

An Elegy on the Much Lamented Death of William Beckford Esq.

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Panel 3

A N
E L E G Y

On the Much Lamented DEATH of
WILLIAM BECKFORD, Esq.

Late LORD-MAYOR of,

A N D
REPRESENTATIVE in PARLIAMENT
F O R,

THE CITY OF LONDON.

*Titles to him no Pleasure could impart,
No Bribes his rigid Virtue could controul;
The Star could never gain upon his Heart,
Nor turn the Tide of Honor in his Soul.*

Vide the POEM.

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. KEARSLY at No. 1. in Ludgate-Street.
M.DCC.LXX.

WILLIAM BECKFORD

On the Much Lamented DEATH of

WILLIAM BECKFORD

ESQ.

OF

THE

CITY OF LONDON

BY

LONDON

PRINTED BY G. KEARNEY, AT THE SIGN OF THE

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A N

ELEGY

On the Much Lamented DEATH of

WILLIAM BECKFORD, Esq.

I.

WEEP on ye Britons—give your gen'ral Tear;
But hence ye Venal—Hence each titled Slave;
An honest Pang should wait on *Beckford's* Bier,
And Patriot Anguish, mark the Patriot's Grave.

II.

When, like the Roman, to his Field retir'd,
'Twas you, (surrounded by unnumber'd Foes,)
Who call'd him forth, his Services requir'd,
And took from Age the Blessing of Repose.

With

III.

With Soul impell'd by Virtue's sacred Flame,
 To stem the Torrent of Corruption's Tide,
 He came, heav'n-fraught with LIBERTY! he came,
 And nobly in his Country's Service died.

IV.

In the last awful, the departing Hour,
 When Life's poor Lamp more faint, and fainter grew;
 As Mem'ry feebly exercis'd her Pow'r,
 He only felt for LIBERTY and you.

V.

He view'd Death's Arrow, with a Christian Eye,
 With Firmness only to a Christian known;
 And nobly gave your Miseries that Sigh
 With which he never gratified his own.

Thou

VI.

Thou breathing Sculpture, celebrate his Fame,
 And give his Laurel everlasting Bloom ;
 Record his Worth while Gratitude has Name,
 And teach succeeding Ages from his Tomb.

VII.

The Sword of Justice cautiously he sway'd,
 His Hand for ever held the Balance right ;
 Each venial Fault with Pity he survey'd,
 But MURDER found NO MERCY in his Sight.

VIII.

He knew when Flatterers besiege a Throne,
 Truth seldom reaches to a Monarch's Ear ;
 Knew, if OPPRESS'D, a LOYAL PEOPLE GROAN,
 'Tis not the COURTIER'S Int'rest HE SHOULD HEAR,

C.

Hence

IX.

Hence, honest to his Prince, his manly Tongue,
The PUBLIC WRONG and LOYALTY convey'd,
While TITLED TREMBLERS, ev'ry Nerve unstrung,
Look'd all around, confounded and dismay'd.

X.

Look'd all around, astonish'd to behold
(Train'd up to Flatt'ry from their early Youth)
An ARTLESS, FEARLESS Citizen unfold
To ROYAL Ears, a MORTIFYING Truth.

XI.

Titles to him no Pleasure could impart,
No Bribes his rigid Virtue could controul;
The Star could never gain upon his Heart,
Nor turn the Tide of Honor in his Soul,

For

[9]

XII.

For this, his Name our Hist'ry shall adorn,
 Shall soar on Fame's wide Pinions, all sublime ;
 Till Heaven's own bright, and never-dying Morn,
 Absorbs our little Particle of Time.

XIII.

Far other Fate the venal Crew shall find,
 Who sigh for Pomp, or languish after Strings ;
 And sell their native Probity of Mind,
 For Bribes from Statesmen, or for Smiles from Kings.

XIV.

And here, a long inglorious List of Names,
 On my disturb'd Imagination croud ;
 " O ! let them perish (loud the Muse exclaims)
 " Consign'd for ever to Oblivion's Cloud.

" White

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XV.

“ White be the Page that celebrates his Fame,
 “ Nor let one Mark of Infamy appear ;
 “ Let not the Villain’s mingle with his Name,
 “ Left Indignation stop the swelling Tear.

XVI.

“ The swelling Tear should plenteously descend,
 “ The delug’d Eye should give the Heart Relief ;
 “ Humanity should melt for Nature’s Friend,
 “ In all the richest Luxury of Grief.”

XVII.

He, as a Planet with unceasing Ray,
 Is seen in one unvaried Course to move,
 Through Life pursu’d, but one illustrious Way,
 And all his Orbit was his Country’s Love.

But

XVIII.

But he is gone!—And now, alas! no more
 His generous Hand neglected Worth redeems;
 No more around his Mansion shall the Poor
 Bask in his warm, his charitable Beams.

XIX.

No more his grateful Countrymen shall hear
 His manly Voice, in martyr'd Freedom's Cause;
 No more the courtly Sycophant shall fear
 His poignant Lash, for violated Laws.

XX.

Yet say, STERN VIRTUE, who'd not wish to die,
 Thus greatly struggling, a whole Land to save?
 Who would not wish, with Ardor wish to lie,
 With *Beckford's* Honor, in a *Beckford's* Grave?

D

Not

[12]

XXI.

Not Honor, such as Princes can bestow,
 Whose Breath a Reptile, to a Lord can raise;
 But far the brightest Honor here below,
 A grateful Nation's unabating Praise.

XXII.

But see! where LIBERTY, on yonder Strand,
 Where the Cliff rises, and the Billows roar,
 Already takes her melancholy Stand,
 To wing her Passage to some happier Shore.

XXIII.

Stay, Goddess! stay, nor leave this once-blest Isle,
 So many Ages thy peculiar Care,
 O! stay, and cheer us ever with thy Smile,
 Lest quick we sink in terrible Despair.

And

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XXIV.

And, lo! she listens to the Muse's Call;
 She comes, once more, to cheer a wretched Land;
 Thou TYRANNY, shalt tremble to thy Fall!
 To hear her high, her absolute Command.

XXV.

" Let not, my Sons, the Laws your Fathers bought,
 " With such rich Oceans of undaunted Blood,
 " By TRAITORS, thus, be basely set at Nought,
 " While at your Hearts you feel the purple Flood.

XXVI.

" Unite in firm, in honorable Bands,
 " Break ev'ry Link of Slav'ry's hateful Chain;
 " Nor let your Children, at their Fathers Hands,
 " Demand their Birthright, and demand in vain.

" Where

XXVII.

“ Where e’er the Murd’ers of their Country hide,
 “ Whatever Dignities their Names adorn ;
 “ It is your Duty——let it be your Pride,
 “ To drag them forth to universal Scorn.

XXVIII.

“ So shall your lov’d, your venerated Name,
 “ O’er Earth’s vast Convex gloriously expand ;
 “ So shall your still accumulating Fame,
 “ In one bright Story with your *Beckford* stand.”

F I N I S.