

Dédicace de *The Ambitious Statesman*

Auteur : Crowne, John

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6 Fichier(s)

Mots clés

[famille de la dédicataire \(beau-père, grand-père\)](#)

Informations éditoriales

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Auteur de la pièceCrowne, John

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TO HER
GRACE,
THE
Dutcheſs of Albemarle.

POETRY ſeem's on Earth, Madam, in the condition of the Philoſopher's Muſick in the Heavens, placed in a vaſt, Solitude where there is nothing to hear it but ſome few Angels that move thoſe Heavens.

The Earth wants no Inhabitants; but whilſt thoſe Inhabitants want ſence 'tis as ſolitary as the Heavens; and a Poet ſings like a Bird in the Deſert. Yet there are ſome Angels and Excellent Spirits below, and in the firſt Rank of 'em is your Grace.

What Angels are, we know not; but when we wou'd make 'em viſible to our thoughts, we dreſs e'm up in ſuch Qualities as Nature and Fortune have beſtowed on your Grace; excellent Wiſdom, great Power, boundleſs Generoſity, and profound Humility; and they, to requite our good thoughts of 'em, when they make themſelves viſible to our
Eyes,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Eyes, assume such Beauty as your's. Then since we bestow
on them all the Excellencies of your Mind, and they borrow
all the Beauties of your Body, we may very well lend your
Grace their Name.

And in this, Madam, I do not flatter you, but my self;
I do not advance you above what you are, but I raise my
self among those who were honoured to be the Entertainers
of Angels, but with this difference: They knew not their
Guests, and so were to be pardoned their Unleavened
Bread, and their fatted Calves; else a foolish Beast
had been an absurd Treat for a Creature, who was all
Mind, and that Mind all Wisdom.

But all the World knows your Graces delicate Spirit,
and therefore my Hospitality becomes my Crime. I set be-
fore your Grace unpleasant Fruit, that blossom'd in a
Stormy time, and so had much ado to grow, and never
cou'd be Ripe.

The Sun seldom shines on a Poet's Orchard; We talk
much of Shades, and we always live in 'em. If we soar,
'tis but to sing like Larks; and though our Notes are
heard, our selves are invisible, and our Nests are always
on the Ground. Our Wit, like the Pine Tree, affects de-
solate Places, barren Rocks, and steep Mountains,
and to shoot high in the Air, and meet those Winds
which shake its Fruit to the Earth, where Toads creep over
it, and Beasts devour it. That a Poet at no time, but
especially at this miserable time, is fit to Entertain any but
himself.

We cannot think our soft Songs shou'd be heard, when
Church-

The Epistle Dedictory.

~~Church-Musick~~ grumbles with loud and unpleasant Discords, and the whole State seems out of Tune.

~~But~~ *Madam*, I have for my Excuse, I design not so much an Entertainment, as a Sacrifice. And I am very safe, since It agree with the whole Kingdom in Faith and Worship. I think there are no Dissenters that will not fully joyn with me in paying all manner of Honours to the Dutchess of Albemarle; A Princess whose Excellencies of Mind are as great and eminent as her Quality.

Many Tests are made to try Men's Faith; I think the Honour Men have for your Grace is the best Test to prove their Understandings. This is an ill time to erect Images for Worship, and the Porch of a trifling Play an ill place for so glorious a Thing as the Image of your Grace.

'Tis true, I have very often seen Great Persons lye in such Porches, begging the Charity of well disposed Passengers, to give their Names a poor Subsistence. 'Tis a sad sight to see Persons of Honour in so wretched a condition, that they have no dwelling for their Names, but are forced to lodge 'em in the Hovels of Miserable Scriblers, and on the Straw of a little Flattery. I shall not presume to place the worst Statue of your Grace among such poor Company. I only beg leave to be my own Porter, and stand at the Gate of my Work in your Grace's Livery, that if any enter, they may not dare to sully the Apartments that belong to your Grace, and where you may sometimes be pleased to walk.

And

The Epistle Dedicatory.

And that your Grace may be encouraged sometimes to walk in 'em, they are adorn'd with an Image of a Vertue, to which your Grace is nearly allyed both by Blood and Marriage.

Loyalty, a Vertue of which the Duke of Newcastle, your Grandfather, and the Duke of Albemarle, the Father of your Illustrious Lord, were the most Glorious Examples that ever were, or ever shall be in the World. They were the Two Hercules Pillars of Honour and Loyalty, beyond which none can travel. Beyond them, all is Sky, Air, and Sea; bright Notion, empty Imagination, and fluctuating Fancy.

The Duke of Newcastle was a Pillar like that of Seth, erected before the great Flood of Rebellion, withstood all the Fury of it, and when it cou'd no longer support the Throne, it supported it self, and lifted up its Head above the Waves, when the Waves cover'd the highest Mountains, and our Palaces far under Water were become the Habitations of Monsters. This Pillar out-last'd the Flood, and on it were engraven all that cou'd be done by Armes, and all that cou'd be written by Wit. And to that Eternal Monument of Wit, Valour and Loyalty, the Muses and the Heroes of all Ages shall repair, to pay their grateful Devotions, to read their Instructions, and consecrate their Wreaths.

The Duke of Albemarle was a Pillar, which Nature and Fortune erected by wonderful Art under the Waters, when there seemed not the least Foundation for such a Work, and the Work impossible. Few saw it, till it
was

The Epistle Dedicatory.

was finished, then it appeared to all, and the Throne was established upon it. Then did the Waters sink to their proper places, the infernal Lakes and Springs whence they came: Then Men began to plant Vineyards, and to rejoyce in the Increase of the Earth, and the Fruit of their Labours.

On these two Columns, shining with Gold, but more excellent in the glorious Works engraven on 'em, stood the Palace of the British Sun.

And now, Madam, it cannot be displeasing to your Grace, to look sometimes on the Image of that Vertue to which you are so nearly allied, and from which you derive such a vast Inheritance of Glory. And truly at this time both Image and Substance seem to need Protection, when some are endeavouring to reduce again the Substance to an Image.

But that is too sad a Note to dwell upon, I shall leave it, and humbly beg, that Poetry, though here poorly clad, may have leave to lye at your Gates, because 'tis of the same Nation and Kindred with that Fair Quality which the Duke of Newcastle took into his Bosom, and Crown'd.

Then, when the World shall see how your Grace delights to Honour it, that Destruction shall never reach it, now and always intended it, by the mighty Empire of Fools.

B

Then

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Then shall my Muse, though often sleeping, as often
stumbling, and always in the dark, be secure under the
Roof of your Grace's Favour, and walk boldly and plea-
santly with such a Light shining round it, as the Title
I beg, of

Madam,

Your Graces most

obedient, humble

Servant,

JOHN CROWNE

THE