

# rape of the lock test

The **Rape** of the **Lock** . an **heroi-comical** poem: in five canto's  
Written by Mr. POPE.

—A **tonso est hoc nomen adepta capillo.**

**OVID**

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TO

Mrs. ARABELLA FERMOUR.

MADAM,

It will be in vain to deny that I have some value for this piece, since I **dedicate** it to you. Yet you may bear me witness, it was intended only to divert a few young [page sig: A2] Ladies, who have good sense and good Humour enough, to laugh not only at their sex's little unguarded Follies, but at their own. But as it was communicated with the Air of a Secret, it soon found its Way into the World. An imperfect Copy having been offer'd to a Bookseller, **You had the Good-Nature for my Sake** to consent to the publication of one more correct: This I was forc'd to before I had executed half my Design, for the **Machinery** was entirely wanting to compleat it. The **Machinery** Madam, is a Term invented by the Critiks, to signify that Part which the Deities, Angels, or Dæmons, are made to act in a poem: For the ancient Poets are in one respect like [page ] many modern Ladies; Let an Action be never so trivial in it self, they always make it appear of the utmost Importance. These Machines I determin'd to raise on a very new and odd Foundation, the **Rosicrucian** Doctrine of Spirits.

I know how disagreeable it is to make use of hard Words before a **Lady**; but 'tis so much the Concern of a Poet to have his Works understood, and particularly by your Sex, that You must give me leave to explain two or three difficult Terms.

The **Rosicrucians** are the People I must bring You acquainted with. The best

Account I know of them is in the French Book call'd **Le Comte de Gabalis**, which [page ] both in its Title and Size is so like a **Novel**, that many of the fair Sex have read it for one by **Mistake**. According to these Gentlemen, the four Elements

are inhabited by Spirits, which they call *Sylphs*, *Gnomes*, *Nymphs*, and *Salamanders*. The *Gnomes*, or Dæmons of Earth, delight in Mischief; but the *Sylphs*, whose Habitation is Air, are the best-condition'd Creatures imaginable. For the say, any Mortals may enjoy the most intimate Familiarities with these gentle Spirits, upon a Condition very easie to all true *Adepts*, an inviolate Preservation of Chastity.

As to the following Canto's, all the Passages of them are as Fabulous, as the

Vision at the beginning, or the Transformation at the End; (except the Loss of [page cw:your] your Hair, which I always name with Reverence.) The Human Persons are as Fictitious as the Airy ones; and the Character of *Belinda*, as it is now manag'd, resembles You in nothing but in Beauty.

If this Poem had as many Graces as there are in Your Person, or in Your Mind, yet I could never hope it should pass thro' the World half so Uncensured as You have done. But let its Fortune be what it will, mine is happy enough, to have given me this Occasion of assuring You that I am. with the truest Esteem, *Madam*

*Your Most Obedient  
Humble Servant.*

A. POPE.

## **The rape of the Lock: an heroic-comical poem in five canto's**

**Pope, Alexander, 1688-1744**

[page 1]

WHAT dire Offence from am'rous Causes springs,  
What mighty Quarrels rise from Trivial Things,  
I sing – This Verse to *C-l*, Muse! is due;  
This, ev'n *Belinda* may vouchsafe to view:  
Slight is the Subject, but not so the Praise,  
If She inspire, and He approve my Lays.

THE RAPE *of the* LOCK.

*CANTO I.*

Say what strange Motive, Goddess! cou'd compel  
A well-bred *Lord* t'assault a gentle *Belle*?  
*Oh say what stranger Cause*, yet unexplor'd,  
Cou'd make a gentle *Belle* reject a *Lord* ?  
And dwells such Rage in softest Bosoms then?  
And lodge such daring Souls in Little Men?  
*Sol* thro' white Curtains did his Beams display,  
And op'd those Eyes which brighter shine than they;  
Now *Shock* had giv'n himself the rowzing Shake,  
And Nymphs prepar'd their *Chocolate* to take;  
*Thrice the wrought Slipper knock'd against the Ground*,  
And *striking Watches* the tenth Hour resound.  
*Belinda* still her downy Pillow prest,  
Her Guardian *Sylph* prolong'd the *balmy Rest*.  
'Twas he had summon'd to her silent Bed  
The Morning Dream that hover'd o'er her Head.  
A Youth more glitt'ring than a *Birth-night Beau* ,  
(That ev'n in Slumber caus'd her Cheek to glow) [page 3]  
Seem'd to her Ear his winning Lips to lay,  
And thus in Whispers said, or seem'd to say.  
*Fairest of Mortals*, thou distinguish'd Care  
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!  
If e'er one Vision touch'd thy infant Thought,  
Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught,  
Of airy Elves by Moonlight Shadows seen,  
The *silver Token*, and the circled Green,  
*Or Virgins visited by Angel-Pow'rs*,  
With Golden Crowns and Wreaths of heav'nly Flowers,  
Hear and believe! thy own Importance know,  
Nor bound thy narrow Views to Things below.  
Some secret Truths from Learned Pride conceal'd,  
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:  
What tho' no Credit doubting Wits may give?  
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.  
Know then, unnumbered Spirits round thee fly,  
The light *Militia* of the lower Sky; [page 4]  
These, tho' unseen, are ever *on the Wing*,  
Hang o'er the *Box* , and hover round the *Ring* .  
Think what an *Equipage* thou hast in Air,  
And view with scorn *Two Pages* and a *Chair*.  
As now your own, our Beings were of old,

