fragrant Sweets to ev'ry Gale that flew,

Ash, Ewe, and Elm in various Order stood,
And spreading Oaks, the Glory of the Wood;
With more than Time or Mem'ry serves to tell,
And (straying to and fro) a little Well
I saw, as from beneath a Hill it rowl'd,
With living Waters clear, and Ice as cold;
Shadowy, and cool, by Branches screen'd from Light,
It whelm'd transparent Waves an Inch in Height;
The humid Margin cloth'd with native Grass,
Like Gold the Sand, the Water clear as Glass,
Surrounding Trees in rising Bowr's did grow,
Shading the Grass, and cheerful Herbs below,
Herbs which their medicinal Pow'rs produce,
And made the Well for Ills of Sov'reign Use,
Not that fair Well th' inamour'd Boy did drink,
When Death lay lurking by the fatal Brink,
Nor that, the Haunt of the aonian Maids,
Where dreaming Poets slept in Pindus Shades,
Nor yet the Font where chaste Diana fir'd,
With Hunting, and her votive Train retire'd;
To shun the sultry Heat of Noon-tide Beams,
And bath their lovely Limbs in cooling Streams,
Where hapless Acteon, in's way mis-led,
Was, in a fatal Hour, to Death betray's,
Could this excel, which Virtues did contain
To cool the burning Heart, and clear the Brain,

Cares to dispel, and sullen Grief to chace,
And add a vivid Lustre to the Face.
I (who had felt of Love the burning Pain,
A raging Fever firing every Vein;)
Extended with my Bosom press'd the Grass,
And quaff'd Relief from out the liquid Glass,
Nor did I quaff the cooling Draught in vain,
It chear'd my Spirits, and dispell'd my Pain,
Then springing thence refresh'd, my Steps I drove,
To third the bloomy Coverts of the Grove:

Surrounding Thickets I with Pleasure view'd,
And here and there my various Course pursu'd;
When long intangl'd in the mazy Scene,
It open'd on a Land, a pleasing Green,
In traversing of which with hasty Pace,
A most surprising View, a heavenly Place
Challeng'd my Eye, for in th' umbrageous Wood
(Of various Greens intwin'd) a lovely Arbor stood
The Pride and Glory of the shady Scene,
The Benches cloth'd with plated Turfs of Green,
And gay with rising Flow'rs the Floor was spread;
The Sides of Eglantine and Woodbine over-head.
When prying thro' the Texture of the Bow'r.
I saw beneath a Woodbine on the Floor,
A Man stretch'd out with horrid Carelessness,

His Visage pale as Box, and black his Dress,
His pallid Looks confess'd a World of Woe,
And Grief it self sat sullen on his Brow,
He seem'd wth Sickness spent, and Fevers fir'd,
Weary of Life, and in his Journey tir'd,
He breath'd his Soul at every piteous Groan,
And it was Death it self to hear his Moan,

(Startl'd) I cautious drew My Foot away
Wond'ring the Cause why pensive there he lay
With no attending Friend, (for none was near)
Making a Moan as pierc'd my Soul to hear,
I with a silent Tread to listen stood,
Conceal'd beneath th' adjoining Under-wood,
Intent, if I by any Means might know,
What brought him there, or whence arose his Woe,
And near unto his Bow'r my Ear I laid
Attentive, list'ning to the Words he said.

Such as his Person was, I'll first relate,
And then recite the Story of his Fate.
Some Lines of Greatness spake a manly Grace,
Which neither Love nor Sickness could deface,
Strugg'ling he seem'd with a superior Fate,
Bold in his Grief, and languishingly great;
Yet Love, destructive Love, the Tyrant play'd,

Impair'd, and much his blooming Youth decay'd;
Tortur'd by Love to distand Shades he bent,
Pensive to breath unheard his Discontent.

Pleas'd in his Words, which I in Mind retain,
The Cause of all his Woe, and all his Pain,
As far as Mem'ry serves, I will recite,
And hope the Task will not forbid Delight.

