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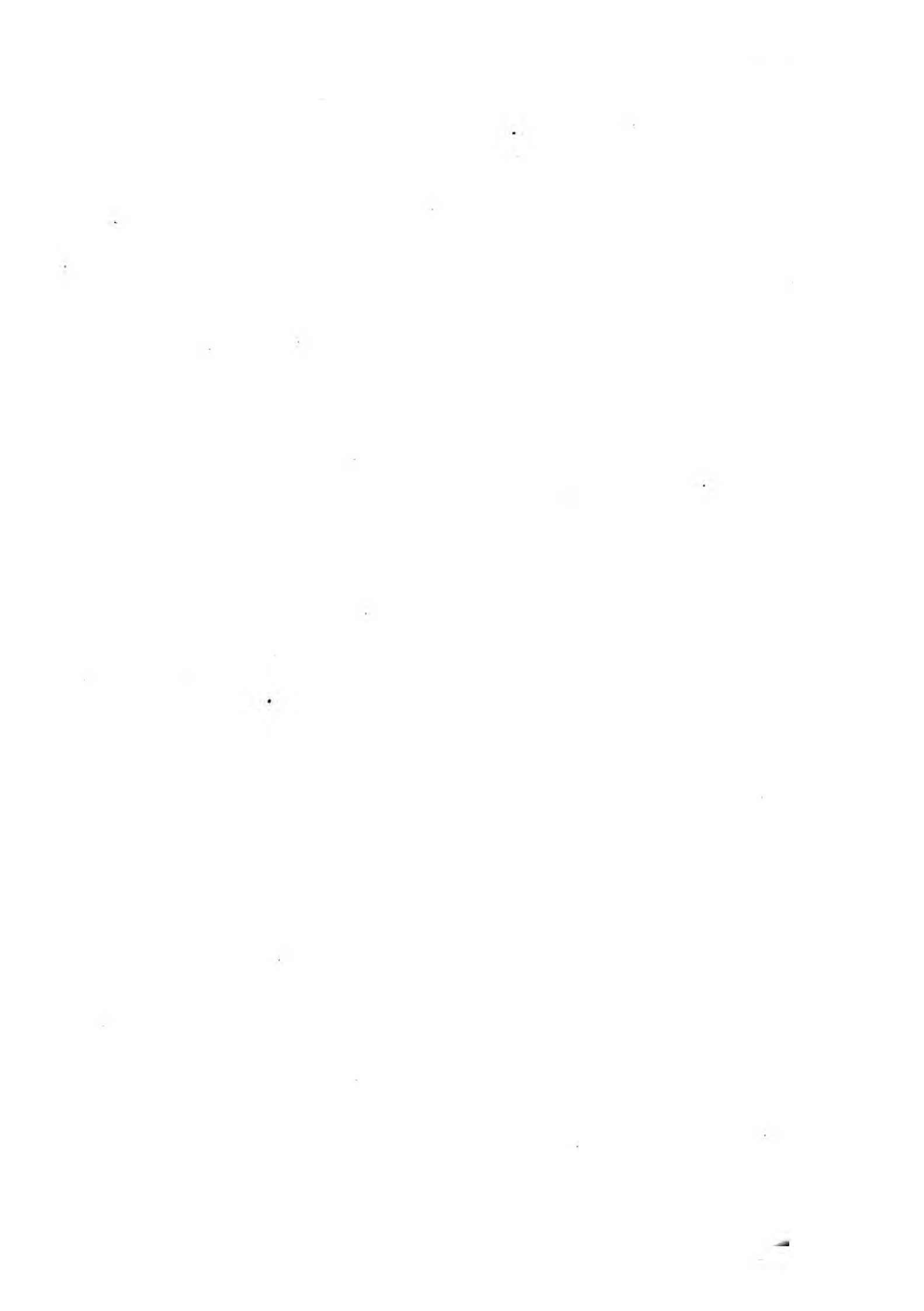
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T H E
DESERT ISLAND,

A
DRAMATIC POEM,

I N
T H R E E A C T S.

As it is Acted at the

not first

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

A. Murphy

Te, dulcis conjux, te solo in littore secum,
Te veniente die, te decedente canebat.

VIRGIL



L O N D O N,

Printed for PAUL VAILLANT, facing Southampton-street,
in the Strand. MDCCLXII.

[Price One Shilling and Six Pence.]



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Piece is founded on the *Ifola Disabitata* of the celebrated ABBE METASTASIO: In reading the Performance of that great Genius, the present Writer received so exquisite a Pleasure, that he contracted a Passion for the Subject, and could not refrain from exercising his Pen upon it. In the Prosecution of his Plan, he knew enough of the modern Theatre, to perceive that it was thin of what our Play-followers call Business; and he was aware that on the Stage it might prove (to use *Milton's* Words) *very different from what among us passes for Best*. The same Remark was made by a Friend of the Author's, who thought it hazardous to offer to a popular Assembly a Piece, in which there were none of those Strokes that generally succeed with the Multitude. "Can't you," said he, "throw
" in something here and there to season it more to
" the public Appetite? — Suppose you were to
" change the Title, and fix the Scene among the
" *Anthropophagi*, or among the *Men, whose Heads*
" *do grow beneath their Shoulders* — a few of those
" extraordinary Personages exhibited on the Stage,
" will prove very acceptable: — What think you
" of an *Irish* Servant in it? — That certainly will
" insure Success, the more especially if you add
" some aerial Beings, and conclude the Whole
" with a drunken Song by the Tars of *Old Eng-*
" *land.*" — The Author was sensible of the Force
of these Observations; but the GREAT MILTON
(mentioned above) stared him in the Face, with
his Reflections on " the Error of introducing tri-
" vial and vulgar Persons, which, by all Judicious,
" hath been counted absurd, and brought in with-
" out Discretion, CORRUPTLY to gratify the Peo-
" ple."* — He therefore determined to preserve the

* *Vide.* Preface to *Samson Agonistes.*

A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

Integrity of his original Design, and to try what would be the Effect of a simple Fable, with but few Incidents, supported entirely by the Spirit of Poetry, Sentiment, and Passion. To combine these three Qualities is indeed an arduous Task; and the Author, therefore, does not flatter himself that he has entirely succeeded in so difficult an Attempt.

In Justice to METASTASIO, he thinks proper to inform the mere *English* Reader, that he hath not been a Translator on this Occasion, but has followed the Impulse of his own Imagination, excepting in a few Passages. The ITALIAN POET gave the Fable; the present Writer made his own Use of it; or in other Words, the Ground-work, or *Canevas*, (as the *French* call it) is METASTASIO'S; for the Colouring Mr. *Murphy* is answerable.

He could not but be surprized to find that, on the first Nights the Scene in the third Act, between *Sylvia* and *Henrico*, was deemed equivocal. There is always a sufficient Number ready to ascribe to an Author various Meanings, which he never had, "and see at Cannon's what was never there." — To these Gentlemen he returns his Thanks; but the Species of Wit, which they are willing to allow him, he begs leave publickly to disclaim. The Character of a Girl, who has never seen a Man, and who has been taught to think of such a Being with Horror, is merely imaginary; but the possible, or Poetical Existence of such a Girl being once established, it is to be wished that the Critics would agree what Questions it is natural for her to ask on her first Interview with a Man. METASTASIO makes her say,

Che vuoi da me?

Un Uom Sei dunque!

Andiamo Insieme.

Ab! troppo non trattenerli, &c.

And

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

And these little Touches, (so differently do we judge in *England*) were thought abroad to be delicate Strokes of the most elegant Simplicity.

He could wish it had been universally understood that it was not a TRAGEDY he offered to the Public, but a DRAMATIC POEM; that is to say, a Piece with some interesting Situations to engage the Affections, but which affords more Room for a Picturesque Imagination to display itself, than is generally allowed to the more important Concerns of real Tragedy, where the Distress should be always encreasing, where the Passions should be always rising to fuller and stronger Emotions, and where of Course the Poet ought not to find Leisure for Imagery and Description. Had this been felt and acknowledged, no Body would have looked for another Kind of Entertainment than was promised; and the Smiles arising from SYLVIA's Dread of a Man (on the first Discovery of him,) and her gradual Attachment to him in Compliance with natural Instinct, would never have been judged inconsistent with the Colour of the Whole. But if the Author of the *Desert Island* has erred in this, he has the Consolation of having erred with the greatest Poet now in *Europe*.