And once inclos'd in Woman's beauteous Mold;  
Thence, by a soft Transition, we repair  
From earthly Vehicles to these of Air.  
Think not, when Woman's transient Breath is fled,  
That all her Vanities at once are dead:  
Succeeding Vanities she still regards,  
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards.  
Her Joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,  
And Love of *Ombre* , after Death survive.  
For when the Fair in all their Pride expire,  
To their first Elements the Souls retire:  
The Sprights of fiery Termagants in Flame  
Mount up, and take a Salamander 's Name.  
Soft yielding Minds to Water glide away,  
And sip with Nymphs , their Elemental Tea. [page 5]  
The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome ,  
In search of Mischief still on Earth to roam.  
The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,  
And sport and flutter in the Fields of Air.  
Know farther yet; Whoever fair and chaste  
Rejects Mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd:  
For Spirits, freed from mortal Laws, with ease  
Assume what Sexes and what Shapes they please.  
What guards the Purity of melting Maids,  
In Courtly Balls, and Midnight Masquerades,  
Safe from the treach'rous Friend, and daring Spark,  
The Glance by Day, the Whisper in the Dark;  
When kind Occasion prompts their warm Desires,  
When Musick softens, and when Dancing fires?  
'Tis but their Sylph , the wife Celestials know,  
Tho' Honour is the Word with Men below.  
Some Nymphs there are, too conscious of their Face,  
For Life predestin'd to the Gnomes Embrace. [page 6]  
Who swell their Prospects and exalt their Pride,  
When Offers are disdain'd, and Love deny'd.  
Then gay Ideas crowd the vacant Brain;  
While Peers and Dukes, and all their sweeping Train,  
And Garters, Stars, and Coronets appear,  
And in soft Sounds, Your Grace salutes their Ear.  
'Tis these that early taint the Female Soul,  
Instruct the Eyes of young Coquettes to roll,

Teach Infants Cheeks a bidden Blush to know,  
And little Hearts to flutter at a *Beau* .  
Oft when the World imagine Women stray,  
The *Sylphs* thro' mystick Mazes guide thier Way,  
Thro' all the giddy *Circle* they pursue,  
And old Impertinence expel by new.  
What tender Maid but must a Victim fall  
To one Man's Treat, but for another's Ball?  
When *Florio* speaks, what Virgin could withstand,  
If gentle *Damon* did not squeeze her Hand? [page 7]  
With varying Vanities, from ev'ry Part,  
They shift the moving Toyshop of their Heart;  
Where Wigs with Wigs, with Sword-knots Sword-knots strive,  
Beaus banish Beaus, and Coaches Coaches drive.  
This erring Mortals Levity may call,  
Oh blind to Truth! the *Sylphs* contrive it all.  
Of these am I, who thy Protection claim,  
A watchful Sprite, and *Ariel* is my Name.  
Late, as I rang'd the Crystal Wilds of Air,  
In the clear Mirror of thy ruling *Star*  
I saw, alas! *some dread Event* impend,  
E're to the *Main* this Morning's Sun descend.  
But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:  
Warn'd by thy *Sylph* , oh Pious Maid beware!  
This to disclose is all thy Guardian can.  
Beware of all, but most beware of Man!  
He said; when *Shock* , who thought she slept too long,  
Leapt up, and wak'd his Mistress with his Tongue. [page 8]  
'Twas then *Belinda* ! if Report say true,  
Thy Eyes first open'd on a *Billet-doux* ;  
*Wounds, Charms* , and *Ardors* , were no sooner read'  
But all the Vision vanish'd from thy Head.  
And now, unveil'd, the *Toilet* stands display'd,  
Each Silver Vase in mystic Order laid.  
First, rob'd in White, the Nymph intent adores  
With Head uncover'd, the *cosmetic Pow'rs*.  
A heav'nly Image in the *Glass* appears,  
To that she bends, to that her Eyes she rears;  
Th' inferior Priestess, at her *Altar's* side,  
Trembling, begins the *sacred Rites of Pride*.  
Unnumber'd Treasures ope at once, and here

The various *Off'rings of the World* appear;  
From each she nicely culls with curious Toil,  
And decks the Goddess with the *glitt'ring Spoil*.  
This *Casket India* 's glowing *Gems* unlocks,  
And all *Arabia* breaths from yonder Box. [page 9]  
The *Tortoise here and Elephant* unite,  
Transform'd to *Combs* , the speckled and the white.  
Here Files of Pins extend their shining Rows,  
Puffs, Powders, *Patches*, Bibles, Billet-doux.  
Now *awful* Beauty puts on all its *Arms*;  
The Fair each moment rises in her Charms,  
Repairs her Smiles, awakens ev'ry Grace,  
And calls forth all the Wonders of her Face;  
Sees by Degrees a purer Blush arise,  
And keener Lightnings quicken in her Eyes.  
The busy *Sylphs* surround their darling Care;  
These set the Head, and those divide the Hair,  
Some fold the Sleeve, while others plait the Gown;  
And *Betty* 's prais'd for Labours not her own.  
THE RAPE *of the LOCK*.

