

CANTO V

She said : The pitying Audience melt in Tears,
But *Fate* and *Jove* had stopp'd the *Baron's* Ears.
In vain *Thalestris* with Reproach assails,
For who can move when fair *Belinda* fails ?
Not half so fix'd the *Trojan* could remain, 5
While *Anna* begg'd and *Dido* rag'd in vain.
Then grave *Clarissa* graceful wav'd her Fan ;
Silence ensu'd, and thus the Nymph began.

Say, why are Beauties prais'd and honour'd most,
The Wise Man's Passion, and the Vain Man's Toast ? 10
Why deck'd with all that Land and Sea afford,
Why Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd ?
Why round our Coaches crowd the white-gloved Beaux,
Why bows the Side-box from its inmost Rows ?
How vain are all these Glories, all our Pains, 15
Unless good Sense preserve what Beauty gains :
That Men may say, when we the Front-box grace,

Behold the first in Virtue as in Face !
 Oh ! if to dance all Night, and dress all Day,
 Charm'd the Small-pox, or chas'd old Age away ; 20
 Who would not scorn what Housewife's Cares produce,
 Or who would learn one earthly Thing of Use ?
 To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,
 Nor could it sure be such a Sin to paint.
 But since, alas ! frail Beauty must decay, 25
 Curl'd or uncurl'd, since Locks will turn to grey ;
 Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
 And she who scorns a Man, must die a Maid ;
 What then remains but well our Pow'r to use,
 And keep good Humour still whate'er we lose ? 30
 And trust me, dear ! good Humour can prevail,
 When Airs, and Flights, and Screams, and Scolding fail.
 Beauties in vain their pretty Eyes may roll ;
 Charms strike the Sight, but Merit wins the Soul."

So spoke the Dame, but no Applause ensu'd ; 35
Belinda frown'd, *Thalestris* call'd her Prude.
 To Arms, to Arms ! the fierce Virago cries,
 And swift as Lightning to the Combate flies.
 All side in Parties, and begin th' Attack ;
 Fans clap, Silks rustle, and tough Whalebones crack ; 40
 Heroes and Heroines Shouts confus'dly rise,

And bass, and treble Voices strike the Skies.
 No common Weapons in their Hands are found,
 Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal Wound.

So when bold *Homer* makes the Gods engage, 45
 And heav'nly Breasts with human Passions rage ;
 'Gainst *Pallas, Mars ; Latona, Hermes, Arms ;*
 And all *Olympus* rings with loud Alarms.
Jove's Thunder roars, Heav'n trembles all around ;
 Blue *Neptune* storms, the bellowing Deeps resound ; 50
Earth shakes her nodding Tow'rs, the Ground gives way,
 And the pale Ghosts start at the Flash of Day !

Triumphant *Umbriel* on a Sconce's Height
 Clapp'd his glad Wings, and sate to view the Fight,
 Propp'd on the Bodkin Spears the Sprites survey 55
 The growing Combat, or assist the Fray.

While thro' the Press enrag'd *Thalestris* flies,
 And scatters Death around from both her Eyes,
 A *Beau* and *Witling* perish'd in the Throng,
 One dy'd in *Metaphor*, and one in *Song*. 60
O cruel Nymph ! a living death I bear,

Cry'd *Dapperwit*, and sunk beside his Chair.
 A mournful Glance Sir *Fopling* upwards cast,
Those eyes are made so killing—was his last :
 Thus on *Meander's* flow'ry Margin lies 65
 Th' expiring Swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir *Plume* had drawn *Clarissa* down,
Chloe stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a Frown ;
 She smil'd to see the doughty Hero slain,
 But, at her Smile, the Beau reviv'd again. 70

Now *Jove* suspends his golden Scales in Air,
 Weighs the Men's Wits against the Lady's Hair ;
 The doubtful Beam long nods from side to side ;
 At length the Wits mount up, the Hairs subside.

