

## **The oeconomy of love: a poetical essay / [Anon].**

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by J. Armstrong

THE  
O E C O N O M Y  
OF  
L O V E.

A POETICAL ESSAY.

---

*Insanire docet certa ratione modoque.*

---

A NEW EDITION,  
Revised and corrected by the Author.

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for T. DAVIES, in Russel-street, Covent-Garden.  
MDCCLXXIV.




73281



THIS little juvenile Performance was chiefly intended as a Parody upon some of the didactic Poets; and, that it might be still the more ludicrous, the Author in some Places affected the stately Language of MILTON.





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THE  
OECONOMY  
OF  
LOVE.

THY Bounties, LOVE; in thy soft Raptures when  
Timeliest the melting Pairs indulge, and how  
Best to improve the genial Joy; how shun  
The Snakes that under flow'ry Pleasure lurk;  
I sing: If thou, fair *Cytherea*, deign

5

Gracious



## 8 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Gracious to smile on my Attempt. Tho' Thou  
 None of the Muses Nine; yet oft on Thee  
 The Muses wait, oft gambol in thy Train,  
 Tho' Virgins. Come, nor leave thy Boy behind,  
 Blind but unerring Archer. *Hymen*, raise 10  
 Aloft thy sacred Torch; Your Gifts I sing.

YE Youths and Virgins, when your generous Blood  
 Has drank the Heat of Fifteen Summers, now  
 The Loves invite; now to new Rapture wakes  
 The finish'd Sense: While, stung with keen Desire,  
 The madd'ning Boy his bashful Fetters bursts; 16  
 And, charm'd with secret Flames, the riper Maid,  
 Conscious and shy, betrays her smarting Breast.

YET



YET Nature not in all her Sons maintains  
An equal Progress. This with kindly Warmth 20  
Shoots up to manly Vigour strait; while That  
Pines crude and chill, and scarce at last attains  
Imperfect Life. Some flight their varnish'd Steed;  
And (wond'rous Instinct!) bent on manlier Sport  
Cope with the Maids. *Alcides* thus, they say, 25  
Rose brawny from his Cradle, while the Snakes  
Hung hissing round him, horrible and fell;  
Sent, by enrag'd *Saturnia*, to destroy  
Her Rival's Hope: The mighty Infant grasp'd  
His speckled Foes, and, smiling, dash'd them down  
To Hell, their native Clime; the spumy Gore 31  
Blotted the frighted Pavement. Early thus



10 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Was future Chivalry prefag'd.—Meantime,  
Others slow ripen : Men there are, who scarce  
Feel the soft Thrillings of untaught Desire ; 35  
While pallid Maids scarce ruminate on Man,  
'Till Twenty : well if then. It boots thee much  
To study the Complexion, much the Clime  
And Habitues of Life. Meanwhile, with me,  
Credit these Signs. The Boy may triumph, when 40  
Night-working Fancy steals him to the Arms  
Of Nymph oft wish'd awake. Nor envy Thou  
Waking Fruition, while such happy Dreams  
Visit thy Slumbers ; liveliest then the Touch  
Thrills to the Brain, with all Sensations else 45  
Unshaken, uneduc'd.—The Maid demands  
The Dues of *Venus*, when the parting Breasts

Wanton



Wanton exuberant and tempt the Touch ;  
 Plump'd with rich Moisture from the finish'd Growth  
 Redundant now : for late the shooting Tubes 50  
 Drank all the Blood the toiling Heart could pour,  
 Infatiate ; now, full grown, they crave no more  
 Than what repays their daily Waste. The Down  
 Then too begins to skirt the hallow'd Bounds  
 Of *Venus*' blest Domain. In either Sex, 55  
 This Sign obtains. For Nature provident,  
 Now, when both Sides stand equal for the Fray,  
 This graceful Armour spreads ; and, but for this,  
 Excoriate oft the tender Parts would rue  
 The close Encounter ; now they fight secure, 60  
 Thus harness'd, and sustain the mutual Shock  
 Of War, unhurt, for many a well-fought Day.



