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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.

By a F R I E N D.

Spoken by M R. H A V A R D.

*T*HE piece is Lillo's—He, long since in dust:
Criticks far hence; or spare his urn's sad trust.
Kind to his muse, and to his memory just. }
His muse resembles him, and knows no art;
She speaks not to the head, but to the heart:
The artless maid, by no false seal impress'd,
Bears but an honest copy of his breast:
And every eye has own'd, his natural lay,
Sprung from the heart, wings to the heart it's way.
The tragic bard apes not the epic fire,
On fancy's wing still aiming to aspire:
In nature's palace, simple, great, and plain,
Enrich'd and crowded ornament were vain:
Embellishment does but distract the mind,
Which art should never to minuteness bind.
Tho' honey'd language she from Hybla steal,
Your ears applaud—your hearts no ardour's feel.
With labour'd art tho' the sad tale be told,
The melting tear, mean while congeal'd, grows cold.
When Passion speaks immediate to the soul,
Parts she o'erlooks, to grasp at once the whole.
To night, your bard, from your own annals, shows
A dreadful story of domestic woes:
From facts he draws (his picture's from the life)
The injur'd husband, and the faithless wife,
Doom'd all the train of bosom pangs to prove,
Pangs, which must always wait on lawless love.
Ye generous who feel for others woe,
Ye fair, whose tears for injur'd virtue flow,
In justice to yourselves, applaud his plan,
And judge the poet, as ye lov'd the man.

D R A