*CANTO II.*

NOT with more Glories, in th' *Ethereal* Plain,  
The Sun first rises o'er the purpled Main,  
Than issuing forth, the *Rival* of his Beams  
Lanch'd on the Bosom of the Silver *Thames* .  
*Fair Nymphs*, and well-drest Youths around her shone,  
But ev'ry Eye was fix'd on her alone.  
On her white Breast a sparkling *Cross* she wore,  
Which *Jews* might kiss, and Infidels adore.  
Her lively Looks a sprightly Mind disclose,  
Quick as her Eyes, and as unfix'd as those:  
Favours to none, to all she Smiles extends,  
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.  
Bright as the Sun, her Eyes the Gazers strike,  
And, like the sun, *they shine on all alike*.  
Yet graceful Ease, and Sweetness void of Pride,  
Might hide her Faults, if *Belles* had faults to hide:  
If to her share some Female Errors fall,  
Look on her Face, and you'll forget 'em all.  
This *Nymph*, to the Destruction of Mankind,

Nourish'd two Locks, which graceful hung behind  
In equal Curls, and well conspir'd to deck  
With shining Ringlets her smooth *Iv'ry* Neck.  
Love in these Labyrinths *his* Slaves detains,  
And mighty Hearts are held in slender Chains.  
With hairy *Sprindges* we the Birds *betray*,  
Slight Lines of Hair surprize the *Finny Prey*, [page 12]  
Fair *Tresses* *Man's Imperial Race* insnare,  
And Beauty draws us with a single Hair.  
Th' Adventrous *Baron* the bright Locks admir'd,  
He saw, he wish'd, and to the Prize aspir'd:  
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,  
By *Force to ravish*, or by Fraud betray;  
For when *Success* a Lover's Toil attends,  
Few ask, if Fraud or Force attain'd his Ends.  
For this, e're *Phaebus* rose, he had implor'd  
Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Pow'r ador'd,  
But chiefly *Love* –to *Love* an Altar built,  
Of twelve vast *French* Romances, neatly gilt.  
There lay the *Sword-knot* *Sylvia* 's Hands had sown,  
With *Flavia's* *Busk* that oft had rapp'd his own:  
A Fan, a Garter, half a Pair of Gloves;  
And all the Trophies of his former Loves.  
With tender *Bilet-doux* he lights the Pyre,  
And breaths three am'rous Sighs to raise the Fire. [page 13]  
Then *prostrate* falls, and begs with ardent Eyes  
Soon to obtain, and long possess *the Prize*:  
The Pow'rs *gave Ear*, and granted half his Pray'r,  
The rest, the Winds dispers'd in empty Air.  
But now secure the *painted Vessel* glides,  
The Sun-beams trembling on the floating Tydes,  
While melting Musick steals upon the Sky,  
And soften'd Sounds along the Waters die.  
Smooth flow the Waves, the *Zephyrs* gently play  
*Belinda* smil'd, and all the World was gay.  
All but the *Sylph* --With careful Thoughts opprest,  
Th' impending Woe sate heavy on his Breast.  
He summons strait his *Denizen* of Air;  
The *lucid* Squadrons round the Sails repair:  
Soft o'er the Shrouds Aerial Whispers breath,  
That seem'd but *Zephyrs* to the Train beneath.



Some to the Sun their [Insect-Wings](#) unfold,  
Waft on the Breeze, or sink in Clouds of Gold. [page 14]  
Transparent Forms, too fine for mortal Sight,  
Their fluid Bodies half dissolv'd in Light.  
Loose to the Wind their airy Garments flew,  
Thin glitt'ring Textures of the filmy Dew;  
Dipt in the richest [Tincture](#) of the Skies,  
Where Light disports in ever-mingling [Dies](#),  
While ev'ry Beam new transient Colours flings,  
Colours that change whene'er they wave their Wings.  
Amid the Circle, on the gilded Mast,  
Superior by the Head, was *Ariel* plac'd;  
His Purple [Pinions](#) opening to the Sun,  
He rais'd his [Azure](#) Wand, and thus begun.  
Ye *Sylphs* and *Sylphids* , to your [Chief](#) give Ear,  
[Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves](#) , and *Daemons* hear!  
Ye know the Spheres and various Tasks assign'd,  
By Laws Eternal, to th' Aerial Kind.  
Some in the Fields of purest *AEther* play,  
And bask and whiten in the Blaze of Day. [page 15]  
Some guide the Course of [wandering Orbs](#) on high,  
Or roll the Planets thro' the boundless Sky.  
Some less refin'd, beneath the Moon's pale Light  
Hover, and catch the shooting stars by Night;  
Or suck the Mists in grosser Air below,  
Or dip their Pinions in the painted [Bow](#),  
Or brew fierce Tempests on the wintry Main.  
Or on the [Glebe](#) distill the kindly Rain.  
Others on Earth o'er human Race preside,  
Watch all their Ways, and all their Actions guide:  
Of these the [Chief the Care of Nations](#) own,  
And guard with Arms Divine the *British Throne* .  
Our humbler Province is to tend the [Fair](#),  
Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious Care.  
To save the [Powder](#) from too rude a Gale,  
Nor let th' imprison'd Essences exhale,  
To draw fresh Colours from the [vernal](#) Flow'rs,  
To steal from Rainbows ere they drop in Show'rs [page 16]  
A brighter Wash; to curl [their](#) waving Hairs,  
Assist their Blushes, and inspire their Airs;  
Nay oft, in Dreams, Invention we bestow,