But how inspir'd shall I the moving Song;
Or who shall lead the heavy Numbers on?
O Niobe, who Marble now appears,
And Myrrha ever weeping balmy Tears,
You I invoke to aid the mournful Strain,
Inspire the heavy Thought, and teach me to complain.
To you, and only you, I have Recourse,
Yours is the Pow'r to grieve, and sorrow's yours;
For sullen Thoughts to sad Complaints belong,
A mournful ale requires a mournful Song:
To Sorrow sighing, and the rolling Tear,
And piteous mourning suits with dreary Chear;
And who attempts to draw a sad Distress,
Must know himself that Weight he would express,
With Grief familiar, Stranger to Delight,
Feel what he would describe, and be what he would write.

Ye tender Youths and Maids, who entertain
Love's Fire, and yet are curs'd to love in vain;
If a malicious Tongue with busy Lyes
Has sully'd all your Truth with Treacheries,
Attentive listen, to this mournful Verse,
With silent sorrowing Looks, while I rehearse
The Height of Sorrow, in a mournful Strain,
With Words communicative of his Pain;
Who wildly staring up with moving Cries,
Thus blam'd his Fate, and importun'd the Skies.

The pensive Thought with rising Sighs opprest,
The Life of frequent Pain unmix'd with Rest,
The Soul deprest, the swelling Heart that's broke,
The pale Complaint, the deadly ashy Look,
Tears that descend in a perpetual Rain,
Witness my Sorrow, and confess my Pain;
Whose Heart the Fates severe have rent in two,
And made my Thought the Register of Woe,
My Breast the gloomy Mansion of Despair,
And all the Tyrant Train inhabit there,
Suspicion, short-lived Hope, and trembling Fear,
My Body's weaken'd with perpetual Pain
Of Heat and Cold, that shoot thro' ev'ry Vein
Now Aguish hills freeze o'er my vital Frame,
Now fev'rish Fires exert their raging Flame,

I glow, I burn, my stubborn Pulse beats high,
And now I chill with Cold, and trembling die,
As Ashes which the Flames no more supply,
Then Heat (repeated) reassumes its Place,
Cold dewy Drops run silent down my Face,
My Heart beats false, my Pulse forget to beat,
While outward Sweats confess the inward Heat;
Alternately I'm wrack'd with equal Pain,
From Love the Fire proceeds, the Cold from her Disdain.

For still the more my fond Endeavours prove,
By gen'rous Acts expressive of my Love,
While all my Thought are bent to please the Fair,
While I decree my votive Life to her,
With haughty Pride sh' insults my humble Pains,
And still the more I love, she more disdains,
No kind Returns m'obsequious Labours crown,
But Looks that kill, with a perpetual Frown.

And Love the God that should my Cause befriend,
Whose Deity I serve, and Pow'r defend,
Instead of pitying all the Wrongs I bear,
(Sportively cruel) urges on the War;
He whets his Sword, and every Arrow flies,
Insults me with his Pow'r, and, while he sharpens, smiles;
With him Detraction, Spite, and Envy join,

All close Combiners in the dark Design;
First Slanders swell, and hand them down to Fame,
The fatal Trump with lying Breath she blew,
Inlarging Eccho swell'd it s it flew;
Till tim'rous Misbelief the Mischief heard,
And Falshood to the Place of Truth preferr'd:
Ye heav'nly Pow'rs that favour Truth and Right,
Can you supinely suffer such a Sight,
What I who Love's unsully'd Fires retain,
Should meet th' unjust Returns of cold Disdain;
Oppos'd by Falshood, and by Treach'ry slain.
That curst Detraction should so pow'rful prove,
To interrupt the Quiet of my Love:

For I unheard of my too cred'lous Fair,
By Judgment rash am sentenc'd to Despair,
Whilst no officious Pleader intercedes,
To moderate her Rage, and clear my Deeds;
But rashly fixt, and bent on cruel Hate
She vow'd my Ruin, and decreed my Fate,

