

Dédicace de Love in a Wood

Auteur : **Wycherley, William**

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Les folios

En passant la souris sur une vignette, le titre de l'image apparaît.

3 Fichier(s)

Informations éditoriales

Titre complet de la pièce *Love in a Wood, or, St. James's Park, a Comedy*

Auteur de la pièce Wycherley, William

Date 1672

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Contributeurs

- Borfotina, Adelina (Stagiaire)
- Lochert, Véronique (Responsable de projet)

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TO HER
G R A C E
THE
Duchess
OF
CLEAVLAND.

MADAM,

ALL Authors whatever in their Dedications are Poets; but I am now to Write to a Lady, who stands as little in need of Flattery, as her Beauty of Art; otherwise, I shou'd prove as ill a Poet to her in my Dedication, as to my Reader in my Play: I can do your Grace no Honour, nor make you more admirers then you have already; yet I can do my self the honour to let the world know, I am the greatest you have; you will pardon me, Madam, for you know, 'tis very hard for a new Author, and Poet too, to govern his Ambition; for Poets, let them pass in the world never so much, for modest, honest men, but begin praise to others, which concludes in themselves; and are like Rooks, who lend people money, but to win it back again, and so leave them in debt to 'em for nothing; they offer Laurel and Incense to their Hero's, but wear it themselves, and perfume themselves. This is true, Madam, upon the honest word of an Author,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

who never yet writ Dedication ; yet though I cannot lye like them, I am as vain as they, and cannot but publickly give your Grace my humble acknowledgments for the favours I have receiv'd from you : This, I say, is the Poets Gratitude, which in plain English, is only Pride and Ambition ; and that the world might know your Grace did me the honour to see my Play twice together ; yet perhaps my Enviers of your Favour will suggest 'twas in Lent, and therefore for your Mortification ; then, as a jealous Author, I am concern'd not to have your Graces Favours lessen'd, or rather, my reputation ; and to let them know, you were pleas'd, after that, to command a Copy from me of this Play ; the way without Beauty and Wit, to win a poor Poets heart. 'Tis a sign your Grace understands nothing better, then obliging all the world, after the best and most proper manner ; But, Madam, to be obliging to that excess as you are, (pardon me, if I tell you, out of my extream concern, and service for your Grace) is a dangerous quality, and may be very incommode to you ; for Civility makes Poets as troublesome, as Charity makes Beggers ; and your Grace will be heresfter as much pester'd with such scurvy Offerings as this, Poems, Panegyricks, and the like, as you are now with Petitions : And, Madam, take it from me, no man with Papers in's hand, is more dreadful then a Poet, no, not a Lawyer with his Declarations ; Your Grace sure did not well consider what you did, in sending for my Play ; you little thought I woud have had the confidence to send you a Dedication too : But, Madam, you find I am as unreasonable, and have as little conscience, as if I had driven the Poetick trade longer

The Epistle Dedicatory.

longer then I have, and we're consider you had enough of the Play ; but (having suffer'd now so severely) I beseech your Grace, have a care for the future, take my Counsel, and be (if you can possible) as proud, and ill-natur'd, as other people of Quality, since your quiet is so much concern'd, and since you have more reason then any to value your self ; for you have that perfection of Beauty (without thinking it so) which others of your Sex, but think they have ; that Generosity in your Actions, which others of your quality, have only in their Promises ; that Spirit, Wit, and Judgment, and all other qualifications, which fit Hero's to command, and wou'd make any but your Grace proud. I begin now elevated by my Subject, to write with the Emotion and Fury of a Poet ; yet the integrity of an Historian ; and I cou'd never be weary, nay, sure this were my only way, to make my Readers never weary too, though they were a more impatient Generation of people then they are. In Fine, speaking thus of your Grace, I shou'd please all the world but you ; therefore I must once observe, and obey you, against my will, and say no more, then that I am,

M A D A M,

Your Grace's

Most ob'liged, and most

humble Servant,

WILLIAM WYCHERLEY.