

SEXUAL STEALING

BY

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TEMPORARY CULTURE

7

A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

I doubt
also accept
that the woman offered herself
her name
to superior who afforded
scarcity
of intelligent frankness

manner called easy
uncommonly unconscious
miniature heart
criticism thrown
happiness as taste
in vast show
Indolence

“The men are generally a set of poor, withered mortals, as dry and sapless as a squeezed lemon, owing to their intemperate way of living—such as late hours, hard drinking, and particularly their too frequent intercourse with the Negro and Mulatto female sex, to whom they generally give the preference over the Creole ladies . . . from this excess it is that I have known many wives to outlive four husbands but never a man to wear out two wives.”

— John Gabriel Stedman, *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*, 1796.

botanizing objects
 reciting Italian
he expressed
 he defeated
silent anxiety
 of sympathy

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DROIT DU SEIGNEUR

often ejaculation was invited
 he discovered with pleasure wilds
 wherever alighting
 opened thyme caught thing imagined

Wednesday 22nd: a.m. *Cum* Violet *Sup. Terr.* Gave her a bitt . . .
 Wednesday 29th: pm. *Cum* Mould's Lydde, in the Curing house, Stans!
 Backwd. Made Phib. run for her impudence . . .
 Tuesday, 4th September: In the evening *Cum* Egypt Susanah, *Sup. Me.*
 Lect. Gave her 2 bitts. Sent word by her to Phib., she might come if she
 would, and accordingly she did. At night *Cum* Phib."

— Thomas Thistlewood, *Diary*, 1759

one step down
 a steep pleasure
 the sunshine of own
 benevolence could smile
 under shady exclamation

refusal in eyes
possible veil
dared affection
wildness
promise
more forcing irremediable

next
words administered pressure
prepared promise
of that attention quickly fever
journey to indecorous thither
reluctant answer

culpable guardian

having passage opened
once had experience unwillingly
after disagreeable novelty
seemed animal
nobody
wept often
useless patience
firmly inculcated

little gates
my yesterday lives
wildly burst nothing
good night corpse

9

WRITING AND SLEEP

come night
break up room thoughts
into images
then words

“Marguerite seized the moment when we were unobserved: she caught my hand, and pressed it strongly.

‘Look at the sheets!’ said she as she passed me, and immediately resumed her former occupation.

Startled by the abruptness of her action, I remained as if petrified . . . You may be certain, that the moment I found myself alone, was that on which I complied with Marguerite’s injunction. I took the candle hastily, approached the bed, and turned down the coverture. What was my astonishment, my horror, at finding the sheets crimsoned with blood!”

— Matthew G. Lewis, *The Monk*, 1796

let question in

door

to the rooms

close

to room written

THE EUROPEAN LADY SETTLES IN

“As soon as I could get away from the party, I went to my own room, the better to enjoy the landscape, as from my windows it is enchanting indeed. Imagine an immense amphitheatre of mountains, irregular in their shape and various in their verdure; some steep and rugged, others sloping gently and presenting the thickest foliage, and the most varied tints of green, interspersed with the gardens of little settlements, some of which are tottering on the very brinks of precipices, others just peep out from the midst of cocoa-nut trees and bamboos, the latter looking really like large plumes of green feathers. The buildings are like little Chinese pavilions, and have a most picturesque effect. In front is a view of the sea, and the harbours of Kingston, Port Royal, Port Henderson, &c. full of ships of war and vessels great and small; the whole affording an exceedingly busy and interesting scene. The plain, from the Liguanea mountains, covered with sugar estates, *penns*, negro settlements, &c. and then the city of Kingston, the town of Port Royal, all so mixed with trees of different sorts, and all so new to a European eye, that it seemed like a paradise; and Clifton, where I stood, the centre of a blissful garden.”

— *Lady Nugent's Journal of Her Residence in Jamaica from 1801 to 1805*, September 24, 1801.

house surrounded
 with wide horizon immediately home
 her home in country inattentive to her mind
 awakened walks
 through negligent recollection
 these surprised gardens

Madame as the princess of *éclat*
determined *conversazioni* possible
and blissful
profit results
might gratified and charmed
climate gaily rugged
ash appeared green
leaves paler where luxuriant
river now romantic
evening flocks
of waving of seen
 peasant peeping
among dominion apprehension
and fancy admiration

“I wish Lord B. would wash his hands, and use a nail-brush, for the black
edges of his nails really make me sick. He has, besides, an extraordinary
propensity to dip his fingers into every dish. Yesterday he absolutely helped
himself to some fricassee with his dirty finger and thumb.”