Behold a Suff'rer, for his Faith unstain'd,
Gor'd by Love's Shafts, and in his Gives inchain'd,
His heavy Chains, and Wounds, I now endure,
Such Wounds as she, and only she can cure;
Whilst by my Woes opprest, I long for Death

Drag hated Life along, and breath unwilling Breath;
Ye know, full well, ye know how I have lov'd,
And that my Breast was ever yet unmov'd,
That it was shut to ev'ry other Fair,
And only her dear Image govern'd there;
Her Image, who unjustly in Return
Receives My Foes, with Smiles, and me with Scorn.
Say whence proceeds this wond'rous Chance of Things,
Whence this uncertain Revolution Springs,
That Love one Moment glads with lively Smiles,
And in the next with sudden Frowns beguiles;
That Falshood should of truth assume the Name,
And Truth of Falshood bear the hated Blame.

This Stormy Change infest's Love's Province most,
Where sudden Tempests shake the uncertain Coast,
Now Summer's Suns delight, now Tempests roar,
And Love's serene Estate is Ruffled o'er;
I, who have practic'd many Years of Love,
Which Death nor any Wordly Chance can move,
I, who have sworn if so the Fair ordain'd
To Die, or what is worse, to Live disdain'd;
Have found that he who loves with generous Pains,
Shall find a Disappointment allhis Gains;
Whilst soothing Flatt'rers wth deceitful Face
Floursh in Crimes, and thrive in Actions base.

Inquire through all the Ages that have been,
Unvail and look o'er the surprizing Scene,
Justice revers'd will every where appear,
Some happy Traitor shines in ev'ry Year;
Whilst all the God-like Friends to Truth and Right,
Are dark'd with Fortunes Clouds, and is in Night
As Palimedes that most worthy Knight,
Brave in the Field, and Victor in the Fight;
Who made Pursuits of Fame his constant Care,
And strove by manly Deeds to please the Fair;
But all in vain were great Pursuits his Care,
And all in vain he strove to please the Fair;
No popular Applause could move her Breast,
But with his Fame her slighting Scorn increast.
Vain were the warriour Paths Alcides trod,
Below superior Man, and now a God;
Who prov'd his Conquest in repeated Spoils,
And led a Life in long laborious Toils;
By Love neglected all in vain he strove,
To please, and urge Returns for profer'd Love.
For after all his Acts and Dangers past,
Death was the sole Reward he found at last.
Cynthius the cheerful Ruler of the Day,
When here below submissive to Love's sway,
Whose heav'nly Sounds could tend'rest Thought inspire,
And swell the coldest Breast with fond Desire;

Whose purple Bloom a Youth eternal show'd,
Whose lovely Hair in shining Ringlets flow'd;
But neither heav'nly Sounds could move the Fair
Nor ever blooming Youth invite her Care,
Nor all the beamy Glories of his Hair;
Unheard and unregarded was his Love,
Nor Pray'rs nor Tear the obd'rate Fair could move,
What need to tell, when to recount were vain,
The endless List of ll the suff'ring Train,
Of Arcite, Pyramas, and Palemon,
On Tristum, Antonie, and Thetis Son;
How were their Acts rewarded and Renown?
And how did Love their gen'rous Labours Crown?
With the Returns that Lovers ever have,
A world of sorrow, Death, and then a Grave;
Aeneas, Jason, Theseus, all untrue
To Loves Decrees, and all the treach'rous Crew,
Who all the sacred Ties of Love profan'd
(Basely successful) what they wisht for gain'd,
For would you o'er the loveliest Breast prevail,
Trust friendly Treach'ry, and you ne'er can fail:
Lovely Adonis ws to Death betray'd
Amidst the Forrest in the Green-Wood Shade,
Where Night and Morning he was wont to rove,
And vent his Passion for the Queen of Love:
With gen'rous Faith he nurs'd the kindly Flame,