12 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

BUT if to Progeny thy Views extend  
Paternal, and the Name of Sire invites ;  
Wouldst thou behold a thriving Race furround 65  
Thy spacious Table : shun the soft Embrace  
Emafculant, till Twice Ten Years and more  
Have steel'd thy Nerves ; and let the holy Rite  
License the Blifs. Nor would I urge, precise,  
A total Abstinence ; this might unman 70  
The genial Organs, unemploy'd so long,  
And quite extinguish the prolific Flame,  
Refrigerant. But riot oft, unblam'd,  
On Kisses, sweet Repast ! ambrosial Joy !  
Now press with gentle Hand the gentle Hand, 75  
And, sighing, now the Breasts, that to the Touch  
Heave



Heave amorous. Nor thou, fair Maid, refuse  
 Indulgence, while thy tender Paramour  
 Aspires no farther : Thus thou may'st expect  
 Treasure hereafter ; when the Bridegroom, warm,  
 Trembling with keen Desire, profusely pours 81  
 The rich Collection of enamour'd Years,  
 Exhaustless, blessing all thy nuptial Nights.

BUT, oh ! my Son, whether the generous Care  
 Of Propagation, and domestic Charge, 85  
 Or soft Encounter more attract : renounce  
 The Vice of Monks recluse, the early Bane  
 Of rising Manhood. Banish from thy Shades  
 Th' ungenerous, selfish, solitary Joy.  
 Hold, *Saticide*, thy Hand ! For thee alone 90



14 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Did Nature form thee? for thy narrow Self  
Grant thee the Means of Pleasure? Dream'st thou so?  
That very Self mistakes its wiser Aim;  
Is finer Sense, ungratified, unpleas'd,  
But when from active Soul to Soul rebounds 95  
The swelling mingling Tumult of Delight.  
Hold yet again! ere idle Callus wrap  
In fullen Indolence th' astonish'd Nerves;  
When thou may'st fret and teize thy Sense in vain,  
And curse too late th' unwisely wanton Hours! 100  
Impious, forbear! thus the first general Hail  
To disappoint, *Increase and Multiply!*  
To shed thy Blossoms thro' the desert Air,  
And sow thy perish'd Off-spring in the Winds. 104  
Unhallow'd Pastime!—Tho' the factious Chief

Oft brew hot Infurrection, rather hie  
 To Bagnio lewd or Tavern; nightly where  
 Venereal Rites are done, from *Draco's* Ken  
 Remote, and Light of Heaven (as erst retir'd  
 The heaving *Gallic* Saints to the kind Gloom 110  
 Of Clift, or Cave, or trusted Barn, to hold  
 Forbidden Sabbaths): rather visit thou  
 Those Haunts of public Lewdness; oft tho' there  
 Sore Ills dismay. Purse, or the Golden Pride  
 That decks thy Finger, gorgeous with the Spoils 115  
 Of *Mexico*, *Peru*, and farthest *Ind*,  
 Or Watch Time-measuring, oft subtracted fly,  
 Sink in the dark Profound. And oft, to crush  
 Thy slacken'd Manhood in the mid Career  
 Of puissant Deeds, untimely rushes in 120



16 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

A forward boist'rous Wight, and from thy Arms

The passive Spouse of all the Town demands.

Him, hung'ring after Gold, nor Words can charm,

Nor more persuasive Wine: thy Gold must pay

The Violation of the *public* Bed; 125

Or braver Steel must prove thy manly Arm,

In dubious Fight.—Yet well, if here could end

The Mis'ry: Worse, perhaps, ensues; a Train

Of Ills, of tedious Count, and horrid Name.

Such as of old distress'd the Man else squar'd 130

To God's own Heart, but that his Wiles debauch'd

*Jerusalem's* fair Daughters to his Flames;

Nor did he from the holy Marriage-bed

Refrain his loose Embraces, when the Wife

Of wrong'd *Urias* he seduc'd; nor stopt 135

'Till



'Till *Murder* crown'd his Love. Hence him the Wrath  
 Of righteous Heaven, awaking, long pursu'd  
 With fore Disease, and fill'd his Loins with Pain.  
 All Day he roar'd, and all the tedious Night 139  
 Bedew'd his Couch with Tears; and still his Groans  
 Breathe musical in sacred Song. What Woes!  
 What Pains he tried!—But now this Plague attacks  
 With double Rancour, and severely marks  
 Modern Offenders: Slily undermines  
 The Fame and Nose, that by unseemly Lapse 145  
 Aukward deforms the human Face divine  
 With ghastly Ruins. Tho' this Breach, they say,  
 Nice *Taliacotius'* Art, with Substitute  
 From Porters borrow'd or the callous Breech  
 Of sedentary Weaver, oft repair'd: 150