See, fierce *Belinda* on the *Baron* flies, 75
 With more than usual Lightning in her Eyes :
 Nor fear'd the Chief th' unequal Fight to try,
 Who sought no more than on his Foe to die.
 But this bold Lord with manly Strength endu'd,
 She with one Finger and a Thumb subdu'd : 80
 Just where the Breath of Life his Nostrils drew,



A charge of *Snuff* the wily Virgin threw ;
 The *Gnomes* direct, to ev'ry Atome just,
 The pungent Grains of titillating Dust.
 Sudden, with starting Tears each Eye o'erflows, 85
 And the high Dome re-ecchoes to his Nose.

Now meet thy Fate, incens'd *Belinda* cry'd,
 And drew a deadly *Bodkin* from her Side.
 (The same, his ancient Personage to deck,
 Her great great Grandsire wore about his Neck, 90
 In three *Seal-Rings* ; which after melted down,
 Form'd a vast *Buckle* for his Widow's Gown :
 Her infant Grandame's *Whistle* next it grew,
 The Bells she jingled, and the *Whistle* blew ;
 Then in a *Bodkin* grac'd her Mother's hairs, 95
 Which long she wore, and now *Belinda* wears.)

Boast not my Fall (he cry'd) insulting Foe !
 Thou by some other shalt be laid as low,
 Nor think, to die dejects my lofty Mind.
 All that I dread, is leaving you behind ! 100
 Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
 And burn in *Cupid's* Flames—but burn alive.

Restore the Lock ! she cries; and all around
Restore the Lock ! the Vaulted Roofs rebound.
 Not fierce *Othello* in so loud a Strain 105
 Roar'd for the Handkerchief that caus'd his Pain.
 But see how oft Ambitious Aims are cross'd,
 And Chiefs contend 'till all the Prize is lost !
 The Lock, obtain'd with Guilt, and kept with Pain,
 In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain : 110
 With such a Prize no Mortal must be blest,
 So Heav'n decrees ! with Heav'n who can contest ?

Some thought it mounted to the Lunar Sphere,
 Since all things lost on Earth are treasur'd there.
 There Heroe's Wits are kept in pond'rous Vases, 115
 And Beau's in *Snuff-boxes* and *Tweezer-cases*.
 There broken Vows and Death-bed Alms are found,
 And Lovers' Hearts with Ends of Riband bound ;
 The Courtier's Promises, and Sick Man's Pray'rs,
 The Smiles of Harlots, and the Tears of Heirs, 120
 Cages for Gnats, and Chains to Yoak a Flea ;
 Dried Butterflies, and Tomes of Casuistry.

But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,
 Tho' mark'd by none but quick Poetic eyes :

(So *Rome's* great Founder to the Heav'ns withdrew,
 To *Proculus* alone confess'd in view.) 125
 A sudden Star, it shot through liquid Air,
 And drew behind a radiant *Trail of Hair*.
 Not *Berenice's* Locks first rose so bright,
 The Skies bespangling with dishevel'd Light. 130
 The *Sylphs* behold it kindling as it flies,
 And pleas'd pursue its progress through the Skies.

This the *Beau-monde* shall from the *Mall* survey,
 And hail with *Musick* its propitious Ray.
 This the blest Lover shall for *Venus* take, 135
 And send up Vows from *Rosamonda's* Lake.
 This *Partridge* soon shall view in cloudless Skies,
 When next he looks through *Galileo's* Eyes ;
 And hence th' Egregious Wizard shall foredoom
 The fate of *Louis*, and the fall of *Rome*. 140

Then cease, bright Nymph ! to mourn thy ravish'd Hair,
 Which adds new Glory to the shining Sphere !
 Not all the Tresses that fair Head can boast
 Shall draw such Envy as the Lock you lost.
 For, after all the Murders of your Eye, 145
 When, after Millions slain, yourself shall die ;

When those fair Suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those Tresses shall be laid in dust ;
This *Lock*, the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe *Belinda's* Name !

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