While churlish Vulcan grasp'd the lovely Dame;
Coldly with grizly Arms the Fair carest,
With sooty Foulness soil'd her snowy Breast:
Dull to her Charms, nor in Injoymenst blest.
Lo! here the Wages faithful Lovers gain,
See here the kind Returns for all their Pain:
Behold the God his suppliant Slaves requite
With Ills undue, and unrelenting Spite:
Designing Villains never fail Reward,
While Godlike Virtue meets with no Regard.
For neither Faith unmov'd, nor Oaths unstain'd,
Perswasive Eloquence, with Truth unfeign'd,
Sincerest Looks that speak an open Heart,
Nor Language not adulterate with Art,
Mosest Submission, and Attendance paid,
A manly Grace in every Act display'd,
Renown of Valour a most glorious Claim;
The brightest Lustre of a lasting Name,
Acquir'd with mighty Toils in the Pursuit of Fame,
Experience gain'd in foreign Countries known,
Danger of Deathin mighty Battles won,
Nor Death it self can move the heedless Foe
Topraise our Merits, or lament our Woe!
They all are useless Pleas, which we prefer
To Love in vain; for he the labour'd Pray'r
Regardless gives to Winds, and throws in empty Air.

But treach'rous Falshoods, and base Flatteries,
Inventive Stories fram'd, and pleasing Lies,
Labour'd Deceit, Words fram'd with subtle Care,
And Scandal darling favourite of the Fair,
Are the successful Means the Traitor plies,
Whilst Words delusive treach'rous Thoughts disguise
And artful Love fits trembling in his Eyes:
He with impos'd submissive Air beguiles,
With humble Looks destroys, and circumvents in Smiles.

These are the Votaries fond Love defends;
These artful Lovers, these delusive Friends,
Whilst humble Slaves, who to his Altars bend,
And servilely his sacred Rites attend,
He treats with all the darkest Share of Fate,
And persecutes with unrelenting Hate:
The Proofs of which I find severely true,
Thanks unto Venus, and her Son be due,
Whose kind Indulgence I have fully try'd,
Witness these Arrows sticking in my Side:
For when unkindly fierce he whets his Dart,
Pale's my dead Face, and throbbing beats my Heart.
The Taste of every worldly Joy is lost,
And Friendlier Death is what I wish for most;
Ev'n Death will a more welcome Suff'ring prove
Than cold Returns for ill requited Love;
For where the God directs, I love in vain,

No Pray'rs nor Tears th'obdurate Fair can gain;
And what is still more hard, when trembling I
Strech't at her Feet pale and submissive lye,
While I Love with suppliant Looks complain,
The fair insulting Foe with glad disdain,
Sports in my Ruin and enjoys my Pain:
No Fault of mine could e'er such Hatred move,
Unless she thinks it criminal to love.
Of all these Wrongs, to thee, I! Love, I cry,
Thou double, thou unseeing Deity:
To various Chance thy Pow'r ws always join'd,
Nor swayed by Reason, nor by Rule confin'd;
What others call thy willful Variance,
I fain would term it smooth, and call it Chance;
And where the Archer is depriv'd of Sight,
No Wonder if amiss the Arrows light
To strike the Stander by, and miss the White;
So thoughtless Love his feather'd Tales lets fly,
That Villains 'scape whilst gen'rous Mortals dye:
But what is worse, when restless Mortals groan,
Gor'd by their Shafts, and suppliant make their Moan,
Th' unhappy Slaves he to their Foe assigns
For Cure, and there the Remedy confines,
And hard's the Case when the sick Patient lies,
And trembling waits his Cure with piteous Eyes,
In Hopes by Med'cines to prolong his Breath,

When the Physician meditates his Death.
Why was the Day that gave me Living first?
Why did the Sun behold a Wretch so curst?
Why was I born, if born to Woe like this,
Sorrow's Companion, Stranger unto Bliss?
Why did the Sister Fates their Work pursue?
They should have cut it first, not drawn the Clue,
When they foresaw my miserable Doom,
Why did they weave such Woes within their Loom?
They shap'd my Fate, and drew a direful Thread
Before my careful Midwife shap'd my Head.