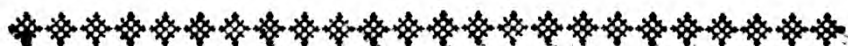
As many of the malevolent Writers of the Age have heretofore honoured the Author with their Abuse, and as he was apprehensive that they still remained under the Oppression of their Dullness and Obscurity, it was deemed proper to call them forth into Daylight, by exhibiting one general Representative of them all on the Stage. For this he returns his Thanks to the Author of the Prologue; and if any needy Booksellers, or unhappy Authors, can find their Account in taking further Liberties with him, he hereby declares, he should be sorry not to have Merit enough to provoke some of them, and for their Encouragement,
he

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

he adds in the Words of the noble Author of the
Characteristics, that “ He will never reply, un-
“ less he should hear of them or their Works in
“ any good Company a Twelve-month after.”

Lincoln's Inn,
Jan. 26, 1760.

The AUTHOR.



P R O L O G U E,

Written and Spoken by MR. GARRICK,

In the Character of a DRUNKEN POET.

A L L, all shall out—all that I know and feel;
I will by Heav'n—to higher Powers appeal!—
Behold a Bard!—no Author of to-night—
No, no,—they can't say that, with all their spite:
Ay, you may frown (looking behind the scenes) I'm at you,
great and small—
Your Poet, Players, Managers and all!—
These Fools within here, swear that I'm in liquor—
My passion warms me—makes my utt'rance thicker;—
I totter too—but that's the Gout and Pain,—
French Wines, and living high, have been my bane.—
From all temptations now, I wisely steer me;
Nor will I suffer one fine woman near me.
And this I sacrifice, to give you pleasure—
For you I've coin'd my brains,—and here's the treasure!

[Pulls out a Manuscript.

*A treasure this, of profit and delight!
And all thrown by for this damn'd stuff to-night:—
This is a play would water ev'ry eye!—
If I but look upon't, it makes me cry:
This Play would tears from blood-stain'd Soldiers draw,—
And melt the bowels of hard-hearted Law!
Would fore and aft the storm-proof Sailor rake;—
Keep turtle eating Aldermen awake!
Would the cold blood of ancient Maidens thrill,
And make ev'n pretty younger tongues lie still.*

This

P R O L O G U E.

*This Play not ev'n Managers would refuse,—
Had Heav'n but giv'n 'em any brains to chuse!—*

[Puts up his Manuscript.

*Your Bard to-night, bred in the ancient school,
Designs and measures all by critic rule;
'Mongst Friends—it goes no farther—He's a Fool.* }

*So very classic, and so very dull—
His Desert Island is his own dear Skull:
No Soul to make the Play-house ring, and rattle,
No Trumpets, Thunder, Ranting, Storms, or Battle!
But all your fine poetic Prittle-prattle.* }

*The Plot is this—A Lady's cast away—
“ Long before the beginning of the Play;”
And they are taken by a Fisherman,
The Lady and the Child—'tis Bays's plan—
So on he blunders—He's an Irishman.—* }

*'Tis all alike—his comic stuff I mean—
I hate all humour—it gives me the Spleen;
So damn'em both, with all my heart, unsight, unseen.
But should you ruin him, still I'm undone—
I've try'd all ways to bring my Phœnix on—* }

[Shewing his Play again.

*Flatter I can with any of their Tribe—
Can cut and slash—indeed I cannot bribe;
What must I do then?—beg you to subscribe.
Be kind ye Boxes, Galleries, and Pit—
'Tis but a Crown a piece, for all this Wit:
All Sterling Wit—to puff myself I hate—
You'll ne'er supply your wants at such a rate!
'Tis worth your money, I would scorn to wrong ye,—
You smile consent—I'll send my hat among ye.* }

[Going, he returns.

*So much beyond all praise your bounties swell!
Not my own Tongue, my Gra-ti-tude can tell—
“ A little Flattery sometimes does well.”* }

[Staggers off.

Dramatis

That wildy-gadding 'midst the rifted rocks
 Wreath your fantastic shoots;—ye darksome trees,
 That weave yon verdant arch above my head,
 Shad'wing this solemn scene;—ye moss-grown
 caves,

Romantic grottos, — all ye objects drear, —
 Tell me, in pity tell me, have ye seen,
 Thro' the long series of involving time,
 In which you have inclos'd this lonely mansion,
 Say; have ye seen another wretch like me?—
 No, never! — You, in tend'rest sympathy,
 Have join'd my plaits — you, at the midnight
 hour,

When with uprooted hair I've strew'd the earth,
 And call'd my husband gone;—have call'd in vain
 Perfidious Ferdinand! — you, at that hour,
 Have waken'd echo in each vocal cell,
 Till ev'ry grove, and ev'ry mountain hoar,
 Mourn'd to my grefs responsive—Well you know
 The story of my woes — Ev'n yonder marble
 Relenting feels the touch; receives each trace
 That forms the melancholy tale.—Tho' rude,
 And inexpert my hand; — tho' all uncouth
 The instrument, yet there behold my work
 Well nigh complete — let me about it freight.

[She advances toward the rock.]

Ye deep engraven letters, there remain;
 And if in future time resistless fate
 Should throw some Briton on this dismal shore;
 Then speak aloud; — to his astonish'd sense
 Relate my sad, my memorable case —
 Alarm his soul, call out —————

STOP

The DESERT ISLAND.

STOP TRAVELLER.

HERE

CONSTANTIA,

WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,

SYLVIA,

WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,

THE PERFIDIOUS

FERDINAND;

WHO PRETENDING TO LAND HER

FOR REFRESHMENT

FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,

BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER

ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,

WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,

PITY MY WRONGS,

BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND,

(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)

I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R - - - -

Revenge! — the word Revenge is wanting still.

Ye holy pow'rs! if with one pitying look

You'll deign to view me, grant my earnest pray'r!

Let me but finish this my sad inscription,

Then let this busy, this afflicted heart

Be still at once, and beat my breast no more.

[She goes on with her work.]

Enter SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

My dearest mother — oh! quite out of breath.

6 The D E S E R T I S L A N D.

To wretches you refuse! — can I forget
Perfidious Ferdinand? — His tyrant form
Is ever present — The deluding looks,
Endearing accents, and the soft regards
With which he led me to yon moss-clad cave,
There to repose awhile — oh! cruel man!
And you, ye conscious wilds, I call you false!
Accomplices in guilt! — The Zephyrs bland
That pant upon each leaf; — the melody
That warbles thro' your groves; the falling foun-
tains

That at each deep'ning cadence lull the mind,
Were all suborn'd against me; all conspir'd
To wrap me in the silken folds of sleep.
Sudden I wake — where, where is Ferdinand?
I rave, I shriek, — no Ferdinand replies; —
Frantic I rove thro' all your winding glades, —
I seek the shore, — no Ferdinand appears —
I climb yon craggy steeps; I see the ship
Unfurling all her sails — I call aloud,
I stamp, cry out; — deaf as the roaring sea
He catches ev'ry gale that blows from heav'n,
And cleaves his liquid way. —

S Y L V I A.

Why will you thus
Recal your past afflictions? —

C O N S T A N T I A.

Ah! what then,
Thou wretched Constance, what were then thy
feelings?

I rend

The DESERT ISLAND. 2

I rend my tresses, — beat my breast in vain,
In vain stretch out these ineffectual arms,
Pierce with my frantic cries the wounded air,
Dash my bare bosom on the flinty rock,
Then rise again, and strain my aching sight,
To see the ship still less'ning to my view,
And take the last, last glimpse, as far, far off
In the horizon's verge she dwindles still,
Grows a dim speck, and mixes with the clouds
Just vanishing, — just lost, — ah! seen no more.

S Y L V I A.

