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The Golden Bull

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The GOLDEN BULL:

Or, The Garland of Love's Craftiness.

In FOUR PARTS.

Come listen, young lovers, awhile, and you'll find
That crosses do often attend true lovers kind,
The like in all ages never was in print,
No doubt but this garland will give you content.
It is of a king, since I must be plain,
Who formerly did in the southern parts reign,
He had no more children than one daughter bright,
Who pleased her father, and was his delight.
A neighbouring prince came a visit to pay,
It being the usual custom, they say.
Love pierced the prince's so deep to the heart,
She was so much wounded when he did depart.
It seems to her father she ne'er told her mind,
Nor to the young prince, tho' she was confin'd,
To love him, for Cupid was sharp and severe.
What afterwards happen'd you soon shall hear.
She being so beautiful, charming and young,
Her father said, with a deluding tongue,
Love, I have a fancy to lie with thee;
Tho' you are my child you have wounded me.
While God gives me breath, and I have grace,
I'll act a child's part, as it is my place.
He said, I'm resolv'd to make you my wife,
Or else your charms do bereave me of life,
The lady burst out in abundance of tears,
And said, Dear father, you are stricken in years,
You can have but short time on earth to remain,
'Tis Satan's temptations put this in your brain.
Consider your end, your strength doth decay,
Then drive the thoughts of the Devil away.
Let not such vain fancies run in your head,
Your soul must live when your body is dead.
True love to you, father, I bear from my heart,
And will be obedient in every part,
But rather than please you I chuse for to die,
So speak no more of it: Fie! father, fie!
Dear child, you are like to the innocent dove,
And so much sweetness confines me to love.
Except you will have me your life I will take,
And afterwards murder myself for your sake.

PART II.

NOW to the second part give attention, I pray,
Which shews this lady contrived a way
To shun her father, by nice cunning skill.
Said she, give me four things your mind I'll fulfil.

He said, Sweet creature, your mind you shall have,
In any thing you shall desire or crave.
These were four hard questions we may suppose,
The first three were for three suits of cloaths.
The first resembled the stars in the sky;
The next the clouds that with the winds doth fly,
The third a garment most beautiful rare,
Of all the birds that fly in the air.
The other thing which to ask I presume,
Is a Golden Bull to stand in my room.
I will give it you, sweet jewel, he said,
If possible such a thing is to be had.
Then unto the goldsmith this lady went,
And then she told her cunning intent,
Before make it hollow, and fit to hold me,
With a door and three bolts within let there be.
When the Bull was made she appointed a day,
With him to be joined, as most people say,
She went to the chappel with him to be wed,
But she had a comical trick in her head.
When come to the chappel, her father to shun,
She said, Excuse me, for back I must run,
To fetch one thing I cannot do without.
This put her father in great fear and doubt.
He said, Dear creature, I am loth to trust
You for to go back. She said, But I must.
And if I return not, next time you see me
I freely consent murdered to be.
Her father waited two hours and more,
And finding she came not, in a passion swore.
Then about the court enquiry was made,
But none knew where his daughter was fled.
My impudent daughter has funn'd me, I see,
The prince that was here has sent presents to me.
Therefore to requite him, I now do approve
To send him this Bull as a token of love.

PART III.

HE sent it abroad with most diligent care,
But never thought his daughter was there,
She carried sweetmeats for her nouthment.
At length they arrived where the present was sent.
The prince lik'd the present, and gave command,
That this fine Bull in his chamber should stand,
That he might view it each day, I declare,
But did not dream his true love was there.