This done, consenting Nature too combin'd,
Produc'd the Means, and in my Ruin join'd;
For this she fram'd a Piece divinely Fair,
Gave the mild Look, the soft attractive Air,
The cheerful Gayness, and the sparkling Eye,
And tun'd her Voice to heav'nly Harmony;
Her lovely Form to curious Shape confin'd,
With ready Wit indu'd her sprightly Mind,
Form'd her with ev'ry lovely Grace beside;
But gave, alas! a Spark too much of Pride:
Mistrust, Suspicion, all the dang'rous Train,
And soil'd the Composition with Disdain:
By which oppress'd and slain, by sland'rous Tonges.
(Guiltless Heav'n knows) I suffer all these Wrongs;
By false destructive Words, as Arrows keen,

I lie and wish for Death on this cold Green.

Bu if in vain is all that I relate,
To screen me from a dire impending Fate;
If vain are all the fatal Truths I tell,
And I must die for having lov'd too well;
Hear this, and sure it must some Pity move,
I found my Fate, while I pursu'd your Love
Believe these diff'rent Causes work'd my Fate,
A Heart of mine too fond, and your too cruel Hate.

But e'er I'm hurry'd to the last Despair,
Hear me, oh! quickly hear, relentless Fair!
Pity those Wounds your Eye did first create,
And oh! Avert a too too hasty Fate.
Hear, I conjure you, hear, by all I prize,
By that fair Face, and dear deluding Eyes,
Say, can such lovely Looks provoke Despair?
And dwells Destruction in a Form so Fair?
Could Nature reconcile such Good and Ill,
That the same Form should plese, and pleasing kill?
If cruel, all those heav'nly Charms are lost,
(for Love's the fairest Worth the Sex can boast)
It adds the Angel to the mortal Face,
Polishes ev'ry Charm, and heightens ev'ry Grace.

‘Tis this alone can raise my drooping Soul;
This, only this, my hasty Death control,
Dismiss my Fears, and all my Grief remove,
And Life can only be convey’d in Love.
This is the only means can be apply’d
To cye nt bruised Head, and wounded Side,
Proofs of Love’s Pow’r, and Trophies of your Pride.
If Heav’ly Favours I can hope to gain,
Soon may they come, or they will come in vain:
They cannot warm my Corps, when I am dead,
Nor ever overtake my flying Shade.

But if you slight my unavailing Pray’r,
And I must needs the lovely Ruin share,
Declare my Fate in one decisive Breath,
Kill me at once, nor give me ling’ring Death;
Dischar’d from tiresome Life the fix’d Decree
Will ease my Pain more soon, and set me free:
‘Twill please me ev’n in Death, ‘twill please my Shade,
To think, what you commanded, I obey’d.

But first e’er I shall be in Night confin’d,
And these pale Lips no more can speak my Mind;
E’er Death in Darkness vails my Actions past,
And Wrong o’er silent Truth triumphs at last,
Let this one Favour your soft Bosom move,

To hear the last Confession of my Love;
Which made, and ev'ry tender Truth confess'd,
And ev'ry Hope and Fear that wrecks my Breast,
Ev'n Time shall list'ning stand to hear my Moan,
And own that none e'er lov'd as I have done.
When my Defence is made, I'll patient stand,
And wait my Sentence from my Judge's Hand:
Nor only wait, but willingly receive,
With thankful Chear the Fate she'll please to give.
If Life, how bless'd! and though she speaks my Death,
With Pleasure I'll resign m' expiring Breath;
Nor blame the Fate she gives, nor call it wrong,
But Blessings in my dying Breath shall throng,
Pant on m quiv'ring Lips, and tremble o'er my Tongue.