I pr'ythee don't talk so — my heart dies in me —
Why won't you strive a little to forget
This melancholy theme? — the twilight grey
Of morn but faintly streaks the east; the stars
still glimmer thro' the whit'ning air; the groves
Are mute; yon all-devouring deep lies hush'd;
The tuneful birds, and the whole brute creation
Still sink in soft oblivious slumber wrapp'd,
Forgetful of their cares; — all, — all but you
Know some repose; — you pass the dreary night
In tears and ceaseless grief; then rising wild
Anticipate the dawn, and here resume
Your doleful task, or else ascend the height
Of yonder promontory; their forlorn
You sit, and hear the brawling waves beneath
Lash the resounding shore; your brimful eye
Still fix'd on that sad quarter of the heav'ns
Where my hard father disappear'd.

CONSTAN-

CONSTANTIA.

Yes, there
 My melancholy loves to dwell; there loves
 To sit, and pine over its hoard of grief;
 To roll these eyes o'er all the fullen main,
 In hopes some sail may this way shape its course,
 With tidings of the human race — Oh! heav'ns!
 Could I behold that dear, that wish'd for sight,
 Could I but see some vestiges of man,
 Some mark of social life, ev'n tho' the ship
 Should shun this isle, and court propitious gales
 Beneath some happier clime; yet still the view
 Would cheer my soul, and my heart bound
 with joy

At that faint prospect of my fellow creatures.
 But not for me, such transport; — not for me —
 Dear native land, I now no more must see thee,
 Condemn'd in ever-during solitude to mourn,
 From thy sweet joys, society, debarr'd!

— SYLVIA.

But to your happiness what's wanting here?
 Full many a time I've heard you praise the arts,
 The polish'd manners, and gay scenes of bliss
 Which Europe yields — yet ever and anon
 I from your own discourse can gather too
 That happiness is all unknown to Europe;
 That envy there can dwell, and discontent;
 The smile, that wakens at another's woe;
 The heart, that sickens at another's praise;
 The tongue, that carries the malignant tale;

The

The little spirit, that subverts a friend ;
 Fraud, perfidy, ingratitude, and murder.
 Now sure with reason I prefer these scenes
 Of innocence, tranquillity and joy !

CONSTANTIA.

Alas ! my child, 'tis easy to forego
 Unknowh delights — pleasures we've never
 felt. —

SYLVIA.

Are we not here what you yourself have told me
 In Europe sovereigns are ? — here we have fix'd
 Our little sylvan reign. — The guileless race
 Of animals, that roam the lawns and woods,
 Are tractable and willing subjects ; — pay
 Passive obedience to us — and yon sea
 Becomes our tributary ; hither rolls
 In each hoarse-murm'ring tide his various stores
 Of dantiest shell-fish — the unbidden earth,
 Of human toil all ignorant, pours forth
 Whatever to the eye, or taste, can prove
 Rare, exquisite, and good — at once the spring
 Call forth its green delights, and summer's blush
 Glows on each purple branch. The seasons here
 On the same tree, with glad surprize,
 Behold each other's gifts arise :
 Spontaneous fruits around us grow ;
 For ever here the Zephyrs blow :
 Shrubs ever flow'ring,
 Shades embow'ring ;
 Heav'nly spots,
 Cooling grotts,

C

Verdant

The DESERT ISLAND.

Verdant mountains,
 Falling fountains;
 Pure limpid rills,
 Adown the hills,
 That wind their way
 And o'er the meadows play,
 Enamour'd of th' enchanted ground.

C O N S T A N T I A.

What is this waste of beauty, all these charms
 Of cold, inanimate, unconscious nature,
 Without the social sense? those joys, my Sylvia,
 Thou can't not miss; for thou hast never
 known 'em.

S Y L V I A.

But still those beauteous tracts of Europe,
 which you so much regret, are full of men;
 And men, you know, are animals of prey:
 I'm sure that you yourself have told me so
 A thousand times. —

C O N S T A N T I A.

And if I have, my child,
 I told a dismal truth. — Oh! they are false,
 Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers;
 Their unrelenting hearts no harbour know
 For honour, truth, humanity, or love.

S Y L V I A.

Well then, in this lone isle, this dear retreat
 From them at least we're free. —

CONSTAN

CONSTANTIA.

Poor innocent!

I can't but grieve for her — [*Bursts into tears,
aside.*]

SYLVIA.

Why fall afresh

Those drops of sorrow? — pray you, now give
o'er. —

CONSTANTIA.

My heart will break—I do not grieve, my child—
I can't conceal my tears—they must have way—

SYLVIA.

Nay, if you love me, sure you will not thus
Make my heart ache within me! —

CONSTANTIA.

No, my sweet —

I will not weep — all will be well, my love —
Oh! misery! — I can't, — I can't contain —
The black ingratitude! — [*Weeps.*]

SYLVIA.

Say, is there aught
That I can do, Mama, to give you comfort? —
If there is, tell me — shall I fetch my fawn?
Dry up your tears, and he is your's this moment
— I'll run and bring him to you. —

CONSTANTIA.

Sylvia, no! —

SYLVIA.

Nay do, Mama—I beg you will—you shall. [*Exit*

CONSTANTIA *alone.*

Alas! I fear my brain will turn — the sun
 Full sixteen times has made his annual course,
 Since here I've dragg'd a miserable being,
 The victim of despair; which long e'er now,
 To phrenzy kindling, must have forc'd me dash
 My brain in madness on yon flinty rocks,
 And end my pangs at once; if the keen instinct
 Of strong maternal love had not restrain'd
 My wild disorder'd soul, and bade me live
 To watch her tender infancy; to rear
 Her blooming years; with fond delighted care
 To tend each blossom of her growing mind,
 And see light gradual dawning on her soul.
 And yet to see her thus, — to see her here,
 Cut off from ev'ry social bliss; condemn'd
 Like some fair flow'r that in a desert grows,
 To breathe its sweets into the passing wind,
 And waste its bloom all unperceiv'd away!
 It is enough to break a mother's heart.
 Let me not think on't — let me shun that thought,
[Sits down and sings.

I.

What tho' his guilt my heart hath torn,
 Yet lovely is his mien,
 His eyes mild-op'ning as the morn,
 Round him each grace is seen.
 But oh! ye nymphs, your loves ne'er let him win,
 For oh! deceit and falshood dwell within.

II. From

II.

From his red lip his accents stole,
 Soft as kind vernal snows;
 Melting they came, and in the soul
 Desire and joy arose.
 But oh! ye nymphs, ne'er listen to his art,
 For oh! base falsehood rancles in his heart.

III.

He left me in this lonely state!
 He fled, and left me here,
 Another Ariadne's fate,
 To mourn the live-long year.
 He fled,—but oh! what pains the heart must
 prove,
 When we reveal the crimes of him we love!

Re-enter SYLVIA.

S Y L V I A.

I cannot bring him now — in yonder stream
 That thro' its pebbled channel glides along
 Soft-murm'ring to the sea, he stands to cool
 His beauteous form in the pure limpid rill.
 But still he shall be your's —

C O N S T A N T I A.

To thee, my child,
 To thee he causes joy — but joy to me
 There's nothing now can bring — left by my
 husband!
 By the false barb'rous man! —

S Y L V I A.

SYLVIA.

And yet this man
 You still regret — you must excuse me now —
 I vow, I can't but think, 'midst all your grief,
 All your reproaches, your complaints against
 him,
 That still this man, this cruel fell deceiver,
 Has found, — I know not why — within your
 breast
 Some tender advocate, to plead his cause.

CONSTANTIA.

No, Sylvia, no; my love is turn'd to hath! —

SYLVIA.

Then dry your sorrows and this day begin
 A happier train of Years — and lo! the sun
 Emerges from the sea — He lifts his orb
 Above the purpled main, and streams abroad
 His golden fluid o'er the world — the birds
 Exulting wake their notes — all things rejoice,
 And hills, and groves, and rocks, and vallies
 smile.

Let me entreat you then forget your cares,
 And share the general blifs. —

*[The sun is seen to rise at a distance, as it
 were out of the sea.]*

CONSTANTIA.