# 18 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Precarious, for no sooner Fate demands  
The Parent Stock, than (pious Sympathy !)  
Revolts th' adopted Nose.—Such Ills attend  
Obscene and bought Embraces. Wiser thou,

FIND some kind Nymph, whom secret Sympathy  
Attracts to thee ; while all her Captives else, 156  
Aw'd by majestic Beauty, mourn aloof  
Her Charms, to them reserv'd, alone to thee  
Discreetly lavish'd. Sacrifice to her  
The precious Hours ; nor grudge with such a Mate  
The Summer's Day to toy or Winter's Night. 161  
Now clasp with dying Fondness in your Arms  
Her yielding Waist : now on her swelling Breast  
Recline your Cheek ; with eager Kisses press



Her balmy Lips ; and, drinking from her Eyes  
 Resistless Love, the tender Flame confess, 166  
 Ineffable but by the murmuring Voice  
 Of genuine Joy ; then hug and kiss again,  
 Stretch'd on the genial Couch, while joyful glows  
 Thy manly Pride, and, throbbing with Desire, 170  
 Pants furious, felt thro' all the Obstacles  
 That intervene : but Love, whose fervid Course  
 Mountains nor Seas restrain, can soon remove  
 Barriers so slight. Then, when her lovely Limbs,  
 Oft lovely deem'd, far lovelier now beheld, 175  
 Thro' all your trembling Joints increase the Flame ;  
 Forthwith discover to her dazzled Sight  
 The stately Novelty, and to her Hand  
 Usher the new Acquaintance. She, perhaps,



20 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Averse, will coldly chide, and, half afraid, 180

Blushing, half-pleas'd, the tumid Wonder view

With Neck retorted and oblique Regard;

Nor quite her curious Eye indulging, nor

Refraining quite. Perhaps, when you attempt

The sweet Admission, toyful she resists 185

With shy Reluctance; nathless you pursue

The soft Attack, and warmly push the War,

Till, quite o'erpower'd with Love, the melting Maid

Faintly opposes.—On the Brink at last

Arriv'd of giddy Rapture, plunge not in 190

Precipitant, but spare a Virgin's Pain;

Ah! spare a gentle Virgin! spare yourself!

Left sanguine War Love's tender Rites profane

With fierce Dilaceration and dire Pangs.

STILL



STILL hear me, *Lovers* ; all whose roving Hearts  
 No sacred nuptial Chains have yet confin'd : 196  
 Attentive hear ; and daily, nightly, weigh  
 The Counsels sage, which, thro' my raptur'd Breast,  
 To you th' auspicious heavenly *Muse* conveys :  
 The *Muse*, no soothing Minister of Vice ; 200  
 Tho' now in sportive Vein to youthful Ears  
 She tunes her Song, to give Instruction Grace.  
 Attend, ye Wise !—No frantic *Bacchanal*,  
 No shameless Bard of the licentious Rout  
 Of flush'd *Silenus*, sings.—What *Nature bids* 205  
 Is good, is wise ; and faultless we obey.  
 We must obey ; howe'er hard *Stoick* Dreams  
 Of *Apathy*, much vaunted, seldom prov'd.

For



## 22 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

For oft beneath the philosophic Gloom

Sly *Lewdness* lurks, and oftener mazy *Guile*, 210

That with well-mimick'd Love th' unwary Heart

Lures to its Fate, and hails while it betrays.

There bloated *Pride* too dwells, and baneful *Hate*,

And dark *Revenge*; than which a deadlier Fiend

Ne'er poison'd mortal Breast, nor urg'd the Soul 215

To ruthless Purpose and inhuman Deeds.

Far hence be These! We know great *Nature's* Pow'r,

Mother of Things, whose vast unbounded Sway,

From the deep Center, all around extends

Beyond the flaming Barriers of the World. 220

We feel her Power: we strive not to repress

(Vainly repress'd, or to Deformity)

Her lawful Growth; Ours be the Task alone

To



To check her rude Excrescences ; to prune  
 Her wanton Overgrowth ; and, where she sports 225  
 In Shapes too wild, to lead her gently back,  
 With prudent Hand, to better Form and Use,

For wisest Ends this universal *Power*  
 Gave *Appetites* : from whose quick Impulse Life  
 Subsists ; by which we only live ; all Life 230  
 Insipid else, unactive, unenjoy'd !