To change a *Flounce* , or add a *Furbelo*.  
This Day, black Omens threat the *brightest Fair*  
That e'er deserv'd a watchful Spirit's Care;  
Some dire Disaster, or by Force, or Slight,  
But what, or where, the Fates have *wraptin* Night.  
Whether the Nymph shall break *Diana* 's Law,  
Or some frail *China Jar* receive a Flaw,  
Or stain her Honour, or her new *Brocade*,  
*Forget her Pray'rs, or miss a Masquerade*,  
Or lose her Heart, or Necklace, at a Ball;  
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that *Shock* must fall.  
Haste then ye Spirits! to your Charge repair;  
The flutt'ring Fan be *Zephyretta'a* 's Care;  
The Drops to thee, *Brillante* , we consign;  
And *Momentilla* , let the Watch be thine; [page 17]  
Do thou, *Crispissa* , tend her fav'rite Lock;  
*Ariel* himself shall be the Guard of *Shock* .  
To Fifty chosen *Sylphs* , of special Note,  
We trust th' important Charge, the *Petticoat* :  
Oft have we known that sev'nfold Fence to fail;  
Tho' stiff with Hoops, and arm'd with *Ribs of Whale*.  
Form a strong Line about the *Silver Bound*,  
And guard the wide Circumference around.  
Whatever spirit, careless of his Charge,  
His Post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,  
Shall feel sharp Vengeance soon o'ertake his Sins,  
Be *stopt* in *Vials* , or transfixt with *Pins* ;  
Or plung'd in Lakes of bitter *Washes* lie,  
Or wedg'd whole Ages in a *Bodkin's* Eye:  
*Gums* and *Pomatums* shall his Flight restrain,  
While clog'd he beats his silken Wings in vain;  
Or Alom- *Stypticks* with contracting Power  
Shrink his thin Essence like a rivell'd Flower. [page 18]  
Or as *Ixion* fix'd, the Wretch shall feel  
The giddy Motion of the *whirling Mill*  
Midst Fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,  
And tremble at the *Sea* that froaths below!  
*Hespoke*; the Spirits from the Sails descend;  
Some, Orb in Orb, around the *Nymph* extend,  
Some *thrid* the mazy Ringlets of her Hair,  
Some hang upon the Pendants of her Ear;

With beating Hearts the dire [Event](#) they wait,  
Anxious, and trembling for the Birth of Fate.

[page 19] THE RAPE *of the* LOCK.

CANTO III.

CLOSE by those [Meads](#) for ever crown'd with Flow'rs,  
Where *Thames* with Pride surveys his rising Tow'rs,  
There stands a Structure of Majestick Frame,  
Which from the neighb'ring [Hampton](#) takes its Name.  
Here *Britain* 's Statesmen oft the Fall foredoom  
Of Foreign Tyrants, and of Nymphs at home;  
Here Thou, great [Anna](#)! whom three Realms obey,  
Dost sometimes Counsel take—and sometimes Tea .

[page 20]

Hither the Heroes and the Nymphs resort,  
To taste awhile the Pleasures of a Court;  
In various Talk th' instructive hours they past,  
Who gave a *Ball* , or paid the *Visit* last:  
One speaks the Glory of the *British Queen* ,  
And one describes a charming *Indian Screen* ;  
A third interprets Motions, Looks, and Eyes;  
At ev'ry Word a Reputation dies.  
*Snuff* , or the *Fan* , supply each Pause of Chat,  
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.  
Mean while declining from the Noon of Day,  
The Sun obliquely shoots his burning Ray;  
The hungry Judges soon the Sentence sign,  
And Wretches hang that Jury-men may Dine;  
The Merchant from th' *Exchange* returns in Peace,  
And the long Labours of the *Toilette* cease --  
*Belinda* now, whom Thirst of Fame invites,  
Burns to encounter two adventurous Knights, [page 21]  
At [Ombre](#) singly to decide their Doom;  
And swells her Breast with Conquests yet to come.  
Strait the three Bands prepare in Arms to join,  
Each Band the number of the Sacred Nine.  
Soon as she spreads her Hand, th' Aerial Guard  
Descend, and fit on each important Card,  
First *Ariel* perch'd upon a [Matadore](#) ,  
Then each, according to the Rank they bore;  
For *Sylphs* , yet mindful of their ancient Race,

Are, as when Women, wondrous fond of place.  
Behold, four *Kings* in Majesty rever'd,  
With hoary Whiskers and a forky Beard;  
And four fair *Queens* whose hands sustain a Flow'r,  
Th' expressive Emblem of their softer Pow'r;  
Four *Knaves* in Garbs succinct, a trusty Band,  
Caps on their heads, and Halberds in their hand;  
And Particolour'd Troops, a shining Train,  
Draw forth to Combat on the [Velvet Plain](#).

[page 22]

The skilful Nymph reviews her [Force](#) with Care;  
[Let Spades be Trumps](#) , she said, and Trumps they were.  
Now move to War her Sable *matadores* ,  
In Show like Leaders of the swarthy *Moors* .  
*Spadillio* first, unconquerable Lord!  
Led off two captive Trumps, and swept the Board  
As many more *Manillio* forc'd to yield,  
And march'd a Victor from the verdant Field.  
Him *Basto* follow'd, but his Fate more hard  
Gain'd but one Trump and one *Plebeian* Card.  
With his broad Sabre next, a Chief in Years,  
The hoary Majesty of *Spades* appears;  
Puts forth one manly Leg, to fight reveal'd;  
The rest his many-colour'd Robe conceal'd.  
The Rebel- *Knave* , that dares his Prince engage,  
Proves the just Victim of his Royal Rage.  
Ev'n mighty *Pam* that Kings and Queens o'erthrow,  
And mow'd down Armies in the Fights of *Lu* ,  
And Chance of War! now, destitute of Aid,  
Falls undistinguish'd by the Victor [Spade](#) !