Once more all hail,
 Thou radiant power, who in your bright career
 Or rising or descending, hast beheld
 My never-ceasing woe! — again thou climb'st

In

In orient glory, and recall't the cares
And toils of man and beast — but oh! in all
Your flaming course, your beams will never light
Upon a wretch so lost, so curst as I am.

SYLVIA.

And yet, my mother —

CONSTANTIA.

Mine are pangs, my child,
Strokes of adversity no time can cure,
No lenient arts can soften or assuage.
But I'll not grieve thee, Sylvia — I'll retire
To some sequester'd haunt — There, all forlorn,
I'll sit, and wear myself away in thought. [*Exit.*

SYLVIA, *alone.*

Alas! how obstinately bent on grief
Is her whole mind! — the votarist of care!
In vain I try to soften her afflictions,
And with each art beguile her from her woe.
I chide, intreat, caress, and all in vain.
And what to me seems strange, perverse, and
wond'rous,
The more I strive, the more her sorrows swell;
Her tears the faster fall, fall down her cheek
In streams so copious, and such bitter anguish,
That I myself at length, I know not how,
Catch the soft weakness, and o'erpow'r'd with
grief,
Flow all dissolving in unbidden tears.
Assist her heav'n. — Her heart will break at last —
I trem-

I tremble at the thought — I'll follow straight
And still implore, beseech, try ev'ry way
To reconcile her to herself and me.

But see, look yonder! what a sight is there!
What can it mean, that huge enormous mass
That moves upon the bosom of the deep!
— A floating mountain! — no — a mountain
never

Could change its place — for such a monstrous
bulk

How light it urges on its way — how quick,
How rapid in its course! — What can it be —
— I'll tow'rd the shore, and from the pointed
rock

That juts into the waves, at leisure view
This wond'rous sight, and what it is explore.

END of the first ACT.

A C T



A C T II.

SCENE, *Another view of the Island, with an opening to the sea between several hills and rocks.*

Enter SYLVIA.

S Y L V I A.

***** TILL I behold it—still it glides along
 * S * Thro' the tumultuous sea — and lo!
 * * * before it

The waves divide! and now they
 close again,

Leaving a tract of angry foam behind.

It must be, sure, some monster of the deep;
 For see! — upon its huge broad back it bears
 Expanded wings, that, spreading to the wind,
 Lie broad incumbent o'er the surge beneath —
 — Ah! save me, save me! — what new forms
 appear!

What shapes of unknown being rise before me!
 From yon huge monster's side they issue forth,
 And bolt upon the shore! — behold, they stop,
 And now with eager disconcerted pace
 Precipitate rush forward on the isle, —
 Now 'mongst the rocks they wind their silent
 way.

D

FERDI-

FERDINAND *and* HENRICO *appear.*

Protect me, heav'n! defend me! shield me!
— ah!

Hide me, ye woods, within your deep recess;
Ne'er may these monsters penetrate your haunts;
Ne'er trace my footsteps thro' your darksome
ways.

Behind the covert of this woodbine bow'r
Oh! let me rest conceal'd! — [*She retires.*]

FERDINAND *and* HENRICO *come forward.*

H E N R I C O.

No trace appears,
No vestige here is seen of human kind.
'Tis drear, 'tis waste, and unfrequented all.
And hark! — what noise? — from yonder toil-
ing deep
How dreadful sounds the pealing roar! — my
friend,
My valued Ferdinand, 'twere best retire.
This cannot be the place. —

F E R D I N A N D.

Oh! my Henrico,
This is the fatal shore — the well-known scene,
Yon bay, yon rocks, yon mountains, from
whose brows
Th' imbow'ring forest over-hangs the deep,
Each well-remember'd object strikes my view,
Answers the image in my mind preserv'd,

Engraven

Engraven there by love's recording hand,
And never, but with life, to fade from thence.

H E N R I C O.

And yet thy love-eneebled soul may form
Imaginary tokens of resemblance.
This foil unbeaten seems by mortal step.

F E R D I N A N D.

No, my Henrico, no — this is the spot —
My heart in ev'ry pulse confirms it to me.
This is the place, the very place, where fate
Began to weave the tissue of my woes.
Oh! I was curst, abhorr'd of heav'n, or else
I ne'er had trusted the contentious waves,
But kept my store of happiness at home.

H E N R I C O.

Repine not for an action that arose
From filial piety, — a father's mandate
Requir'd obedience from you. —

F E R D I N A N D.

To his summons
I paid a glad attention — yet, good heav'n!
Why in that early æra of my bliss
Should then his orders come, to dash my joys?—
Oh! I was blest with all that rarest beauty,
With all that ev'ry Venus of the mind,
The tender heart, and the enliven'd wit
Could pour delightful on the raptur'd sense
Of the young bridegroom, whose admiring eyes
Still hung enamour'd on her ev'ry charm,

20 The DESERT ISLAND.

And thence drank long inspiring draughts of
love,

Unsated still, — still kindling at the view.

H E N R I C O.

Thy fate indeed was hard —

F E R D I N A N D.

Heav'n knows it was —

Each soft desire, each joy refin'd was mine —

The hours soft glided by, and as they pass'd
Scatter'd new blessings from their balmy wings;

They saw our ever new delight; they saw

A blooming offspring crown our mutual loves;

The mother's features, and her ev'ry grace

In this our daughter exquisitely trac'd.

But to be torn from that supreme of bliss, —

My wife, — Constantia, — and my beauteous
babe,

Here to be left on this untravell'd isle,

To pine in bitterness of want! — their bed

The cold bare earth, while the inclement winds

From yonder main came howling round their
heads,

Until at length the friendly hand of death

In pity threw his shroud upon their woes.

H E N R I C O.

Too sure, I fear, they're lost. —

F E R D I N A N D.

Perhaps, my friend,

Perhaps when gasping in the pangs of death, —

— When

— When ev'ry beauty faded from her cheek,
— And her eye languish'd motionless and dim,
Perhaps ev'n then, in that sad dismal hour,
My name still hover'd on her quiv'ring lips,
And nought but death could tear me from her
heart.

H E N R I C O.

Her tend'rest thoughts no doubt were fix'd on
thee.

F E R D I N A N D.

Her tend'rest thoughts! oh! no — her utmost
rage —

Who knows, Henrico, but she deem'd me false;
Deem'd me a vile deserter from her arms?

She did, — she must — each strong appearance
join'd

To mark me guilty — Oh! that thought strikes
deep

It's scorpion stings into my very heart.

Could she but think me so refin'd in guilt,

So exquisite a villain, as to cause

A moment's anguish in that tender breast,

Where all the loves, where all the virtues dwelt,

— 'Twere misery, — 'twere torture in th' ex-
treme —

And yet she thought me such — by heav'n she
did —

Accus'd me of the worst, the blackest treason,

Of treason to my love — stung with th' idea

She roam'd this isle, and to these desert wilds

Pour'd

Pour'd forth her lamentable tale ; — who knows
 But on some craggy cliff whole nights she sat
 Raving in madness to the moon's pale gleam ;
 Until at length all kindling into phrenzy,
 Clasp'ing her infant closer to her breast,
 With desperation wild from off the rock
 Headlong she plung'd into the roaring waves,
 While her last accents murmur'd faithless Fer-
 dinand.

H E N R I C O.

Distract not thus your soul with fancied woes.
 She could not think thee faithless ; thee, whose
 mind,
 Whose ev'ry virtue were so well approv'd.

F E R D I N A N D.

Still will I hope she did not. — Oh ! she knew
 I made that voyage in duty to a father.
 A while we steer'd a happy course, until
 Beneath the burning line, from whence the sun
 In streight direction pours his ardent blaze
 On ev'ry fever'd sense, a storm arose,
 Sudden and wild ; as if a war of nature
 Were thund'ring o'er our heads — full twenty
 days

It drove us headlong on the dashing surge
 Far from our destin'd way, until at length
 In evil hour we landed on this isle.

SYLVIA.

SYLVIA returns, and peeps from behind a hedge.

S Y L V I A.

Methought I heard a sound, as if they both
Held mutual converse — yonder lo! they
stand —

They do not follow me — what can they be! —

F E R D I N A N D.