Hence too this peopled Earth ; which, That extinct,  
 That Flame for *Propagation*, soon would roll  
 A lifeless Mass, and cumber Heaven in vain.

Then Love of Pleasure sways each Heart, and we  
 From that no more than from ourselves can fly : 236  
 Blameless when govern'd well. But, where it errs,



24 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Extravagant, and wildly leads to Ill,

Public or private, there its curbing Power

Cool *Reason* must exert.—This Lesson weigh, 240

Ye tender Pairs. Indulge your gentle Flames,

Each fondest Wish, and bathe your Souls in Love.

But let *Discretion* guide unruly *Bliss*,

Virtuous in Pleasure. So you shall enjoy

Pleasure unmix'd, and without Thorn the Rose. 245

This Caution scorn'd, beware th' Event perverse :

Expect, for *Pleasure*, *Pain* and sharp *Remorse*;

For *Love*, *Aversion*; and each broken Vow

The Jest of Fools, the Pity of the Wise!

Be secret, *Lovers*. Let no dangerous Spy 250

Catch your soft Glances, as oblique they deal

Mutual

Mutual Contagion, darting all the Soul  
 In missive Love; nor hear your lab'ring Sighs.  
 But chiefly when the high-wrought Rapture calls,  
 Impatient, to soft Deeds, then far retire 255  
 From ev'ry mortal Ken. *The sapient King*  
 (Whose Loves who could defame?) in the mild Gloom,  
 Deep in the Center of his Gardens, hid,  
*Held Dalliance with his fair Ægyptian Spouse.*  
 Find then some soft obscure Retreat, untrod 260  
 By Mortals else, where thick-embowering Shades  
 Condense to Darknes and embrown the Day;  
 There, safe from all prophane Access, pursue  
*Love's bashful Rites.* For oft the curious Eye  
 Of prying Childhood, and th' Aspect malign, 265  
 Waning and wan, of Virgin stale in Years,



26 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Shed baneful Influence on the Rites of Love,  
And thou, my Son, when Floods of mellowing Wine  
And social Joys have loosen'd all thy Breast;  
When every Secret gushes; this at least, 270  
This one, reserve, of Love and bounteous Charms  
Of trusting Beauty; venturing all for thee,  
For thy Delight, her Fortune and her Fame;  
For her thou nothing. Hold, ingrateful! hold 274  
Thy wanton Tongue. Leave to the last of Fools,  
Of Villains! that ungenerous Vanity,  
Cruel and base, to vaunt of secret Joys;  
Of Joys on thee, so vaunting, ill bestow'd,  
Oh! dare not thus with mortal Sting to wound  
The tender helpless Sex.—Does thy vile Breath 280  
So blast my Sister's or my Daughter's Fame—

By

By Heav'n, thou dy'st : thy treacherous Blood alone  
 Can wash my Honour clean.—Prudent meantime,  
 Ye generous Maids, revenge your Sex's Wrong ;  
 Let not the mean Destroyer e'er approach 285  
 Your sacred Charms. Now muster all your Pride,  
 Contempt, and Scorn, that, shot from Beauty's Eye,  
 Confounds the mighty Impudent, and smites  
 The Front unknown to Shame. Trust not his Vows,  
 His labour'd Sighs, and well-diffembled Tears, 290  
 Nor swell the Triumph of known Perjury.

MEANWHILE, my Son, if angry Fate, or Love,  
 Grown indiscreet, or loud *Lucina*, tell  
 Th' important Secret : Is thy Mate well form'd,  
 Virtuous, and equal for thy lawful Bed ; 295



28 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Save her, I charge thee, from foul Infamy

And lonely Shame : let Wedlock's holy Tie

Legitimate th' indiffoluble Flames.

If Birth too base, dishonourable, with Mind

Incultivate and vicious, to that Height 300

Forbid her Hopes to climb ; at least, secure

From Penury her humble State, by thee

Else humbled more, and to Necessity,

Stern Foe to Virtue, Fame, and Life, betray'd,

A helpless Prey.—Oh ! let no Parent's Woe, 305

No Complaints of trusting Innocence, nor Tears

Of pining Beauty, blast thy guilty Joys.