[page 23]

Thus far both Armies to *Belinda* yield;  
Now to the [Baron](#) Fate inclines the Field.  
His warlike *Amazon* her Host invades,  
Th' Imperial Consort of the Crown of *Spades* .  
The *Club's* black Tyrant first her Victim dy'd,  
Spite of his haughty Mien, and barb'rous Pride:  
What boots the Regal Circle on his Head,  
His Giant Limbs in State unwiedly spread?  
That long behind he trails his pompous Robe,

And of all Monarchs only grasps the [Globe](#)?  
The *Baron* now his *Diamonds* pours apace;  
Th' embroider'd *King* who shows but half his Face,  
And his refulgent *Queen* , with Pow'rs combin'd,  
Of broken Troops an easie Conquest find.  
*Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts* , in wild Disorder seen,  
With Throngs promiscuous strow the level Green.  
Thus when dispers'd a routed Army runs,  
Of *Asia* 's Troops, and *Africk* 's Sable Sons, [page 24]  
With like Confusion different Nations fly,  
In various habits and of various Dye,  
The pierc'd Battalions dis-united fall,  
In Heaps on Heaps; one Fate o'erwhelms them all.  
The *Knave* of *Diamonds* now exerts his Arts,  
And wins (oh shameful Chance!) the *Queen* of *Hearts* .  
At this, the Blood the *Virgin's* Cheek forsook,  
A livid Paleness spreads o'er all her Look;  
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching Ill,  
Just in the Jaws of Ruin, and [Codille](#) .  
And now, (as oft in some distemper'd State)  
On one nice [Trick](#) depends the gen'ral Fate,  
Lurk'd in her Hand, and mourn'd his captive [Queen](#) .  
He springs to Vengeance with an eager pace,  
And falls like Thunder on the prostrate Ace.  
The Nymph exulting fills with Shouts the Sky,  
The Walls, the Woods, and long Canals reply.  
[page 25]

Oh thoughtless Mortals! ever blind to Fate,  
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!  
Sudden these Honours shall be snatch'd away,  
And curs'd for ever this Victorious Day.  
For lo! the Board with [Cups and Spoons](#) is crown'd,  
The [Berries](#) crackle, and the [Mill](#) turns round.  
On shining Altars of [Japan](#) they raise  
The silver Lamp, and fiery Spirits blaze.  
From silver Spouts the grateful Liquors glide,  
And *China* 's Earth receives the smoking Tyde.  
At once they gratify their Scent and Taste,  
While frequent Cups prolong the rich Repast.  
Strait hover round the Fair her Airy Band;  
Some, as she sip'd, the fuming Liquor fann'd,

Some o'er her Lap their careful Plumes display'd,  
Trembling, and conscious of the rich Brocade.  
Coffee , (which makes the Politician wife,  
And see thro' all things with his half shut Eyes) [page 26]  
Sent up in Vapours to the *Baron* 's Brain  
New Stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.  
Ah cease rash Youth! desist e'er 'tis too late,  
Fear the just Gods, and think of *Scylla* 's Fate!  
Chang'd to a Bird, and sent to flit in Air,  
She dearly pays for *Nisus*' injur'd Hair!  
But when to Mischief Mortals bend their Mind,  
How soon fit Instruments of Ill they find?  
Just then, *Clarissa* drew with tempting Grace  
A two-edg'd Weapon from her shining Case;  
So Ladies in Romance assist their Knight,  
Present the Spear, and arm him for the Fight.  
He takes the Gift with rev'rence, and extends  
The little Engine on his Finger's Ends,  
This just behind *Belinda* 's Neck he spread,  
As o'er the fragrant Steams she *bends her Head*:  
Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprights repair,  
A thousand Wings, by turns, blow back the Hair, [page 27]  
And thrice they twitch'd the Diamond in her Ear,  
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the Foe drew near.  
Just in that instant, anxious *Ariel* sought  
The close Recesses of the Virgin's Thought;  
As on the *Nosegay* in her Breast reclin'd,  
He watch'd th' Ideas rising in her Mind,  
Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her Art,  
An Earthly Lover lurking at her Heart.  
Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his Pow'r expir'd,  
Resign'd to Fate, and with a Sigh retir'd.  
The Peer now spreads the glitt'ring *Forfex* wide,  
T'inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.  
Ev'n then, before the fatal Engine clos'd,  
A wretched *Sylph* too fondly interpos'd;  
Fate urg'd the Sheers, and cut the *Sylph* in twain,  
(\*But Airy Substance soon unites again)  
The meeting Points that sacred Hair dissever  
From the fair Head, for ever and for ever! [page 28]  
Then flash'd the living Lightnings from her Eyes,

And Screams of Horror rend th' affrighted Skies.  
Not louder Shrieks by Dames to Heav'n are cast,  
When Husbands or when *Monkeys* breath their last,  
Or when rich *China* Vessels, fal'n from high,  
In glittering Dust and painted Fragments lie!  
Let *Wreaths of Triumph* now my Temples twine,  
(The Victor cry'd) the glorious Prize is mine!  
While Fish in Streams, or Birds delight in Air,  
Or in a Coach and Six the *British* Fair,  
As long as *Atalantis* shall be read,  
Or the small Pillow grace a Lady's Bed,  
While *Visits* shall be paid on *solemn Days*,  
When numerous Wax-lights in bright Order blaze,  
While Nymphs take Treats, or Assignations give,  
So long my Honour, Name, and Praise shall live!  
What Time wou'd spare, from Steel receives its date,  
And Monuments, like Men, submit to Fate! [page 29]  
Steel did the Labour of the Gods destroy,  
And strike to Dust th' Imperial Tow'rs of *Troy* ;  
Steel cou'd the Works of mortal Pride confound,  
And hew Triumphal Arches to the Ground.  
What Wonder then, fair Nymph! thy Hairs shou'd feel  
The conqu'ring Force of unresisted Steel?