There is the spot, just where yon aged tree
Imbrowns the plain beneath, on which the
villains,

The unrelenting band of pirates, seiz'd me —
There I receiv'd my wound, and there I fought
Till my sword shiver'd in my hand — worn out,
Oppress'd by numbers, pow'rless, and disarm'd,
They bore me headlong to the beach; in vain
Piercing the air with horrid cries; in vain
Back towr'd the cave, where poor Constantia
slept,

With her lov'd infant daughter in her arms,
Straining my ardent eyes — my eyes alone!
For oh! their cruelty had bound my arms,
And tears and looks were all I then could use.

S Y L V I A.

The voice but indistinctly strikes my ear,
Would they would turn this way. —

F E R D I N A N D.

Fetter'd, ty'd down,
They dragg'd me to the vessel — bore me hence —

In

In vain our ship pursued — In vain gave chase —
 Form'd with detested skill the guilty bark
 In which they plung'd me, gliding oe'r the main
 Outstripp'd their tardy course — they steer'd
 away

Far to their regions of accursed bondage,
 Far from Constantia, far from ev'ry joy
 A doating husband, and delighted father
 Feels in mix'd rapture with his wife and child.
 Oh! I could pour my plaints — but I'll not
 wound
 Thy ear, my friend, with further lamentation.

H E N R I C O.

Would Heav'n I could remove the cause —

F E R D I N A N D.

Alas!
 That cannot be — Thou can'st not bid return
 The irrevocable flight of time; recall
 The moments of our young delight; annul
 And render void, what once the hand of fate
 Hath from it's stores of woe, pour'd down upon
 me.

S Y L V I A (*half concealed.*)

Why will they stand with looks averted thus?
 I long to see their countenance and mein.

F E R D I N A N D.

But yet, thou best of friends, yet grant me this;
 Assist my search; — oh! let me roam around
 This fatal shore — the isle's circumference

Circles

Circles a scanty space — we cannot lose
Each other here — do thou pursue that path
That leads due east — this way I'll bent my
course.

H E N R I C O.

By heav'n there is no task of hardihood
Of toil, or danger but I'll try for thee;
For thee, my friend; — to thee I owe my life,
And that more precious boon, my liberty:
Thou hast releas'd me from the falling chain,
From slav'ry's bitter presure — 'twas thy skill
That form'd the plan of freedom, seiz'd the
vessel,
And made your friends the partners of your
flight.
— For thee I'll roam around — but oh! I fear
Our search will prove in vain —

F E R D I N A N D.

Too sure it will —
And yet it is the doom of love like mine
To dwell for ever on the sad idea
Of the dear object lost; to visit oft
A lonely pilgrim ev'ry well known scene,
Each haunted glade, where the lov'd object
stray'd;
To call each circumstance of pass'd delight
Back to the soul; in fond excursions seek
The dear lamented shade — Then, oh! my
friend,
Then let me taste that sad, that pensive comfort;

E

Range

Range thro' these wilds; ascend each craggy
steep,

Try in each grotto, in each gloomy cave
If haply there remain some vestige of Constantia.

[Exit.

H E N R I C O.

On yonder beach we'll meet again — fare-
well! —

S Y L V I A.

Conceal thee Sylvia;—ah!—it comes this way!—
Then let me seek the covert of the woods,
Where nods the brownest horror; there lie safe
From the unusual sight of these strange beings.

[Exit.

H E N R I C O, *solus*.

How cruel is my friend's condition! — doom'd
For ever to regret, yet never find
The object of his soul — his early love
He lavish'd all on her — with her it goes
To the dank grave, and leaves him hapless here
To die a lingering death. — Yet still I'll try
By ev'ry office friendship can perform
To heal the wound that preys upon his life.

[Exit.

The

The back scene closes, and presents a thick wood; then enter SYLVIA.

S Y L V I A.

What have my eyes beheld? — my flutt'ring
heart

Beats quick in strange emotions — from yon
grove

Of tufted trees, I saw this nameless being

Walk o'er the ruffet heath — it's face appear'd

Confess'd to view — It cannot be a man —

No lines of cruelty deform'd his visage. —

Were it a man, his untam'd savage soul

Would strongly speak in each distorted fea-
ture —

This was all pleasing, amiable and mild :

A gentle sorrow, bright'ning into smiles,

Such as bespoke a calm, yet feeling spirit,

Sat on it's peaceful brow, and o'er it threw

A gentle gleam of sweetness and of pain.

— It cannot be a woman neither — no —

The dress accords not with that mode, which
oft

My mother hath describ'd — Whate'er it be

Attraction dwells about it; winning smiles;

Affuasive airs of tenderness and joy.

I'll seek my mother — she perhaps may know

These forms, to me unusual — By this row

Of darksome pines, my steps all unperceiv'd

May gain the place where with assiduous hand
 She works, and teaches the rude rocks to tell
 Her mournful elegy — what mean my feet?
 — Why stand they thus forgetful of their office?
 — Why leaves th' involuntary sigh! — and
 why
 Thus in quick pulses beats my heart? — my
 eyes

A misty dimness covers — In my ears
 Strange murmurs sound — my very breath is
 lost —

What can it be? — I know thee fear! — 'tis thou
 That caus'st this! — and yet it can't be fear —
 Fear cannot thrill with pleasure thro' the veins;
 Knows not this dubious joy — these grateful
 tremblings —

I cannot guess what these emotions mean,
 Nor what this busy thing my heart would want!
 Let me seek shelter in my mother's arms. [*Exit.*]

*Scene changes to the first view of the island
 where CONSTANTIA'S inscription is seen*

Enter FERDINAND.

No — never more shall these fond eyes behold
 her.

Lost, lost, my poor Constantia lost! — In vain
 I search these gloomy woods — In vain call out
 Her honour'd name to ev'ry hill and dale.

My

My eyes are false, or on the craggy base
 Of yonder rock some instrument appears,
 The mark of human kind — [Takes it up.
 A broken sword!
 Oh! all ye heav'nly pow'rs! — the very same —
 This once was mine — unfaithful to its trust
 It fail'd me at my utmost need — I see
 The well known characters; the very words
 That form'd its motto — 'tis, it is the same —
 Oh! were Constantia found! — what do I see?
 All o'er with hair the flinty rock bestrew'd! —
 These were her decent tresses — these in anguish
 She tore relentless from her beauteous head,
 Up by the roots she tore, and scatter'd wild
 To all the passing winds — she still may live! —
 Constantia? — my belov'd, — my life, return! —
 Constantia! — ha! — what mystic characters
 Are hewn into the rock? — my name appears —
 [He reads.

STOP TRAVELLER.
 HERE
 CONSTANTIA,
 WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,
 SYLVIA,
 WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,
 THE PERFIDIOUS
 FERDINAND;
 WHO PRETENDING TO LAND HER
 FOR REFRESHMENT

FROM

FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,
 BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER
 ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,
 WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Support me, heav'n! — ah! no — withhold your
 aid,

Ye unrelenting pow'rs, and let me thus,
 Each vital spark subsiding, thus expire.

[Leans against the rock.]



Enter HENRICO.

H E N R I C O.

What ho! — my Ferdinand! — this way the
 found

Struck on my list'ning ear — what means my
 friend

Thus growing to the rock, transform'd to stone,
 A breathing statue, 'midst these shapeless piles? —

F E R D I N A N D.

Henrico there! — read there! —

H E N R I C O.

Letters engrav'd! — *[He reads to himself as
 far as*

SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Alas! my friend — *They gaze speechless at each
 other for some time, then Ferdinand falls.*

The storm of grief o'erpow'rs his feeble spirits.

Now

The DESERT ISLAND. 31

Now rouse thy strength, my Ferdinand, and
bear
This load of sorrow like a man. ———

F E R D I N A N D.

I do ———
Thou see'st I do — I do not weep, my friend —
These eyes are dry — their very source is dry —
— I am her cruel husband to the last. ———

H E N R I C O.

Oh! thou wert ever kind and tender to her.

F E R D I N A N D.