Quite out of the bull in the night she did creep,
And kissed the prince as he was asleep,
And left a rich neckcloth embroider'd with gold,
Which he on his pillow next day did behold.
The prince had a mother, to whom he did say,
Who did you let into my chamber, I pray?
Son, there has been no one, I vow and protest.
He took up the neckcloth, and laugh'd at the jest.
What lady this is I must be satisfy'd,
And if it's for love, I'll make her my bride.
I must see her fancy who comes in my room;
But if it's a harlot death is her doom.
At night she crept softly, and kiss'd him, 'tis said,
And a velvet cap she laid at his head.
His heart was ravish'd so at her charms,
That presently he took her up in his arms.
With the fright she her joints could not hold,
And begged pardon for being so bold.
His answer was, I give pardon to thee,
But I desire to know who you be.
She told her name, and whose daughter she were,
And how love caused her to come there.
He said, Dear love, as you ventur'd for me,
To cross the ocean, my bride you shall be.
No doubt that the couple had joy that night.
Next morning the prince said, as soon as 'twas light,
Keep fast in the bull, where secure you may be.
When I give three knocks, love, come out to me.
So then he a ring from his finger did take,
And said, Sweet jewel, take this for my sake.
I must take a progress; dearest, do not mourn,
If God gives me leave I'll quickly return.

PART IV.

SO then to his mother he went, and did say,
Let no one go into my chamber, I pray.
If I find that any go into my room,
Then death, without mercy, shall be their doom.
The mother said, Son, I'll keep it secure,
That no one shall go into it before.
He went to his hunting with a cheerful mind.
But now you will a sad tragedy find.
Three ladies came, and desired to view
Her son's Golden Bull, and made much ado.
The old lady, thinking no harm there could be,
Admitted them up, this fine bull to see.
Soon as they came in, and saw the sight,
They said, In this bull he may well delight.
The workman that made it had nice crafty skill.
Come let us go down, now we've had our will.
To kick it, said one, resolv'd I be,
The rest had a mind, to they kick'd it all three.
Thinking it was the prince gave three knocks there,
This beautiful lady came forth, I declare.
Said they, we have waited to see the best fight,
For in this base harlot the prince does delight,

Therefore she shall die like a harlot in grain.
So they all disputed how she should be slain.
The first said, To hang her with speed it is fit.
The second said, No, let us drown her for it.
But the last of the three this answer return'd,
If I had my will then she should be burn'd.
The other said, No, that must not be done,
For under the window a river doth run.
So they toss'd her out, and she swam to a tree,
Where she lived three days, and none did her see.
The suit of the clouds this lady had on,
A maid came for water, and swift did return.
Her master said, Why does thy colour change?
Said she, There's a fight that's wondrous strange.
The gentleman ran with such speed as might be
Where he saw the lady sit under a tree.
He went with a boat, took her in his arms,
And he was ravish'd with her fine charms.
The gentleman to her these words did express,
Dear lady, how came you in this distress?
She told him her sorrows from first to last,
Saying, Now I hope all my troubles are past.
Fair lady, your sorrows have not been a few,
The prince is sick; I suppose 'tis for you.
What is he come home! that well pleases me,
In a few days his bride I shall be.
Take this diamond-ring, and go to him, I pray,
The prince doth know it, I dare to say.
Then into his chamber he straightway did go,
Saying, What is the cause of your languishing so?
'Tis love is the cause of my anguish and pain:
A lady I lov'd, but I fear she is slain.
Therefore no physicians my life can save.
I'll follow my jewel to the silent grave.
Then straightway he cast the ring in his view,
Which made him cry, Who gave it you?
Dear prince, the lady is at my house now.
He started up, saying, I am well, I vow.
So then to his mother the prince did go,
Somebody has been in my chamber, I know,
Then straightway she gave an account who they were,
The prince sent for them, who came, I declare.
Then unto the prince they for pardon did crave.
He said, what you chuse you surely shall have:
One hanged, one drowned, and one burnt, shall be
And this was the sorrowful end of all three.
The prince and the prince's with joy were crown'd
The music play'd, and trumpets did sound,
In triumph they wedded, it was a joyful day,
Then was the time to drive sorrow away.
The next news she heard her father was dead
And then of that country queen she was made,
Then they had both nations to rule and defend,
And so let my tragical comedy end.