[page 30] THE RAPE *of the* LOCK.

CANTO IV.

BUT anxious Cares the pensive Nymph opprest,  
And secret Passions labour'd in her Breast.  
Not youthful Kings in Battel seiz'd alive,  
Not scornful Virgins who their Charms survive,  
Not ardent Lovers robb'd of all their Bliss,  
Not ancient Ladies when refus'd a Kiss,  
Not Tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
*Not Cynthia* when her *Manteau* 's pinn'd awry,  
E'er felt such Rage, Resentment and Despair,  
As Thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd Hair.  
For, that sad moment, when the *Sylphs* withdrew,  
And *Ariel* weeping from *Belinda* flew,  
*Umbriel* , a dusky melancholy Spright,  
As ever fully'd the fair face of Light,  
Down to the Central Earth, his proper Scene,

Repairs to search the gloomy Cave of *Spleen* .  
Swift on his sooty Pinions flitts the *Gnome* ,  
And in a Vapour reach'd the dismal *Dome* .  
No cheerful Breeze this sullen Region knows,  
The dreaded *East* is all the Wind that blows.  
Here, in a Grotto, sheltred close from Air,  
And screen'd in Shades from Day's detested Glare,  
She sighs for ever on her pensive Bed,  
*Pain* at her side, and *Languor* at her Head.  
Two Handmaids wait the Throne: Alike in Place,  
But diff'ring far in Figure and in Face. [page 32]  
Here stood *Ill-nature* like an *ancient Maid* ,  
Her wrinkled Form in *Black* and *White* array'd;  
With store of Pray'rs, for Mornings, Nights, and Noons,  
Her Hand is fill'd; her Bosom with *Lampoons* .  
There *Affectation* with a sickly Mien  
Shows in her Cheek the Roses of Eighteen,  
Practis'd to Lisp, and hang the Head aside,  
Faints into Airs, and languishes with Pride;  
On the rich Quilt sinks with becoming Woe,  
Wrapt in a Gown, for Sickness, and for Show.  
The Fair ones feel such Maladies as these,  
When each new Night-Dress gives a new Disease.  
A constant *Vapour* o'er the Palace flies;  
Strange Phantoms rising as the Mists arise;  
Dreadful, as Hermit's Dreams in haunted Shades,  
Or bright as Visions of expiring Maids.  
Now glaring Fiends, and Snakes on *rolling Spires* ,  
Pale Spectres, gaping Tombs, and Purple Fires: [page 33]  
Now Lakes of liquid Gold, *Elysian* Scenes,  
And Crystal Domes, and Angels in Machines.  
Unnumber'd Throngs on ev'ry side are seen  
Of Bodies chang'd to various Forms by *Spleen* .  
Here living *Teapots* stand, one Arm held out,  
One bent; the Handle this, and that the Spout:  
A *Pipkin* there like *Homer* 's *Tripod* walks;  
Here sighs a Jar, and there a *Goose-pye* talks;  
Men prove with Child, as pow'rful Fancy works,  
And Maids turn'd Bottels, call aloud for Corks.  
Safe past the *Gnome* thro' this fantastick Band,  
A *Branch* of healing *Spleenwort* in his hand.



Then thus addrest the Pow'r-Hail wayward Queen;  
Who rule the Sex to Fifty from Fifteen,  
Parent of Vapors and of Female Wit,  
Who give th' *Hysteric* or *Poetic* Fit,  
On various Tempers act by various ways,  
Make some take Physick, others scribble Plays; [page 34]  
Who cause the Proud their Visits to delay,  
And send the Godly in a *Pett*, to pray.  
A Nymph there is, that all thy Pow'r disdains,  
And thousands more in equal Mirth maintains.  
But oh! if e'er thy *Gnome* could spoil a Grace,  
Or raise a Pimple on a beauteous Face,  
Like *Citron-Waters* Matron's Cheeks inflame,  
Or change Complexions at a losing Game;  
If e'er with airy *Horns* I planted Heads,  
Or rumpled Petticoats, or tumbled Beds,  
Or caus'd Suspicion when no Soul was rude,  
Or discompos'd the Head-dress of a Prude,  
Or e'er to *costive* Lap-Dog gave Disease,  
Which not the Tears of brightest Eyes could ease:  
Hear me, and touch *Belinda* with Chagrin;  
That single Act gives half the World the Spleen.  
The Goddess with a discontented Air  
Seems to reject him, tho' she grants his Pray'r. [page 35]  
A wondrous Bag with both her Hands she binds,  
Like that where once *Ulysses* held the Winds;  
There she collects the Force of Female Lungs,  
Sighs, Sobs, and Passions, and the War of Tongues.  
A Vial next she fills with fainting Fears,  
Soft Sorrows, melting Grievs, and flowing Tears.  
The *Gnome* rejoicing bears her Gift away,  
Spreads his black Wings, and flowly mounts to Day.  
Sunk in *Thalestris'* Arms the Nymph he found,  
Her Eyes dejected and her Hair unbound.  
Full o'er their Heads the swelling Bag he rent,  
And all the *Furies* issued at the Vent.  
*Belinda* burns with more than mortal *Ire*,  
And fierce *Thalestris* fans the rising Fire.  
O wretched Maid! she spread her hands, and cry'd,  
(While *Hampton* 's *Ecchos*, wretched Maid reply'd)  
Was it for this you took such constant Care