And when cold Death o'er me had gain'd his Pow'r,
And these desiring Eyes can gaze no more;
When Sighs no more shall swell my lab'ring Breast,
And this poor heaving Heart shall be at Rest,
When the pale Marble o'er my Grave shall rise,
And hide this hated Object from your Eyes;
Ev'n then my Spirit I to you command,
To hover round you, and your Steps attend:
Unheard, unseen, nor to your Sense display'd,
A most officious inoffensive Shade,
The base Attempts of Men more false than I,

The silent Whisper, and the dand'rous Lye.
I'll take my Midnight-Stand beside your bed,
And guard the Slumbers that surround our Head:
No Thoughts of me shall e'er disturb your Mind
Not one Remembrance that you were unkind;
But happier Objects rise before your Sight,
Youth's more successful Mirth and gay Delight,
With all the visionary Joys of Night.
Yet think once more before it be too late,
Nor seal too soon a rash and hasty Fate;
Destroy me not by a too hasty breath,
For on one Word depends my Life or Death.

No more he said, for rising Sighs opprest
His further Speech, and swell'd his manly Breast:
A sullen silence to his Words took Place,
And the big Tears run slowly down his Face;
Whilst I, who in the Secret Covert kept,
Joyn'd in is Grief, and by Example wept.
At length he rose and to a Cottage bent
His feeble Steps, where most his Time he spent,
Unheard, unseen to breath his Discontent.

And for the Sun with a declining Ray
Scattered around the West imperfect Day,
While yet his ruddy Beams afforded Light,

I took my Pen with hasty speed to write
His sad Complaint, and fix it to Record,
Near as I could remember Word by Word.

And as I wrote the Ev'ning Star oh high
Shot his clear Beams amid the Western Sky:
The Star that leads the silent Train of Night,
And glads the closing Day with cheerful Light:
The Orb in which fair Venus does arise,
Smiling indulgent in the ev'ning Skies,
Then to the Heath down-kneeling on my Knee
I thus address'd the Cyprian Deity.

Hail beauteous Pow'r, whose influence soft can move
The Breasts of Gods and Men, and teach 'em Love,
Inform the coldest Bosom with a Flame,
And raise to Fondness the severest Dame.
If e'er the Warriour-God with ow'rful Charms,
And vig'rous Pleasure fill'd your lovely Arms;
When all dissolv'd in Joys you lay intwin'd,
By Lulcan guarded, and the Net confin'd;
Expos'd and laugh'd at in the loose Embrace,
While ev'ry envious Goddess wish'd your Place;
To this unhappy Suppliant favouring prove,
If e'er Adonis mov'd thy Breast to Love:
Now Goddess, now thy kind Indulgence show,

And be propitious to my eager Vow/
Thou can'st to Love the coldest Breast incline,
Thine is the Pow'r to move, and the kind Infl'ence thine:
Hither thy Care and wanton Sparrows bring,
Higher may Love attend with easy Wing;
His kindly Torch with speedy Hand apply,
And her cold Bosom with new Fire supply.
So may all Nature thy kind Pow'r invoke,
And Paphos from a thousand Altars smoak:
May suppliant Mortals bend before thy Shrine,
Serve thee alone, and know no Pow't but thine.

And when her wheeling Orb and Golden Light
Gave way to dusky Shades, and coming Night,
As through the dark'ning Grove I homeward stray'd
Pensive and slow, thus to my self I pray'd,

May the kind Pow'r of Love for ever Smile
With Looks auspicious o'er Britannia's Isle;
May ech fond Youth by early Love inspir'd
Attempt a Breast with equal Passions fir'd;
Mild be his Flame, or if it fiercely burn,
May Fires as Fierce unit it in Return,
May ev'ry blooming Youth unalter'd prove,
And ev'ry tender Maid confess her Love:
May Love's kind Pow'r direct the golden Year,

Nor one black Aera soil his Calander,
May smiling Joys in endless Circles run,
And when by Death the Ties are all undone,
Warm may the Flames expire, as when they first begun.

FINIS