Shall she, so late the Softener of thy Life,

Thy chief Delight, whose melting Essence oft

Lay with thy melting Essence kindly mix'd 310

(As

(As far as Bodies and embodied Souls  
 Can mingle) ; she, who deem'd thy Vows sincere,  
 Thy Passion more than selfish, and thy Love  
 To her devoted, as was her's to thee ;  
 Shall she (Oh ! cruel Perfidy !) at last 315  
 When with her tainted Name the Winds grow sick ;  
 When envious Prudery chides, affecting Scorn  
 Of natural Joys, and they of *public Fame*,  
 Insulting, hail her Sister ; while each Friend  
 Disgusted flies ? shall she not find in thee 320  
 Unshaken Amity ? When to thy Arms,  
 Well-known, with wonted Confidence she flies,  
 To pour her Sorrows forth, and soothe her Cares,  
 Shall she then find thy faithless Heart from Home,  
 From her estrang'd ? At that disastrous Hour, 325

Wilt



30 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Wilt thou ungently spurn her from thy Love?

To waste in sickly Grief her once-priz'd Charms,

Forlorn to languish out her Life, to lead

Despis'd, unwedded, her dishonour'd Days?

Or, if her barren Fortune, hard like thee, 330

Scowls meagre *Want* (whose Iron Empire *Pride*,

Reluctant, and her Off-spring *Modesty*,

Blushing at last obey), unskill'd in Arts

Of mercenary *Venus*, to increase

The rompish Band, that, without Pleasure lewd, 335

With deep-felt Sorrow gay, thro' *Trivia's* Reign

Nightly solicit Lovers; oft repuls'd,

Oft, when invited to the barren Toil,

Thankless deserted by their slippery Loves.

Or to the Salt of Years, where tedious Lust 340

Uncouth

Uncouth and monstrous creeps thro' freezing Loins,  
 Patient submitted ; to the boist'rous Will  
 Of Midnight Ruffians, to abhorr'd Disease,  
 Hourly expos'd, and *Draco's* fiercer Rage.  
 Spare, mighty *Draco* ! spare a hapless Race, 345  
 By thy own Sex to Wretchedness betray'd !—  
 A Woman bore thee ; by each tender Name  
 Of Woman, spare !—Hast thou or Daughter fair,  
 Or Sister ? They, but for a happier Birth,  
 The Gift of Fate, and Honour's Guardian, Pride  
 Early inspir'd, had swell'd the common Stream : 351  
 While she whom now thy awful Name dismays,  
 Portentous heard from far, with Fortune's Smiles  
 And fair Example, might have grac'd thy Bed,  
 A virtuous Mate, in ev'ry Charm compleat. 355



A pious Duty next, neglected oft,  
 Demands my Song. If from thy secret Bed  
 Of Luxury unbidden Off-spring rise,  
 Let them be kindly welcom'd to the Day.  
 'Tis Nature bids. To Nature's sacred Voice 360  
 Attend ; and from the Monster-breeding Deep,  
 The ravag'd Air, and howling Wildernefs,  
 Learn Parent Virtues. Shall the growling Bear  
 Be more a Sire than thou? An Infant once,  
 Helpless and weak, but for Paternal Care, 365  
 Thou had'st not liv'd to propagate a Race  
 To Misery ; to resign to Step-dame Fate  
 Perhaps a worthier Off-spring than thy Sire  
 Tenderly rear'd. For from the stol'n Embrace,

Untir'd



Untir'd with worn Acquaintance, keenly urg'd, 370

Elate with gen'rous Rapture, likeliest springs

The noblest Breed, most animated, best.

What Heroes hence have issued! what fam'd Chiefs

And Demi-Gods, of old! The Stealth of Love

Gave *Greece* her *Hercules*, and mighty *Rome* 375

First rose beneath a random son of *Mars*.

Thy Vigour too, the Blossom of thy Strength,

Reckless and wild profus'd, in dangerous Days,

Or in the Senate wise, and nobly warm

To Public Good, may save the rushing State; 380

Or, bold in Arms, may roll her Thunders forth

To shatter distant Skies, and, rous'd to Blood,

Lead on the *British Lion* to the Field.

Thy Country claims thy Care; nurse well her Hopes;



34 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

And thine; nor thou her Church's hungry Wolves;  
 Hight *Overseers*, with thy own Children's Gore 386  
 Sate, if Rapine know Satiety.