The *Bodkin*, *Comb* , and *Essence* to prepare; [page 36]  
For this your Locks in *Paper-Durance* bound,  
For this with tort'ring Irons wreath'd around?  
For this with *Fillets* strain'd your tender Head,  
And bravely bore the double Loads of *Lead*?  
Gods! shall the Ravisher display your Hair,  
While the *Fops* envy, and the Ladies stare!  
*Honour* forbid! at whose unrival'd Shrine  
Ease, Pleasure, Virtue, All, our Sex resign.  
Methinks already I your Tears survey,  
Already hear the horrid things they say,  
Already see you a degraded *Toast*,  
And all your Honour in a Whisper lost!  
How shall I, then, your helpless Fame defend?  
'Twill then be Infamy to seem your Friend!  
And shall this Prize, th' inestimable Prize,  
Expos'd thro' Crystal to the gazing Eyes,  
And heighten'd by the Diamond's circling Rays,  
On that Rapacious Hand for ever blaze?  
Sooner shall Grass in *Hide -Park Circus* grow,  
And Wits take Lodgings in the Sound of *Bow* ; [page 37]  
Sooner let Earth, Air, Sea, to *Chaos* fall,  
Men, Monkies, Lap-dogs, Parrots, perish all!  
She said; then raging to *Sir Plume* repairs,  
And bids her *Beau* demand the precious Hairs:  
( *Sir Plume* , of *Amber Snuff-box* justly vain,  
And the nice Conduct of a *clouded Cane* )  
With earnest Eyes, and round unthinking Face,  
He first the Snuff-box open'd, then the Case,  
And thus broke out— "My Lord, why, what the Devil?  
"*Z-ds!* damn the Lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!  
"Plague on't! 'tis past a Jest—nay prithee, *Pox!*  
"Give her the Hair—he spoke, and rapp'd his Box.  
It grieves me much (reply'd the Peer again)  
Who speaks so well shou'd ever speak in vain.  
But \* by this *Lock*, this sacred Lock I swear.  
(Which never more shall join its parted Hair, [page 38]  
Which never more its Honours shall renew,  
Cleft from the lovely Head where once it grew)  
That while my Nostrils draw the vital Air,  
This Hand, which won it, shall for ever wear.

He spoke, and speaking in proud Triumph spread  
The long-contended Honours of her Head.  
But *Umbriel* , hateful *Gnome* ! forbears not so;  
He breaks the Vial whence the Sorrows flow.  
Then see! the *Nymph* in beauteous Grief appears,  
Her Eyes half languishing, half drown'd in Tears;  
On her heav'd Bosom hung her drooping Head,  
Which, with a Sigh, she rais'd; and thus she said.  
For ever curs'd be this detested Day,  
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite Curl away!  
Happy! ah ten times happy, had I been,  
If *Hampton-Court* these Eyes had never seen!  
Yet am not I the first mistaken Maid,  
By Love of *Courts* to num'rous Ills betray'd. [page 39]  
Oh had I rather un-admir'd remain'd  
In some lone Isle, or distant *Northern* Land;  
Where the gilt *Chariot* never mark'd the way,  
Where none learn *Ombre* , none e'er taste *Bohea* !  
There kept my Charms conceal'd from mortal Eye,  
Like Roses that in Desarts bloom and die.  
What mov'd my Mind with youthful Lords to rome?  
O had I stay'd, and said my Pray'rs at home!  
'Twas this, the Morning *Omens* did foretel;  
Thrice from my trembling hand the *Patch-box* fell;  
The tott'ring *China* shook without a Wind,  
Nay, *Poll* sate mute, and *Shock* was most Unkind!  
A *Sylph* too warn'd me of the Threats of Fate,  
In mystic Visions, now believ'd too late!  
See the poor Remnants of this slighted Hair!  
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy own did spare.  
This, in two sable Ringlets taught to break,  
Once gave new Beauties to the snowie Neck.  
The Sister-Lock now sits uncouth, alone,  
And in its Fellow's Fate foresees its own; [page 40]  
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal Sheers demands;  
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious Hands.  
Oh hadst thou, Cruel! been content to seize  
Hairs less in sight, or any Hairs but these!  
[page 41] THE RAPE of the LOCK.

CANTO V.

SHE said: the pitying Audience melt in Tears,  
But *Fate* and *Jove* had stopp'd the *Baron* 's *Ears*.  
In vain *Thalestris* with Reproach assails,  
For who can move when fair *Belinda* fails?  
Not half to fixt the *Trojan* cou'd remain,  
While *Anna* begg'd and *Dido* rag'd in vain.  
To Arms, to Arms! the bold *Thalestris* cries,  
And swift as Lightning to the Combate flies. [page 42]  
All side in Parties, and begin th' Attack;  
Fans clap, Silks russle, and tough *Whalebones* crack;  
Heroes and Heroins Shouts confus'dly rise,  
And base, and treble Voices strike the Skies.  
No common Weapons in their Hands are found,  
Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal Wound.  
\* So when bold *Homer* makes the Gods engage,  
And heav'nly Breasts with human Passions rage;  
'Gainst *Pallas*, *Mars*; *Latona*, *Hermes* , Arms;  
And all *Olympus* rings with loud Alarms.  
*Jove* 's Thunder roars, Heav'n trembles all around;  
Blue *Neptune* storms, the bellowing Deeps resound;  
*Earth* shakes her nodding Tow'rs, the Ground gives way;  
And the pale Ghosts start at the Flash of Day!  
Triumphant *Umbriel* on a *Sconce*'s Height  
Clapt his glad Wings, and sate to view the Fight,  
Propt on their Bodkin Spears the Sprights survey  
The growing Combat, or assist the Fray.  
[page 43]

