

Dédicace de *The Orphan*

Auteur : Otway, Thomas

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Les folios

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3 Fichier(s)

Mots clés

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Informations éditoriales

Titre complet de la pièce *The Orphan, or, The Unhappy-Marriage, a Tragedy, as it is acted at His Royal Highness the Duke's Theatre*

Auteur de la pièce Otway, Thomas

Date 1680

Lieu d'édition Londres, Royaume-Uni

Éditeur

- Bentley, Richard
- Magnes, Michael

Langue Anglais

Source [Internet Archive](#)

Analyse

Type de paratexte Dédicace

Genre de la pièce Tragédie

Les relations du document

Ce document n'a pas de relation indiquée avec un autre document du projet.

Informations sur la notice

Edition numérique Véronique Lochert (Projet Spectatrix, UHA et IUF) ; EMAN (Thalim, CNRS-ENS-Sorbonne nouvelle)

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Otway, Thomas Dédicace de *The Orphan* 1680.

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Consulté le 13/02/2026 sur la plate-forme EMAN :

<https://eman-archives.org/Spectatrix/items/show/1905>

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Notice créée par [Adelina Borfotina](#) Notice créée le 01/07/2024 Dernière

modification le 03/12/2025

TO HER
Royal Highness
THE
DUCHESS.

Madam,

AFTER having a great while wist to write something that might be worthy to lay at your Highnesses Feet, and finding it impossible : Since the World has been so kind to me to Judge of this Poem to my advantage, as the most pardonable fault which I have made in its kind ; I had sinn'd against my self, if I had not chos'en this Opportunity to implore (what my Ambition is most fond of) your Favour and Protection.

For though Fortune would not so far bleſſ my endeavours, as to encourage them with your Royal Highnesses presence, when this came into the World : Yet, I cannot but declare it was my design and hopes it might have been your Divertisement in that happy season, when you return'd again to chear all those eyes that had before wept for your Departure, and enliven all hearts that had droopt for your Absence : When

The DEDICATION.

Wit ought to have pay'd it's Choicest Tributes in, and Joy have known no Limits, then I hop'd my little Mate would not have been rejected; though my ill Fortune was too hard for me, and I lost a greater Honour, by your Royal Highnesses Absence, than all the Applauses of the World besides can make me Reparation for.

Nevertheless, I thought my self now quite unhappy, so long as I had hopes this way yet to recompence my disappointment past: When I consider'd also that Poetry might claim right to a little share in your Favour: For *Tasso*, and *Ariosto*, some of the best, have made their Names Eternal, by transmitting to after-Ages the Glory of your Ancestors: And under the spreading of that shade, where two of the best have planted their Laurels, how Honour'd should I be, who am the worst, if but a branch might grow for me.

I dare not think of offering at any thing in this Address, that might look like a Panegyrick, for fear lest when I have done my best, the World should Condemn me, for saying too little, and you your self check me, for meddling with a Task unfit for my Talent.

For the description of Vertues, and Perfections so rare as yours are, ought to be done by as deliberate, as skillful a Hand; the Features must be drawn very fine, to be like, hasty dawbing would but spoil the Picture, and make it so unnatural, as must want false lights to set it off:

And

The DEDICATION.

And your Vertue can receive no more Lustre from Praises, than your Beauty can be improv'd by Art; which as it Charms the bravest Prince that ever amaz'd the World with his Virtue: So let but all other Hearts enquire into themselves, and then Judge how it ought to be prais'd.

Your Love too, as none but that great Heroe who has it could deserve it, and therefore, by a particular Lot from Heav'n, was destin'd to so extraordinary a blessing, so matchless for it self, and so wondrous for it's Constancy, shall be remembred to your Immortal Honour, when all other Transactions of the Age you live in shall be forgotten.

But I forget that I am to ask Pardon for the fault I have been all this while Committing: wherefore I beg your Highness to forgive me this presumption, and that you will be pleas'd to think well of one who cannot help resolving with all the Actions of Life, to endeavour to deserve it: Nay more, I would beg, and hope it may be granted, that I may through yours never want an Advocate in his Favour, whose Heart, and Mind, you have so entire a share in; it is my only Portion and my Fortune; I cannot but be happy, so long as I have but hopes I may enjoy it, and I must be Miserable, should it ever be my ill Fate to lose it.

This, with Eternal wishes for your Royal Highnesses Content, Happiness, and Prosperity, in all Humility is presented by

Your most obedient and devoted Servant,

THO. OTWELL.