

T H E

Oxfordshire Tragedy;

O R, T H E

VIRGIN'S ADVICE.

I N T W O P A R T S.

PART I. How fair Rosanna of the City of Oxford, was
by a young Gentleman betray'd of her Virginity.

PART II. His Cruelty in murdering her; and how a
Rose-bush sprung upon her grave; which blossomed
all the Year through; and how the Murder came
to be found out, by his cropping the Rose, &c.



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OXFORDSHIRE TRAGEDY.

PART I.

YOUNG Virgins fair of beauty bright,
 and you that are of Cupid's fold,
 Unto my tragedy draw near.

for it's as true as e'er was told.

In Oxford liv'd a Lady fair,
 the Daughter of a worthy Knight;
 A gentleman that lived near,
 was enamour'd with her beauty bright.

Rosalinda was this maiden's name,
 the flower of fair Oxfordshire,

This gentleman a courting came,
 begging her for to be his dear.

Her youthful heart to love inclin'd,
 young Cupid bent his golden bow,
 And left his golden dart behind,
 prov'd fair Rosalinda's overthrow.

Within the private groves they'd walk,
 and valleys where the lambs do play,
 Sweet pleasant tales of love they'd talk,
 for to pass away the summer's day.

My charming lovely Rose, said he,
 see how the pleasant flowers spring,
 The pretty birds on ev'ry tree,
 with melody the groves do ring.

I nothing want, for to delight
my soul, but these sweet charms of thine,
Our hearts are fix'd, therefore my dear,
like the turtle dove let us combine;
Let me embrace my heart's delight,
within this pleasant bower here,
This bank of violets for our bed,
shaded with these sweet roses fair.

She said, What can you mean, I pray?
I am a noble Lady born,
What signifies my beauty bright,
that's a trifle when my honour's gone.
My parents they will me disdain,
young virgins they will me deride,
Oh! do not prove my overthrow,
if you love me stay till I'm your bride.

Sweet angel bright, I here do vow,
by all the Powers that are divine,
I'll ne'er forsake my dearest dear.
you're the girl that does my heart confine
And if you will me still deny,
this sword shall quickly end my woe,
Then from her arms he flew straightway,
in fury out his sword he drew.

Her hands as white as lilies fair,
most dreadfully she there did wring;
She said, My death's approaching near,
should I take pity and comfort him,
It only brings my fatal fall,
it's I that must receive the wound,

The crimson dye forsook her cheeks,
At's feet she dropt upon the ground.

Thus innocence he did betray,
Full sore against her chaste desire,
True love is a celestial charm,
but the flames of lust's a raging fire :
But when her senses did revive,
he many vows and oaths did make,
That he'd for ever true remain,
her company would not forsake.

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P A R T II.

NOW Virgins in the second part,
observe this Lady's fatal end,
When once your virtue is betray'd,
you've nothing young men will commend.
For after the traitor had his will,
he never did come near her more :
And from her eyes both day and night,
for his sake crystal tears did flow.

Into the mourning valley she,
would often wander all alone,
And for the jewel that she lost,
in the bower thus would often mourn.
O that I was some pretty bird,
that I might fly to hide my shame ;
Oh ! silly maid for to believe,
all the fair delusions of a man.

the harmless lambs can sport and play,
the turtle constant to his mate ;

Nothing so wretched is as I,
to love a man that doth me hate;
will a letter to him send,
rememb'ring of the oaths he made,
Within the pleasant bow'r, where,
my tender heart he first betray'd.

Her trembling hand a letter wrote.
' My dearest dear, what must I do?

Alas! What have I done, that I
' am forsaken, and forgot by you?

I could have many a Lord of fame,
' who little knows my misery;

I did forsake a worthy Knight,
' 'tis all for love I bear to thee,

And now my little infant son,
' will quickly spread abroad my shame;
One line of comfort to me send,
or by your cruelty I'm slain.'

This answer he to her did send.

' Your insolence amazes me,
To think that I should marry one,
' with whom before I had been free!

Indeed I'll not a father be,
' to any bastard you will bear:
So take no further thought of me,
' no more from you, pray let me hear.'

When she this letter did receive,
she wrung her hands and wept full sore,
And ev'ry day she still would range,
to lament within that pleasant bow'r.

The faithless wretch began to think,
how noble were her parents dear ;
He said, I sure shall punish'd be,
soon as the story they come to hear :
So then the Devil he did begin,
to enter in his wretched mind :
Her precious life he then must have,
thus he to act the thing did find.

He many times had watch'd her out,
into the pleasant valley, where
One day he privately did go,
when he knew the Lady was not there,
And privately he dug a grave,
underneath an oaken tree ;
Then in the branches he did hide,
for to act this piece of cruelty.

Poor harmless soul she nothing knew,
as usual she went there alone,
And on a bank of violets, she,
in a mournful manner sat her down ;
Of his unkindness did complain,
at length the grave she did espy,
She rose indeed to view the same,
little thinking he was so nigh :

You gentle Gods, so kind, said she,
did you this grave for me prepare !
He then descended from the tree,
saying, Strumpet, now thy death is near !
O welcome, welcome, she reply'd,
as long as by your hand I die !

This is a pleasant marriage-bed,
I'm ready, use your cruelty.

But may the Heavens bring to light
thy crime, and thus let it appear,

Winter and Summer on this grave,

may the damask rose in bloom spring here,
Never to wither, though its cropp'd,

but when thy hand doth crop the same,
Then may the bloom that minute blast,
to bring to light thy bitter shame.

More she'd have said, but with his sword,
he pierc'd her tender body through,

Then threw her in the silent grave,

saying, Now there is an end of you.

He fill'd the grave close up again,

with weeds the same did overspread.

Then unconcern'd he straight went home,
immediately went to his bed.

Her parents dear, did grieve full sore,

the lose of their young daughter dear,

Thinking that she was stole away,

unto all the riches she was heir.

Twelve months ago this thing was done,

there's thousands for a truth doth know;

According as she did desire,

on her grave a damask rose did grow.

And many wonder'd at the same,

for all the winter it did spring;

If any one would crop the Rose,

in a moment it would grow again.

This thing was blaz'd the country round,
and thousands went the same to see,

This miracle from Heaven shown;
he amongst the rest must curious be,

To go and see if this was true,
and when unto the place he came,

The beauteous Rose he saw in bloom,
and eagerly he cropt the same:

The leaves did fall from off the bush,
the Rose within his hand did die;

He cry'd. 'Tis fair Rosanna's blood,
that did spring from her fair body.

Many people that were there,
took notice of what he did say.

They told he had some murder done,
he the truth confess'd without delay.

They dug, and found the body there,
the first of April it was known:

Before a Magistrate he was brought,
and now in prison lies forlorn.

Till he his punishment receives,
no doubt but he will have his due:

Young men by this a warning take,
perform your vows whate'er you do,

For God does find out many ways,
such heinous sins to bring to light,

For murder is a dying sin,
and hateful in his blessed sight.