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Virture and Beauty in Danger

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VIRTUE and BEAUTY in Danger; Or, King Edward's Courting the London Virgin.



FAir angel of England, thy beauty most bright,
Is all my hearts pleasure, my Joy and delight;
Then grant me, fair Lady, thy true Love to be,
That I may say welcome goth fortune to mes
The turtle so chaste and so true in her love,
By gentle pertwasions her fancy will move
Then be not entreated fair Lady in vain,
For Nature requirereth what I should obtain.

The Phenix so famous that liveth alone,
Is vowed to chastity, being but one:
But be not my darling so chaste in desire,
Lest thou, like the Phenix dost pennance in fire.

But, alas! Gentle Lady, I pity your fate,
In being resolved to lie without mate;
For if of our courting the pleasure you knew,
You would have a liking the same to ensue.
Long time have I sued the same to obtain,
Yet I am requitted with scorn and disdain:
But if you will grant your good will unto me,
You shall be advanced to princely degree.

Promotions and Honour may often entice
The chaste that liveth, tho' never so nice:
What woman to worthy but could be content,
To live in a palace where princes frequent.

Two brides young and princely to church I have led
Two ladies now lately have decked my bed:
Yet hath thy love taken more root in my heart,
Than all their contentments, whereof I had part.
Your gentle heart cannot mens hearts much abide,
And women least angry, when mostly they chide;
Then yeild to me kindly, and say that at length,
Men they want mercy, and women want strength.

I grant that fair ladies may poor men resist,
And princes may conquer and woe when they list;
A King may command her to lye by his side,
Whose features deserveth to be a King's bride.
In granting your love, you shall purchase renown,
Your head shall be crowned with England's crown;
Thy garments most gallant with gold shall be wrought
If true love with treasure of thee may be bought.
Great ladies of honour shall tend on thy train,
Most richly attir'd with scarlet in grain;
My chamber most princely thy person shall keep,
Where virgins with musick shall rock thee to sleep.

If there's any pleasure thy hear can invent,
Command them, sweet lady, thy mind to content;
For kings gallant courts where princes do dwell,
Affords such sweet pastime as ladies love well.
Then be not resolved to die a true maid,
But print in thy bosom these words I have said,
And grant a King favour, your true love to be,
That I may say Welcome sweet virgin to me.

The VIRGIN's Answer.

OWanton King Edward, thy labour is vain,
To follow the pleasure thou can'st not attain,
With getting thou lovest, and having do make it,
The which if thou purchase, is spoil'd if thou hast it.
But if thou obtainest it, thou hast nothing won;
And I lose nothing, yet am quite undone;
But if of my Jewel, the king does deceive me,
No king can restore, tho' a kingdom he give me.
My colour is chang'd since you see me last,
My favour is vanish'd, my beauty is past;

The rosy red blushes that sat in my cheek,
To paleness is turn'd, which all men dislikes.

I pass not for princes to love, do protest,
The name of a virgin contenteth me best;
I have not deserved to lie by thy side,
Nor yet to be counted for King Edward's Bride.

The name of a princess I never did crave,
No such type of honour thy hand-maid will have;
My breast shall not harbour so lofty a thought,
Nor be with rich proffers to wantoness brought.

If wild wanton Rosamond, one of our sort,
Had never frequented King Henry's fair court:
Such heaps of deep sorrow she never had seen,
Nor tasted the rage of so jealous a Queen.

All men have their freedom to shew their intent,
They win not a woman except she consent:
Who then can impute them unto any fault,
Who still does go upright, until Men make them halt.

'Tis counted a kindness in men for to try,
And virtue in women the same to deny;
For women unconstant can never be prov'd,
Until by their betters therein may be mov'd.

If women and modesty once do him sever,
Then farewell good name and credit for ever.
And royal king Edward, let me be exil'd,
E'er any man knows my body's defil'd.

No, no, my father's reverend tears
Too deep an impression within my heart bears,
Nor shall his bright honour that blot from me have,
To bring his grey hairs with grief to the grave.

The heavens forbid that when I shall die,
That any such thing should upon me lie;
As I have kept myself from this sin,
My heart shall not yield with a prince to begin.

Come rather with pity, and weep on my tomb,
Then for my birth, curse my dear mother's womb,
That brought forth a blossom that stained the tree
With wanton desires to shame her and me.

Leave off, noble King, you tempt but in vain,
These milk-white affections with lewdness to stain;
Tho' England will give me no comforts at all,
Yet England will give me a sad burial.