

Dédicace de *The Mourning Bride*

Auteur : Congreve, William

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5 Fichier(s)

Mots clés

[lien au genre dramatique](#), [lien au sujet](#)

Informations éditoriales

Titre complet de la pièce*The Mourning Bride, a Tragedy, as it is acted at the Theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields by His Majesty's Servants*

Auteur de la pièceCongreve, William

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Notice créée par [Adelina Borfotina](#) Notice créée le 01/07/2024 Dernière modification le 03/12/2025

T O
Her Royal Highness,
T H E
PRINCESS.

M A D A M,

I H A T high Station, which, by
Your Birth You hold above the
People, exacts from every one,
as a Duty, whatever Honours
they are capable of paying to Your Royal
Highness: But that more exalted Place, to
which, Your Vertues have rais'd You, a-
A bove

The Epistle Dedicatory.

bove the rest of Princes, makes the Tribute of our Admiration and Praise, rather a choice more immediately preventing that Duty.

The Publick Gratitude, is ever founded on a Publick Benefit ; and what is universally bless'd, is always an universal Blessing Thus from Your self, we derive the Offerings which we bring ; and that Incense which arises to Your Name, only returns to its Original, and but naturally requires the Parent of its Being.

From hence it is that this Poem constituted on a Moral, whose End is to recommend and to encourage Vertue, of consequence has recourse to Your Royal Highness's Patronage ; aspiring to cast it self beneath Your Feet, and declining Approbation, till You shall condescend to own it, and vouchsafe to shine upon it as on a Creature of Your Influence.

'Tis from the Example of Princes, that Vertue becomes a Fashion in the People, For even they who are averse to Instruction, will yet be fond of Imitation.

But

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But there are Multitudes, who never can have Means, nor Opportunities of so near an Access, as to partake of the Benefit of such Examples. And to these, Tragedy, which distinguishes it self from the Vulgar Poetry, by the Dignity of its Characters, may be of Use and Information. For they who are at that distance from Original Greatness, as to be depriv'd of the Happiness of Contemplating the Perfections and real Excellencies of Your Royal Highness's Person, in Your Court ; may yet behold some small Sketches and Imagings of the Vertues of Your Mind, abstracted, and represented in the Theatre.

Thus Poets are instructed, and instruct ; not alone by Precepts which persuade, but also by Examples which illustrate. Thus is Delight interwoven with Instruction ; when not only Vertue is prescrib'd, but also represented.

But if we are delighted with the Livelyness of a feign'd Representation of Great and Good Persons and their Actions ; how must

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we be charm'd with beholding the Persons themselves? If one or two excelling Qualities, barely touch'd in the single Action, and small Compass of a Play, can warm an Audience, with a Concern and Regard even for the seeming Success and Prosperity of the Actor : With what Zeal must the Hearts of all be fill'd, for the continued and encreasing Happiness of those, who are the true and living Instances of Elevated and Persisting Virtue? Even the Vicious themselves must have a secret Veneration for those peculiar Graces and Endowments, which are daily so eminently conspicuous in Your Royal Highness; and though repining, feel a Pleasure which in spite of Envy they per-force approve.

If in this Piece, humbly offer'd to Your Royal Highness, there shall appear the Resemblance of any one of those many Excellencies which You so promiscuously possess, to be drawn so as to merit Your least Approbation, it has the End and Accomplishment of its Design. And however imperfect
it

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it may be in the Whole, through the Inexperience or Incapacity of the Author, yet, if there is so much as to convince Your Royal Highness, that a Play may be with Industry so dispos'd (in spite of the licentious Practice of the Modern Theatre) as to become sometimes an innocent, and not unprofitable Entertainment ; it will abundantly gratifie the Ambition and Recompence the Endeavours of,

Your Royal Highness's

Most Obedient, and

most humbly Devoted Servant.

William Congreve.