Tender and kind! — look there! — there stands
the black,
The horrid roll of guilt denounc'd against me.
Lo! the dread characters! — let me peruse
The whole sad record; of this bitter woe
Still deeper drink, and gorge me with affliction.
[He reads.]

FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,

PITY MY WRONGS,

BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND,

(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)

I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R - - -

Revenge, she meant to say—the word's begun—
But death untimely stopp'd her hand—oh! misery!
She thought me false, and yet could love still—

The

The wound now pierces deeper — had she loath'd
me,

Abhorr'd me, curs'd me, 'twere not half the
torture

This angel-goodness causes — and to lose her!
To lose a mind like her's, that thus could pour
Such unexampled tenderness and love,
Amidst the keenest anguish — on the earth
Measure thy length, thou wretch accurst! —
there lie,

For ever lie, and to these woods and wilds
Howl out thy griefs in madness and despair.

H E N R I C O.

I feel, I feel thy sorrows — oh! my friend, —
Cruel event! — your tears alas! are just —
Then let them flow, and let me mingle mine —
Your gushing sorrows may assuage your grief,
This storm of rage attemp'ring into peace.

F E R D I N A N D.

Who talks of peace? — let phrenzy seize my
brain —

Come, moon-struck madness, with thy glaring
eye,

And clanking chain; come, shoot thy kindling
fires

Into my utmost soul; — blast ev'ry thinking
pow'r;

Raze each idea out; — tear up at once
The seat of memory — no — leave me that —

Still leave me memory, to picture forth

Constan-

Constantia's lovely form, that I may sit
 With unclad sides, upon some blasted heath
 And gloat upon her image ; — see her still,
 See her whole days with fancy's gushing eye,
 And gaze on that alone —

H E N R I C O.

Arise my friend,
 And quit this fatal shore —

F E R D I N A N D.

And quit this shore!
 But whither turn? — ah! whither shall I go? —
 Where shelter me from misery? — this isle
 Shall be my journey's bound. —

H E N R I C O.

What can'st thou mean?

F E R D I N A N D.

Never again to draw the vital air
 But where my love expir'd — to feed my soul
 With these sad objects, this sepulchral tale,
 Ev'n to the height of yet unheard-of anguish;
 To print my pious kisses on the rocks;
 To bathe the ground, which her dear footsteps
 press'd,
 With the incessant tears of burning anguish;
 To make these wilds all vocal with her name,
 Till this cold lifeless tongue shall move no more.

H E N R I C O.

By heav'n, you must not think —

F

FERDI-

F E R D I N A N D.

Farewell! — farewell! —
 Consult thy happiness! — for ever here
 By fate I'm doom'd to stay — alas! Con-
 stantia! —

To perish with thy infant here! — no friend
 To close thy ghastly orbs! — thy pale remains
 On the bare earth expos'd, without the tribute
 Of a fond husband's tears o'er thy dead corse; —
 Without the last sad obsequies — yet here,
 I still will raise an empty sepulchre.
 There shall no cold unconscious marble form
 In mockery of imitated woe
 Bend o'er the fancy'd urn: myself will be
 The sad, the pensive, monumental figure,
 Distilling real anguish o'er the tomb;
 Till wasting by degrees I moulder down,
 And sink to silent dust. —

H E N R I C O.

What man could do,
 Already you've perform'd —

F E R D I N A N D.

Prithee, no more —
 I will about it streight — this place affords
 Materials for the work — Thither I'll bring
 Whate'er can deck the scene — Constantia, yes;
 I will appease thy discontented shade,
 Then follow thee to yonder realms of bliss.

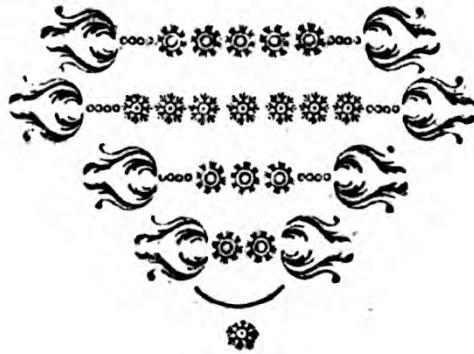
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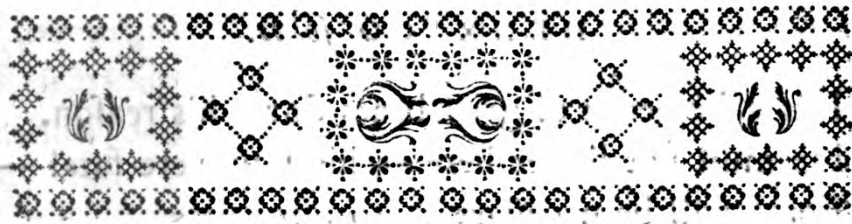
HENRICO.

HENRICO *solus.*

His vehemence of grief bears down his reason.
He must not linger here — his stay were fatal —
Force will be necessary — to our boat
I'll hasten back and call some trusty friends
To drag him from this melancholy shore.

END of the Second ACT.






A C T III.

The same scene continues.

Enter SYLVIA.


 HRO' the befriending gloom of arch-
 ing bow'rs,
 Thro' walks, where never sun-beam
 pierc'd, at length

I've gain'd this deep-encircled vale — ah! me!
 I feel strange tremors still — she is not here —
 Mama! — where can she be? — her mournful
 task

Waits for her ling'ring hand — my dearest
 mother —

She answers not — what noise is that? — me-
 thought

I heard some steps advancing — 'tis my fawn
 That rustles thro' the forest glade — he stops
 And looks, then runs, and stops again to take
 A fearful gaze — he too perhaps has seen
 These unknown beings — yonder lo! he stands
 In mute expressive wonder — heav'n protect me!
 — Thro' this close path, that gradual winding
 up

Leads

Leads on to plains, to woods, and verdant lawns
Embosom'd in the rock, I'll journey up —
The day now glows intense, but by the rills,
That thro' embow'ring groves come purling
down;

I oft can lay me, and enjoy each breeze
That plays amid those craggy scenes — a noise
From yonder interwoven branches — ha! —
Ye guarding angels, save me! — see, see there—
That thing again! —

Enter H E N R I C O.

H E N R I C O.

What beauteous form in these forlorn abodes
Attracts my wond'ring eyes? —

S Y L V I A.

Ye heav'nly pow'rs! [*Retiring from him.*]

H E N R I C O.

It swims before my sight — whate'er thou art,
Virgin, or goddess — oh! a goddess sure! —
Thou goddess of these mansions! — for thy looks
Beam heav'nly radiance, with propitious ears
Accept my supplication —

S Y L V I A.

Ha! — it speaks —
It speaks — what dost thou mean! —

H E N R I C O.

Oh! say what place,
What clime is this?—and what art thou that thus
Adorn'st this lonely mansion? —

S Y L V I A.

S Y L V I A.

Will you first
Promise to come no nearer?

H E N R I C O.

With devotion
As true as ever pilgrim offer'd up
In holy fervor to his saint, — I promise.

S Y L V I A.

How gentle it's demeanor! — tell me now
What thing thou art?

H E N R I C O.

One born to misery; —
A man, whom fate —

S Y L V I A.

A man! — art thou a man?

H E N R I C O.

I am. —

S Y L V I A.

Oh! heav'ns! — a man! — protect me — save
me — *[Runs away.]*

H E N R I C O.

Nay, fly me not — a sudden impulse here
Bids me pursue — forgive, thou unknown fair,
That with soft violence I thus presume
To force thee measure back thy steps again.
[He brings her back.]

S Y L V I A.

Force me not thus, inhuman, barb'rous man —
What have I said — Oh! worthy gen'rous man,
Thus

Thus on my knees I beg, — have mercy on
me —

— I never did you harm — indeed I did not. —

H E N R I C O.

Arise, [*raises her*] thou lonely tenant of these
woods,

And let me thus, — thus as befits the man
Whose mind runs o'er with rapture and surprize,
Whose heart throbs wild with mingled doubt
and joy,

Thus let me worship this celestial form,
This heav'nly brightness, to my wond'ring eyes
That sheds such influence, as when an angel
Breaks thro' a flood of glory to the sight,
Of some expiring faint, and cheers his soul
With visions of disclosing heav'n.