— Lady Nugent, July 31, 1801

grandeur without taste
interrupted every occasion
quarrelling afterwards
where wretched delicacy persisted
bed-chamber disrespect
declared as right harmless
with always unwilling company
her lips
her displeasure observing
below moving

avarice dower
part ignorant heiress
accepted work of nuptials
reading sudden fortune
 now marriage
of disappeared happiness

II

SHE TRIES TO MAKE THE BEST OF IT

laughter removed walls
and owner who preserved his wherefore
with Madame compelled
to present company
disgust home

Madame might be resented
Madame uncommonly exhibited discernment
appeared equal
of salutation
said have fears
looked amused
varied splendour of party
lamented his government
talked French particularly
detected effect
himself nothing Parisian



Francisco Goya, "Can't Anyone Untie Us?" Plate 75 of *Los Caprichos*, 1799.

her chateau presence
now silent effort

HER RETREAT

“Nothing amuses her. She sighs continually for the friend of her youth and seems to exist only in the recollection of past happiness. Her aversion to her husband is unqualified and unconquerable. He is vain, illiterate, talkative. A silent fool may be borne, but from a loquacious one there is no relief. How painful must her intercourse with him be; and how infinitely must that pain be augmented by the idea of being his forever? Her elegant mind, stored with literary acquirements, is lost to him.”

— Leonora Sansay, *Secret History, or the Horrors of Santo Domingo*, 1808.

courage when overcome
withdrew to books

society admiration revered delicacy
secured asylum
relief retirement

 read read
taught that hope permitted
strength powerfully still

sleep talking as consequence

“It was generally in the tone of expostulation, and appeared to be intreating to be saved from some great injury. Such phrases as these—‘have pity’; ‘have mercy,’ were frequently intermingled with groans, and accompanied by weeping.”

— Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntley, or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker*, 1799.

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THE PLANTER BROODS OVER HIS
PARENTS' MARRIAGE

of narrative attention sir

of late he might
softly seated
reading aloud of sorrow

observe letters
assume certain other time

a retiring miniature
of mother earnestly sighed
on subject
the husband particularly
familiar conversation
and selfishness refinement
wife fatigue
the blunted dim but necessary bed
desired attention
learned accommodation
hurried moments
lamented fully

suspended apologizing
towards cannot reach wish
indisposition affecting reason
mind mother the disorder
suffering only always
her grief much resignation
with effort affected
dry countenance
but never
so practiced pressure
for comfort
in play
concerning father's coffee mistress

*tell they
is she home too*

*O her warbling pomp
All that bosom magnificence
And these
And the*

“The mulatto women are the hated but successful rivals of the Creole ladies. Many of them are extremely beautiful; and, being destined from their birth to a life of pleasure, they are taught to heighten the power of their charms by all the aids of art, and to express in every look and gesture all the refinements of voluptuousness. It may be said of them, that their very feet speak.”

— Leonora Sansay, *Secret History; or, The Horrors of Santo Domingo*, Philadelphia, 1808.

I4

HIS FATHER'S COFFEE MISTRESS

sorrows like music
swelled a procession
soon fabled undulating
surrounded with vision
procession herself
till plunge delightful
sounding to where

I offer palace

a conviction

expressed with magnificence

concealed with presumption

avenue of avoiding

himself

afflicting every life

time affects intercourse
female will have alternative
voice all consolation
faintly Father Father
he listen
he countenance prevail
pang
tears returned
gradually comfort
erroneously
pillow forgetting

sometimes enfeebled heart
leaned on sublimity
obliged illness

advanced
and exhibited

to contrast beauty soon secretly stretched

my peasant for what tender thoughts
daughter regret
pressed to gleam
melancholy vapours from glass
window illness

mind exhausted
gentle door
to lips
resentment turned prayer
old bed
wished sense
accepted much
and failed

fear feelings
say happiness
harassed delusion

