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### **The Works Of Mr. George Lillo; With Some Account Of His Life**

Containing, The Fatal Curiosity. A Tragedy. Marina. A Tragedy. Elmerick.  
A Tragedy. Britannia And Batavia. A Masque. And Arden Of Feversham. A  
Tragedy

**Lillo, George**

**London, 1775**

Prologue.

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# P R O L O G U E.

*HARD is the task, in this discerning age,  
 To find new subjects that will bear the stage;  
 And bold our bards, their low harsh strains to bring  
 Where Avon's swan has long been heard to sing;  
 Blest parent of our scene! whose matchless wit,  
 Tho' yearly reap'd, is our best harvest yet.  
 Well may that genius every heart command,  
 Who drew all nature with her own strong hand;  
 As various, as harmonious, fair and great,  
 With the same vigour and immortal heat,  
 As thro' each element and form she shines: [lines.  
 We view heav'n's hand-maid in her Shakespeare's  
 Though some mean scenes, injurious to his fame,  
 Have long usurp'd the honour of his name;  
 To glean and clear from chaff his least remains,  
 Is just to him, and richly worth our pains.  
 We dare not charge the whole unequal play  
 Of Pericles on him; yet let us say,  
 As gold though mix'd with baser matter shines,  
 So do his bright inimitable lines.  
 Throughout those rude wild scenes distinguish'd stand,  
 And shew he touch'd them with no sparing hand.  
 With humour mix'd in your fore-fathers way,  
 We've to a single tale reduc'd our play.  
 Charming Marina's wrongs begin the scene;  
 Pericles finding her with his lost queen,  
 Concludes the pleasing task. Shou'd as the soul,  
 The fire of Shakespeare animate the whole,  
 Shou'd heights, which none but he cou'd reach, appear,  
 To little errors do not prove severe.  
 If, when in pain for the event, surprize  
 And sympathetic joy shou'd fill your eyes;  
 Do not repine that so you crown an art,  
 Which gives such sweet emotions to the heart:  
 Whose pleasures, so exalted in their kind,  
 Do, as they charm the sense, improve the mind.*