

The Rover by Aphra Behn

M/M SS, SmS, R&D

BEHN • THE ROVER; OR, THE BANISHED CAVALIERS 577

ACT IV • SCENE II

FLORINDA: I own I fought today in the defense of a friend
with whom you, if you're the same, and your
swords were first engaged. Perhaps you think this
enough to kill me; but if you do, I cannot fear
you'll do it basely.

ANTONIO: No sir, I'll make you fit for a defense with
this. *(Gives him the sword.)*

FLORINDA: This gallantry surprises me, nor know I how to
use this present, sir, against a man so brave.

ANTONIO: You shall not need. For know, I come to
warn you from a danger that is decreed against you:
perhaps your life, or long imprisonment. And 'twas
with so much courage you offended, I cannot see you
timid.

FLORINDA: How shall I pay this generosity?

ANTONIO: It had been safer to have killed another than
have attempted me. To show your danger, sir, I'll let
you know my quality: And 'tis the Viceroy's son
whom you have wounded.

FLORINDA: The Viceroy's son! — *(Aside.)* Death and con-
fusion! Was this plague reserved to complete all the
rest? Obligated by him, the man of all the world I
would destroy!

ANTONIO: You seem disordered, sir.

FLORINDA: Yes, trust me, I am, and 'tis with pain that man
nerves such bounties who wants the power to pay
you back again.

ANTONIO: To gallant spirits 'tis indeed uneasy, but you
may quickly overpay me, sir.

FLORINDA *(aside)*: Then I am well. Kind heaven, but set us
on, that I may fight with him and keep my honor
— Oh, I'm impatient, sir, to be discounting the
debt I owe you. Command me quickly.

ANTONIO: I have a quarrel with a rival, sir, about the
land we love.

FLORINDA *(aside)*: Death, 'tis Florinda he means! That
thought destroys my reason, and I shall kill him.

ANTONIO: My rival, sir, is one has all the virtues man
can boast of —

FLORINDA *(aside)*: Death, who should this be?

ANTONIO: He challenged me to meet him on the Molo
as soon as day appeared, but last night's quarrel has
made my arm unfit to guide a sword.

FLORINDA: I apprehend you, sir. You'd have me kill the
man that lays a claim to the maid you speak of. I'll
do't. I'll fly to do't!

ANTONIO: Sir, do you know her?

FLORINDA: No, sir, but 'tis enough she is admired by you.

ANTONIO: Sir, I shall rob you of the glory on't, for you
must fight under my name and dress.

FLORINDA: That opinion must be strangely obliging that
makes you think I can personate the brave Antonio,
whom I can but strive to imitate.

ANTONIO: You say too much to my advantage. Come,
at the day appears that calls you forth. Within, sir, is
the habit. *(Exit Antonio.)*

(Obliged by: Favored by. 82. habit: Antonio's clothing.)

BELVILE: Fantastic fortune, thou deceitful light,
That cheats the wearied traveler by night,
Though on a precipice each step you tread,
I am resolved to follow where you lead. *(Exit.)* 85

Scene II

*(The Molo. Enter Florinda and Callis in masks, with
Stephano.)*

FLORINDA *(aside)*: I'm dying with my fears: Belvile's not
coming as I expected under my window makes me
believe that all those fears are true. — Canst thou not
tell with whom my brother fights?

STEPHANO: No, madam, they were both in masquerade. 5
I was by when they challenged one another, and they
had decided the quarrel then, but were prevented by
some cavaliers; which made 'em put it off till now.
But I am sure 'tis about you they fight.

FLORINDA *(aside)*: Nay, then, 'tis with Belvile, for what 10
other lover have I that dares fight for me except An-
tonio, and he is too much in favor with my brother. If
it be he, for whom shall I direct my prayers to heaven?

STEPHANO: Madam, I must leave you, for if my master
see me, I shall be hanged for being your conductor. I 15
escaped narrowly for the excuse I made for you last
night i'th' garden.

FLORINDA: I'll reward thee for't. Prithee, no more.
(Exit Stephano.)

(Enter Don Pedro in his masking habit.)

PEDRO: Antonio's late today; the place will fill, and we
may be prevented. *(Walks about.)* 20

FLORINDA *(aside)*: Antonio? Sure I heard amiss.

PEDRO: But who will not excuse a happy lover
When soft fair arms confine the yielding neck,
And the kind whisper languishingly breathes
"Must you be gone so soon?" 25
Sure I had dwelt forever on her bosom —
But stay, he's here.

(Enter Belvile dressed in Antonio's clothes.)

FLORINDA *(aside)*: 'Tis not Belvile; half my fears are
vanished.

PEDRO: Antonio! 30

BELVILE *(aside)*: This must be he. — You're early, sir; I
do not use to be outdone this way.

PEDRO: The wretched, sir, are watchful, and 'tis enough
you've the advantage of me in Angellica.