S Y L V I A.

He kneels! —

He kneels to me! — how mild his very look —
How soft each word! — are you indeed a man? —

H E N R I C O.

I am, sweet faint — and one whose heart is prone
To melt at each idea beauty prints
On his delighted sense; and sure such beauty,
Touch'd by the hand of harmony, adorn'd
With inexpressive graces, well may claim
My lowliest adoration and my love.

S Y L V I A.

This language all is new; — but still it has
I know not what of charming in't, that gains
Upon

Upon the list'ning ear — If this be falshood ; —
Then falshood can assume a pleasing look.

H E N R I C O.

Why those averted eyes ?

S Y L V I A.

What would you have ?

H E N R I C O.

Oh! if thou art as gracious, as thou'rt fair,
Say have you seen Constantia? when and where,
And how did she expire? —

S Y L V I A.

Constantia lives —

Why didst thou say expire? — my mother lives,
Lives in these blest abodes —

H E N R I C O.

Ah! gentle Sylvia, —

So I will call thee, — daughter of Constantia,
Oh! fly and find her out — mean time I'll seek
Th'afflicted Ferdinand. —

S Y L V I A.

What dost thou say? —

Can he, can Ferdinand be here? — that false,
Perfidious, barb'rous man, — can he be here?

H E N R I C O.

He is, my fair; nor barbarous nor false.

Fortune that made him wretched, could no
more.

Anon

Anon you'll know the whole; to waste a mo-
ment —

In conference now, and longer to suspend
The meeting of this pair, who now in agony
Bemoan their lot, were barbarous indeed.

S Y L V I A.

But may I trust him? won't he do her harm?

H E N R I C O.

He won't, my beauteous fair. —

S Y L V I A.

Is he like you? —

H E N R I C O.

His goodness far transcends me —

S Y L V I A.

Then I think

I'll venture to comply — let's go together. —

H E N R I C O.

Oh! I could tend thy steps for ever; hear
Soft accents warbling from thy vermeil lip,
Watch thy mild-glancing eye; behold how
grace,

Whate'er you do, which ever way you bend,
Guides each harmonious movement; but this
hour

Is friendship's due; then let us instant fly
Thro' diff'rent paths — thou to seek out Con-
stantia,

And I to find her husband — haply so

G

Their

Their meeting will be speedier — farewell!
 I'll bring him to this very spot — adieu!
 For a short interval adieu, my love!

S Y L V I A.

Farewell! — another word — pray what's your name?

H E N R I C O.

Fair excellence, Henrico I am call'd.

S Y L V I A.

Pray do not tarry long, Henrico —

H E N R I C O.

Why
 That pleasing charge, my sweet?

S Y L V I A.

I cannot tell;
 But as you're leaving me, each step you move,
 My spirits sink; a melancholy gloom
 Darkens the scene around, and I methinks
 Helpless in solitude am left again
 To wander all alone a dreary way.

H E N R I C O.

Oh! I will come again, thou angel sweetness!
 Yes, I will come, and at that lovely shrine
 Pour out my adoration and my vows.
 Yes, I will come, to part from thee no more;
 A moment now farewell! —

[Exit.

S Y L V I A.

SYLVIA, *alone.*
Farewell! — be sure you keep your word —

Yet He's gone,
And yet is with me still — absent I hear
And see him in his absence — still his looks
Beam with mild dignity, and still his voice
Sounds in my ear delightful — what it means,
This new-born sense, this wonderful emotion,
Unfelt till now, and mix'd of pain and joy,
I cannot guess — how my heart flutters in me!
I'll not perplex myself with vain conjecture;
Whate'er the cause, th'effect, I feel, is pleasing.

[Constantia is heard singing within the scenes.]

Oh! heav'n! what noise! — it is my mother's
Voice —

Again she pours her melancholy forth,
As sweetly plaintive as when sad Philomel,
Beneath some poplar shade, bemoans her young,
And sitting pensive on the lonely bough,
Her eye with sorrow dimm'd, she tunes her dirge,
Warbling the night away, while all around
The vocal woodland, and each hill and dale
Ring with her griefs harmonious — hark! —
that way

It sounds — all gracious powr's direct me to her,

[Exit.]

A short song is heard within the scenes,
then enter CONSTANTIA.

From walk to walk, from glade to glade, o'er all
The sea-girt isle, o'er ev'ry mountain's top,

I roam from place to place; but oh; no place
 Affords relief to me — the sun now leads
 The sultry hours, and from his burning ray
 Each living thing retires; yet I endure
 His fiercest rage. The fever in my mind
 Heeds not external circumstance, and time
 Witholds his medicinal aid — the trees,
 And rocks themselves his pow'ful influence
 own;
 — All but my grief — that, each succeeding
 day

Sees in my heart fresh bleeding as at first,
 Delay not thus, ye cruel fates, but come
 And wrap me in eternal rest. — Till then
 Let me pursue my melancholy task.

[Works at the inscription.]

Enter FERDINAND.

FERDINAND.

Away with their ill-tim'd, officious care.
 I'll none of it — 'tis cruelty not friendship —
 'Tis misery protracted, 'tis with art,
 Inhuman art, to lengthen out the life
 Of him who groans in torment — no — they
 never shall
 Compel me back to a base world again! —
 I've liv'd enough — my course is ended here —
 For here Constantia lies — ye heav'nly pow'rs!
 What means upon yon consecrated ground
 That visionary form, with lifted arm
 And gleaming steel, that seems in act to carve
 The rugged stone? —

CONSTAN-

CONSTANTIA.

What is't I hear! — a voice!
A groan! — from whence — ha!

— [Seeing Ferdinand.

FERDINAND.

'Tis, it is her ghost,
Her discontented shade that hovers still
About this place.

CONSTANTIA.

Avaunt, thou air-drawn shape
Of that Perfidious — ah! — [She faints away.

FERDINAND.

Leave me not thus —
Oh! ever gracious, ever gentle, say —
'Tis gone — in sullen silence gone! —

Enter HENRICO.

HENRICO.

Quick let me find him, to his raptur'd ear
[Laying hold of Ferdinand.
Give the delightful tidings — ha! —

FERDINAND.

And thus
I sink at once and follow my belov'd,
[Falls into Henrico's arms.

HENRICO.

He faints — He faints — the chilling dews of
death

Distil

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Distil thro' ev'ry pore — my Ferdinand,
Awake, arise, and hear the joyful sounds
Of happiness restor'd — His eyes unfold
To seek fair day light, and now close again
As if they sicken'd at the view —

F E R D I N A N D.

Forbear,
And let me die! —

H E N R I C O.

Constantia lives — she lives
Once more to fold thee in her warm embrace.

F E R D I N A N D.

I saw her fleeting ghost — fullen and pale
It vanish'd from my sight —

C O N S T A N T I A.

Haunt me not, thus
Thou cruel tyrant form! — [*Coming to herself.*]

H E N R I C O.

Whence is that voice?
Oh heav'ns — Constantia there! — she too
 entranc'd
Lies stretch'd upon the ground —

F E R D I N A N D.

Where is Constantia?
Oh! let me fly to her embrace — 'tis she —

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It is my wife! — it is Constantia! — still,
— Oh! ecstasy of bliss? — she still survives —

CONSTANTIA.

'Tis mere illusion all; — the false creation
Of some deceitful dream —

FERDINAND.

'Tis real all —
Again I told her thus — the known embrace
Hath thrill'd it's wonted transport to my heart.
My life, my soul, thy Ferdinand is come,

CONSTANTIA.

And com'st thou then, inhuman as thou art,
Com'st thou again to wreak thy falsehood on me?

FERDINAND.

By heav'n I ne'er was false — dash not my joys
With thy unkind suspicion of my love,
While thus transported far above the lot
Of human bliss, I press my lips to thine,
Inhaling balmy sweets, and all my soul
Runs o'er with joy, with wonder and delight.

CONSTANTIA.

Did'st thou not meanly leave me here a prey?

FERDINAND.