While thro' the Press enrag'd *Thalestries* flies,  
And scatters Deaths around from both her Eyes,  
A *Beau* and *Witling* perish'd in the Throng,  
One dy'd in *Metaphor* , and one in *Song* .  
*O cruel Nymph! a living Death I bear* ,  
Cry'd *Dapperwit* , and sunk beside his Chair.  
A mournful Glance Sir *Fopling* upwards cast,  
\* *Those Eyes are made so killing* –was his last:  
Thus on *Meander* 's flow'ry Margin lies  
Th' expiring Swan, and as he sings he dies.  
As bold Sir *Plume* had drawn *Clarissa* down,  
*Chloe* stept in, and kill'd him with a Frown;  
She smil'd to see the *doughty* Hero slain,  
But at her Smile, the Beau reviv'd again.

+ Now *Jove* suspends his golden Scales in Air,  
Weighs the Mens Wits against the Lady's Hair; [page 44]  
The doubtful Beam long nods from side to side;  
At length the Wits mount up, the Hairs *subside*.  
See fierce *Belinda* on the *Baron* flies,  
With more than usual *Lightning in her Eyes*;  
Nor fear'd the Chief th' unequal Fight to try,  
Who sought no more than on his Foe *to die*.  
But this bold Lord, with manly Strength indu'd,  
She with one Finger and a Thumb subdu'd,  
Just where the Breath of Life his Nostrils drew,  
A Charge of *Snuff* the wily Virgin threw;  
The *Gnomes* direct, to ev'ry *Atome* just,  
The pungent Grains of titillating Dust.  
Sudden, with starting Tears each Eye o'erflows,  
And the high Dome re-ecchoes to his Nose.  
Now meet thy Fate, th' incens'd *Virago* cry'd,  
And drew a deadly *Bodkin* from her Side.  
(\*The same, his *ancient Personage* to deck,  
Her great great Grandsire wore about his Neck [page 45]  
In three *Seal-Rings* ; which after melted down,  
Form'd a vast *Buckle* for his Widow's Gown:  
Her infant *Grandame's Whistle* next it grew,  
The *Bells* she gingled, and the *Whistle* blew;  
Then in a *Bodkin* grac'd her Mother's Hairs,  
Which long she wore, and now *Belinda* wears.)  
Boast not my Fall (he cry'd) insulting Foe!  
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.  
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty Mind;  
All that I dread, is leaving you behind!  
Rather than so, ah let me still survive,  
And burn in *Cupid* 's Flames,—but burn alive.  
*Restore the Lock* ! she cries; and all around  
*Restore the Lock* ! the vaulted Roofs rebound.  
Not fierce *Othello* in so loud a Strain  
Roar'd for the Handkerchief that caus'd his Pain.  
But see how oft Ambitious Aims are cross'd,  
And Chiefs contend 'till all the Prize is lost! [page 46]  
The Lock, obtain'd with Guilt, and kept with Pain,  
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:  
With such a Prize no Mortal must be blest,

So Heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?  
Some thought it mounted to the Lunar Sphere,  
\* Since all things lost on Earth, are treasur'd there.  
There Heroe's Wits are kept in pondrous Vases,  
And Beau's in *Snuff-boxes* and *Tweezer-Cases* .  
There broken Vows, and Death-bed *Alms* are found,  
And Lovers Hearts with Ends of *Riband* bound;  
The Courtiers Promises, and Sick Man's Pray'rs,  
The Smiles of Harlots, and the Tears of Heirs,  
Cages for Gnats, and Chains to Yoak a Flea;  
Dry'd Butterflies, and *Tomes of Casuistry*.  
But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,  
Tho' mark'd by none but quick Poetic Eyes:  
(So *Rome* 's great *Founder* to the Heav'ns withdrew,  
To *Proculus* alone confess'd in view.) [page 47]  
A sudden Star, it shot thro' liquid Air,  
And drew behind a radiant *Trail of Hair* .  
Not *Berenice* 's Locks first rose so bright,  
The Skies bespangling with dishevel'd Light.  
The *Sylphs* behold it kindling as it flies,  
And pleas'd pursue its Progress thro' the Skies.  
This the *Beau-monde* shall from the *Mall* survey,  
And hail with Musick its propitious Ray.  
This, the blest Lover shall for *Venus* take,  
And send up Vows from *Rosamonda* 's Lake.  
This *Partridge* soon shall view in cloudless Skies,  
When next he looks thro' *Galilaeo* 's *Eyes*;  
And hence th' Egregious Wizard shall foredoom  
The Fate of *Louis* , and the Fall of *Rome* .  
Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn the ravish'd Hair  
Which adds new Glory to the shining *Sphere*!  
Not all the Tresses that fair Head can boast  
Shall draw such Envy as the Lock you lost. [page 48]  
For, after all the Murders of your Eye,  
When, after Millions slain, your self shall die;  
When those fair Suns shall sett, as sett they must,  
And all those Tresses shall be laid in Dust;  
*This Lock* , the *Muse* shall consecrate to Fame,  
And mid'st the Stars inscribe *Belinda* 's Name!  
*FINIS* .