BELVILE *(aside)*: Angellica! Or I've mistook my man, or 35
else Antonio! Can he forget his interest in Florinda
and fight for common prize?

PEDRO: Come, sir, you know our terms.

BELVILE *(aside)*: By heaven, not I. — No talking; I am
ready, sir. 40

(Offers to fight; Florinda runs in.)

35. Or: Either.

FLORINDA (to Belvile): Oh, hold! Whoever you be, I do
conjure you hold! If you strike here, I die!

PEDRO: Florinda!

BELVILE: Florinda imploring for my rival!

45 PEDRO: Away; this kindness is unseasonable.

(Puts her by; they fight; she runs in just as Belvile dis-
arms Pedro.)

FLORINDA: Who are you, sir, that dares deny my prayers?

BELVILE: Thy prayers destroy him; if thou wouldst pre-
serve him, do that thou'rt unacquainted with, and
curse him.

(She holds him.)

50 FLORINDA: By all you hold most dear, by her you love,
I do conjure you, touch him not.

BELVILE: By her I love?

See, I obey, and at your feet resign
The useless trophy of my victory.

(Lays his sword at her feet.)

55 PEDRO: Antonio, you've done enough to prove you love
Florinda.

BELVILE: Love Florinda! Does heaven love adoration,
prayer, or penitence? Love her? Here, sir, your sword
again.

(Snatches up the sword and gives it to him.)

60 Upon this truth I'll fight my life away.

PEDRO: No, you've redeemed my sister, and my friend-
ship.

(He gives him Florinda, and pulls off his vizard to show
his face, and puts it on again.)

BELVILE: Don Pedro!

PEDRO: Can you resign your claims to other women,
and give your heart entirely to Florinda?

65 BELVILE: Entire, as dying saints' confessions are!

I can delay my happiness no longer:

This minute let me make Florinda mine.

PEDRO: This minute let it be. No time so proper: This
70 night my father will arrive from Rome, and possibly
may hinder what we purpose.

FLORINDA: O, heavens! This minute?

(Enter Masqueraders and pass over.)

BELVILE: Oh, do not ruin me!

PEDRO: The place begins to fill, and that we may not be
75 observed, do you walk off to St. Peter's church,
where I will meet you and conclude your happiness.

BELVILE: I'll meet you there. — (Aside.) If there be no
more saints' churches in Naples.

FLORINDA: Oh, stay, sir, and recall your hasty doom!

80 Alas, I have not yet prepared my heart
To entertain so strange a guest.

PEDRO: Away; this silly modesty is assumed too late.

BELVILE: Heaven, madam, what do you do?

FLORINDA: Do? Despise the man that lays a tyrant's
claim

85 To what he ought to conquer by submission.

BELVILE: You do not know me. Move a little this way.
(Draws her aside.)

FLORINDA: Yes, you may force me even to the altar;
But not the holy man that offers there
Shall force me to be thine.

(Pedro talks to Callis this while.)

BELVILE: Oh, do not lose so blest an opportunity!

(Pulls off his vizard.)

See, 'tis your Belvile, not Antonio,
Whom your mistaken scorn and anger ruins.

FLORINDA: Belvile!

Where was my soul it could not meet thy voice,
And take this knowledge in.

(As they are talking, enter Willmore, finely dressed, and
Frederick.)

WILLMORE: No intelligence? No news of Belvile yet?

Well, I am the most unlucky rascal in nature. Ha! Am
I deceived, or is it he? Look, Fred! 'Tis he, my dear
Belvile!

(Runs and embraces him; Belvile's vizard falls out of
hand.)

BELVILE: Hell and confusion seize thee!

PEDRO: Ha! Belvile! I beg your pardon, sir.

(Takes Florinda from him.)

BELVILE: Nay, touch her not. She's mine by conquest, and
I won her by my sword.

WILLMORE: Didst thou so? And egad, child, we'll keep
her by the sword.

(Draws on Pedro; Belvile goes between.)

BELVILE: Stand off!

Thou'rt so profanely lewd, so curst by heaven,
All quarrels thou espousest must be fatal.

WILLMORE: Nay, an you be so hot, my valor's coy,
And shall be courted when you want it next.

(Puts up his sword.)

BELVILE (to Pedro): You know I ought to claim a
victor's right,

But you're the brother to divine Florinda,
To whom I'm such a slave. To purchase her:

I durst not hurt the man she holds so dear.

PEDRO: 'Twas by Antonio's, not by Belvile's
sword

This question should have been decided, sir.

I must confess much to your bravery's due,
Both now and when I met you last in arms;

But I am nicely punctual in my word,
As men of honor ought, and beg your pardon:

For this mistake another time shall clear.

(Aside to Florinda as they are going out.)

— This was some plot between you and Belvile,
But I'll prevent you.

[Exeunt Pedro and Florinda.]

(Belvile look
in rage.)

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