And can Constantia deem me then so base?
Can she believe me such a vile betrayer?
— Can'st thou? —

CONSTANTIA.

On this inhospitable shore
Left as I was —

FERDI-

F E R D I N A N D.

Oh! misery! — thou wert
 While I was dragg'd by an insidious band
 Of pyrates, savage blood-hounds! into bondage
 But witness heav'n — witness ye midnight hours
 That heard my ceaseless groans, how her dear
 image
 Grew to my very heart! —

C O N S T A N T I A.

And hast thou then
 Been doom'd to slavery?

F E R D I N A N D.

I have.

C O N S T A N T I A.

And groan'd
 This long, long time beneath oppression's hand?

F E R D I N A N D.

E'er since these eyes have gaz'd delighted on
 thee,
 The bitter draught of misery was mine.

C O N S T A N T I A.

And wert thou true indeed?

F E R D I N A N D.

By heav'n I was.

C O N S T A N T I A.

And have I then accus'd thee? — have I pour'd
 A thousand strong complaints against thee? —
 called

High

High judging heav'n to witness to my wrongs,
Told all these wilds, these rocks, these wood-
crown'd hills

Of injur'd truth and violated love?
Falsely I talk'd, unjustly I complain'd
Of injur'd truth and violated love,
My Ferdinand was true — again 'tis giv'n
With his lov'd form to glad these eyes, to rush
With eager transport to his fond embrace,
To cling around his neck, and growing to him
Pour the warm tears of rapture and of love.

[They embrace.]

Enter SYLVIA.

S Y L V I A.

I heard my mother's voice — what do I see?
In a man's arms! — embracing and embrac'd!

F E R D I N A N D.

Is that my Sylvia? — oh! it must be so —
My child, my child survives! — survives to take
A raptur'd father's blessing, and o'erpay
His sufferings past by his excess of joy,
This interview of mingled tears and kisses.

[Embraces her.]

S Y L V I A.

How gentle his deportment too! — I feel
A soft attraction bind my soul to his.
—Mama, are these the men, whom you describ'd
Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers? —

H
CONSTAN-

C O N S T A N T I A.

I was deceiv'd myself, my child; for truth,
Honour, and love, and constancy are theirs.
I now have proof of unexampled goodness

S Y L V I A.

Indeed I strongly thought you wrong'd 'em
much,
When first Henrico met my wond'ring eyes.

F E R D I N A N D.

Henrico is my friend, my best, Constantia,
And thou hereafter shalt know all his virtues.

S Y L V I A.

And shall I know him too? —

H E N R I C O.

Thou shalt; — and I
Will live thy slave, if thou wilt deign to love me.

S Y L V I A.

Love you! — I know not what you mean by
love;

But if with pleasure to behold thee; if
To hang upon thy words; to mourn thy absence;
With joy to meet again, and feel my heart
Form new desires, and wish it knows not what,
If that be love — I do already love you —
I love you better than my fawn.

H E N R I C O.

How sweet
The voice of innocence — oh! thou shalt be, —
— My

— My friend will smile consent, — yes, thou fair
nymph,
Shalt be my bride —

S Y L V I A.

Your bride! — what's that?

H E N R I C O.

My wife. —

S Y L V I A.

No, sir, not that. — I crave your pardon there —
— I beg to be excus'd — I do not chuse
To be left helpless on a desert island.

C O N S T A N T I A.

Thy father did not leave me, Sylvia; — no; —
He could not prove deliberately false.
His heart was unsusceptible of fraud. —
— Anon you'll know it all. —

H E N R I C O.

Mean time, my fair,
Banish thy fears; and let me with this kiss
On the white softness of this lovely hand,
For ever dedicate my heart.

S Y L V I A.

Oh! heav'ns!
What must I do, Mama? —

C O N S T A N T I A.

Requite his love
With fair return of thine, —

H 2

S Y L V I A.

S Y L V I A.

Must I do so! —
 The task appears not undelightful — yes ;
 To thee I can resign myself — but tell me ;
 Wilt thou ne'er leave me ? wilt thou ever here
 Fix thy abode ? —

H E N R I C O.

No ; — we'll convey thee hence,
 To the soft influence of a milder clime :
 There, like a flow'r transplanted, thou shalt
 flourish,
 And ne'er regret this warmer southern sky,
 But thrive and ripen, to the wond'ring world
 Unfolding all thy sweets to higher bloom

S Y L V I A.

What place is that ? — and whither will ye bear
 me ?

F E R D I N A N D.

To thy dear native soil — to England, love. —

S Y L V I A.

To England !

H E N R I C O.

Yes ! the land of beauteous dames ;
 'Mongst whom thy matchless excellence shall
 shine

With undiminish'd radiance, and exert
 It's gentle pow'r, by innocence endear'd,
 By virtue heighten'd, and by modest truth
 Attemper'd

Attemper'd to such sweetness, that each fair
 With unrepining heart, and glad consent
 Shall own thy rival claim; and ev'ry youth
 Touch'd by the graces of thy native beauty,
 Shall join to make thy form the public care.

S Y L V I A.

I cannot quit this Island; — cannot leave
 These woods, these lawns, these hills and deep-
 ning vales,

These streams oft-visited, each well known haunt
 Where hand in hand with innocence I've stray'd,
 And tasted joys serene as in the air,
 That pants upon yon trembling leaves. —

F E R D I N A N D.

Such joys
 For thee shall blossom in thy native land,
 And new delights arise. — There cultur'd fields
 Wave with the golden harvest; commerce pours
 Each delicacy forth; there stately domes
 Attract the wond'ring eye; there cities swarm
 With busy throngs intense, and smiles around
 A scene of active, cheerful, social life.
 Thither I'll lead thee, sweet —

S Y L V I A.

And yet my heart
 Misgives me much: — does not contention there,
 And civil discord render life a scene
 Of care, and toil, and struggle? — does not
 war

From foreign nations oft invade the land,
 With all his train of misery and death?

F E R D I -

FERDINAND.

Thy lovely fears are groundless — ours the
land

Where inward peace diffuses smiles around,
And scatters wide her blessings — there a
king, —

(My friend comes later thence, and tells me all)

There reigns a happy venerable king

Dispensing justice and maintaining laws

That bind alike his people and himself.

From that source liberty and ev'ry claim

A free-born people boast, flow equal on

And harmonize the state; while in the eve

And calm decline of life our monarch sees

A royal grandson still to higher lustre

Each day expanding; emulous to trace

His grandsire's steps, to copy out his actions;

And bid the ray of freedom onward stretch

To ages yet unborn.

SYLVIA.

And do the people

Know their own happiness?

FERDINAND.

They do, my sweet:

Pleas'd they behold their native rights secur'd;

Their commerce guarded, and the useful arts,

That raise, that soften, and embellish life,

All to perfection rising. With a sense

Of

Of their own blessing touch'd, with one consent
They pour their treasures, and exhaust their
blood

In their king's righteous cause; and Albion thus
Raifes her envied head; thus ev'ry threat
Of foreign force, each menace of invasion
From a vain, vanquish'd, disappointed foe,
Like broken billows on her craggy cliffs,
Shall murmur at her feet in vain. —

S Y L V I A.

Methinks

I long to see this place —

F E R D I N A N D.

My Sylvia, yes,

Thou shalt return — propitious gales invite —
Come then, Constantia — oh! what mix'd emo-
tions

Heave in this bosom at the sight of thee? —

C O N S T A N T I A.

I too run o'er with ecstasy of joy,
And tears must speak my happiness — I long
To utter all my fond, fond thoughts; — to tell
The story of my woes, and hear of thine;
While at each word our hearts shall melt within
us,

And thrill with grief, with tendernefs, and love.

F E R D I N A N D.

The tale shall serve us in our future hours
Of tender intercourse, to sweeten pain,

To

The DESERT ISLAND.

To calm adversity, and teach our souls
 To bend in love, in gratitude, and praise
 To the All-good on high, who thus befriends
 The cause of innocence; who thus rewards
 Our suffering constancy; whose hand, tho' slow,
 Thus leads to rapture thro' a train of woe.

F I N I S