For, bred to Death, and of sagacious Nose,  
 A prowling Herd, lur'd with the recent Smell  
 Of secret Birth, their Carnage sweet, or led 390

By Infant Wailings, querulous, and shrill,  
 Beset thy frightened Gates. These timely thou  
 Prevent, or mourn too late thy ravish'd Gold

And captive Son; to the Street-dunning Tribe  
 Of Mendicants let out, fictitious Badge 395

Of low Distress: there, to what Life of Pain

Led up, who knows? to what disgraceful Fate,

What Gibbet, bred? Or, from his Parents' Arms,

With Nurse unpitying, unbenign, exil'd



To squalid Lodge, to find in *Famine's* Cave 400

A ling'ring Death; or, by a deadlier Hag

Than her that rides the lab'ring Night, oppress'd,

Untimely sink beneath a heavier Fate,

While they, the Sons of licens'd Rapine, screen'd

Under the Altar of the God of Life 405

With Murder stain'd, on what should raise thy Son,

Nightly regale, carnivorous; for them

The Heifer bleeds, or for her slaughter'd Young

Roams wild the woodland Bounds: and what

should now

To thy young Hopes in white nectareous Rills 410

Descend, to them in deep *Oporto* flows,

Or hot *Madeira*. Thus the sanguine Feast

They crown, nor dread the Cry of infant Blood.



36 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

THESE Precepts wisely keep, by these direct  
 Thy Steps thro' Pleasure's Labyrinth. Unhurt 415  
 And unoffending, thus thy tutor'd Feet  
 May tread the Wilds of else-delusive Joy.  
 So shall no Sorrows wound, no ruder Cares  
 Disturb thy Pleasures, no remorseful Tears  
 Attend thy gay Delight: nor Sighs make way, 420  
 But such as heave the Pleasure-burden'd Breast;  
 As utter Love, with speechless Eloquence  
 Well understood; and breathe from Soul to Soul  
 The soft Infection, fondly still receiv'd.—  
 Almighty *Love*! Oh! inexhausted Source 425  
 Of universal Joy! first Principle  
 Of all-creating *Nature*! Harmony,

By



By which her mighty Movements all are rul'd!  
 Soft Tyrant of each Element; whose Sway  
 Resistless thro' the Wilds of Air is felt, 430  
 Thro' Earth, and the deep Empire of the Main!  
 Thy willing Slaves, we own thy gentle Power,  
 In us supreme, with kind Endearments rais'd,  
 Above the merely-sensual Touch of Brutes.  
 By thy soft Charm, the savage Breast is tam'd, 435  
 The Genius rais'd. Thy heavenly Warmth inspires  
 Whate'er is noble, generous, or humane,  
 Or elegant; whate'er adorns the Mind,  
 Graces or sweetens Life: and without thee  
 Nothing or gay or amiable appears. 440

YET not to Love (thus polishing the Soul,  
 Thus charming; tho' of every finer Breast



38 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE;

The fovereign Joy), yet not to Love alone  
 Yield languid all your Hours. The self-same Cates  
 Still offer'd soon the Appetite offend ; 445  
 The most delicious soonest. Other Joys,  
 Other Pursuits, their equal Share demand  
 Of Cultivation. These with kindly Change  
 Will chear your sweetly-varied Days ; from these  
 With quicker Sense you shall and firmer Nerves 450  
 Return to Love, when Love again invites.  
 Be those the least neglected, which adorn  
 With Virtue, Sense, and Elegance, the Mind ;  
 Those what before was amiable improve,  
 And lend to Love new Grace and Dignity. 455  
 Life too has serious Cares, which madly scorn'd,  
 The Means of Pleasure melt.—And Age will come,  
 When



When Love, alas ! the Flower of human Joys,  
 Must shrink in horrid Frost. Oh ! hapless he !  
 Thrice hapless then ! whose only Joy was That : 460  
 Whose cruel restless Furies teize him now  
 To vain Attempts. Him the inclement Power  
 Of craving *Impotence*, to fonder Toys  
 Than other Dotage knows, or easy-dup'd  
 Credulity can well believe, incites. 465  
 Him all the Nymphs despise, and the young Loves  
 With leering Scorn behold ; while vigorous Heat  
 Has fled his shaken Limbs, surviving still  
 In his green Fancy. Thence what desperate Toil,  
 By Flagellation and the Rage of Blows, 470  
 To rouse the *Venus* loitering in his Veins !  
 Fruitless, for *Venus* unsolicited



40 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

The kindest smiles, abhorring painful Rites.

Cease, reverend Fathers ! from those youthful Sports

Retire, before unfinish'd Feats betray 475

Your slacken'd Nerves. The hoary Years, design'd

For Wisdom, for sedate Philosophy

And Contemplation, ill agree with Love.

Chearful retire : nor grudge in peevish Saws,

Like envious Monitors, the sprightly Joys 480

Of lusty Youth. You had your genial Time

Of Pleasure !—Ours is on the rapid Wing !

AND you, whose youthful Blood impetuous rolls,

With generous Spirits fraught and kindly Balm,

Husband your Vigour well ; if aught or Health, 485

Or Off-spring numerous, beautiful, and strong,

Or



Or Pleasure weigh. For from the trite Embrace  
 Follow faint Relaxation, Strength impair'd,  
 Disgust, and mutual Apathy, Love's Bane.  
 Some boast, I know, their Vigour to renew 490  
 And keen Desire, by Food restorative  
 Or Pharmacy more noxious. *Orchis* hence,  
 Lascivious Bulb, *Satyrium* better nam'd;  
 And that maritime, which the sea-born Queen  
 Feeds with her native Sponge, *Eryngo* mild; 495  
*Boletus*, fam'd among the fungous Tribe;  
 And fell *Cantharides*; in various Forms  
 Are tried. But what ensues? Diseases more  
 Than ever burden'd *Auster's* dropping Wings.  
 Cold *Tremors*, *Spasms*, and *Cephalæa's* dire; 500  
 Eternal Waste of Nature's balmy Dew;



*Tubes*, and gaunt *Marasmus*; hideous Loss  
 Of godlike Reason; and th' imprison'd Rage  
 Of fierce *Lipuria*, whose collected Fires  
 The Vitals only seize. Or if the Sons 505  
 Of jaded Luxury those Plagues escape,  
 They waste their melting Youth, and bring grey

Hairs

Before their Time; grey Hairs and idle Years.  
 Leave Nature to herself, nor covet more  
 Than Nature gives, that but to real Wants 510  
 Each well-conducted Appetite provokes.

BUT chiefly thee, fair Nymph, it boots to know,  
 That Love and Joy when in their Prime most fear  
 Decay, the Fate of all created Things.



Be frugal then ; the coyly-yielded Kifs 515

Charms most, and gives the most sincere Delight.

Cheapness offends ; hence on bought *Phryne's* Lip

No Rapture hangs, however fair she seem,

However form'd for *Love and amorous Play*.—

Hail ! *Modesty* ! fair female Honour, hail ! 520

Beauty's chief Ornament, without whose Charm

Beauty disgusts ; or gives but vulgar Joys.

Celestial *Maid* ! be it lawful that with Lips

Profane I name thee ; and in wanton Song.

But in these vicious Days great *Nature's* Laws 525

Are spurn'd ; eternal *Virtue*, which nor Time

Nor Place can change, nor Custom changing all,

Is mock'd to Scorn ; and *lewd Abuse* instead,

Daughter of Night, her shameless Revels holds



44 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

O'er half the Globe, while the chaste Face of Day  
Eclipses at her Rites. For Man with Man, 531

And Man with Woman (monstrous to relate !)

Leaving the natural Road, themselves debase

With Deeds unseemly, and Dishonour foul,

*Britons*, for Shame ! be Male and Female still,

Banish this foreign Vice ; it grows not here ; 536

It dies, neglected ; and in Clime so chaste

Cannot but by forc'd Cultivation thrive :

So cultivated, swells the more our Shame,

The more our Guilt. And shall not greater Guilt

Meet greater Punishment and heavier Doom ? 541

Not lighter for Delay. Did Justice spare

The Men of *Sodom* erst ? Like us they sinn'd,

Like us they sought the Paths of monstrous Joy ;



Till, urg'd to Wrath at last, all-patient Heaven  
Descending wrapt them in sulphureous Storm. 546  
And where proud Palaces appear'd, the Haunts  
Of Luxury, now sleeps a fullen Pool:  
Vengeful Memorial of Almighty Ire,  
Against the Sons of Lewdness exercis'd. 559

T H E E N D,



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