

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

www.traditionalmusic.co.uk

A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed (1731)

A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed (1731)

Corinna, Pride of Drury-Lane,
For whom no Shepherd sighs in vain;
Never did Covent Garden boast
So bright a batter'd, strolling Toast;
No drunken Rake to pick her up,
No Cellar where on Tick to sup; [credit]
Returning at the Midnight Hour;
Four stories climbing to her Bow'r;
Then, seated on a three-legg'd Chair,
Takes off her artificial Hair:
Now, picking out a Crystal Eye,
She wipes it clean, and lays it by.
Her Eye-Brows from a Mouse's Hyde,
Stuck on with Art on either Side,
Pulls off with Care, and first displays 'em,
Then in a Play-Book smoothly lays 'em.
Now dextrously her Plumpers draws, [see below]
That serve to fill her hollow Jaws.
Untwists a Wire; and from her Gums
A Set of Teeth completely comes.
Pulls out the Rags contriv'd to proip
Her flabby Dugs and down they drop.
Proceeding on, the lovely Goddess
Unlaces next her Steel-ribb'd Bodice;
Which by the Operator's Skill,
Press down the Lumps, the Hollows fill,
Up goes her Hand, oiff she slips
The Bolsters that supply her Hips.
With gentlest Touch, she next explores
Her Shankers, Issues, running Sores,
Effects of many a sad Disaster;
And then to each applies a Plaister.
But must, before she goes to Bed,
Rub off the Dawbs of White and Red;
And smooth the Furrows in her Front,
With greasy Paper stuck upon't.
She takes a Bolus e'er she sleeps; [a large pill]
And then between two Blankets creeps.
With Pains of Love tormented lies;
Or if she chance to close her Eyes,
Of Bridewell and the Compter dreams, [a whore's prison]
And feels the Lash, and faintly screams;

Or, by a faithless Bully drawn,
At some Hedge-Tavern lies in Pawn; [a low alehouse]
Or to Jamaica seems transported,
Alone, and by no Planter courted;
Or, near Fleet-Ditch's oozy Brinks,
Surrounded with a Hundred stinks,
Belated, seems on watch to lye,
And snap some Cully passing by; [simpleton]
Or, struck with Fear, her Fancy runs
On Watchmen, Constables and Duns [an importunate creditor]
From whom she meets with frequent Rubs,
But, never from Religious Clubs;
Whose Favour she is sure to find,
Because she pays 'em, all in Kind.

Corinna wakes. A dreadful Sight!
Behold the Ruins of the Night!
A wicked Rat her Plaister stole,
Half eat, and dragg'd it to his Hole.
The Crystal Eye, alas, was miss't;
And Puss had on her Plumpers p---st.
A pigeon pick'd her Issue-Peas; [see below]
And Shock her tressesj fill'd with Fleas.

The Nymph, tho' in this mangled Plight,
Must ev'ry Morn her Limbs unite.
But how shall I describe her Arts
To recollect the scatter'd Parts?
Or shew the Anguish, Toil, and Pain,
Of gath'ring up herself again?
The bashful Muse will never bear
In such a Scene to interfere.
Corinna in the Morning dizen'd, [dressed up]
Who sees, will spew; who smells, be poison'd.

#651

"Plumpers" are either a device for smoothing out the cheeks, or false bosoms, according to Henley and Farmer's Dictionary.

note: I offer another ballad dealing with the woman who removes various beautifying appurtenances before going to bed. I offer another, courtesy of a student, Allesandra Djurkolu, who came upon this in a collection of Dean Jonathan Swift's poems. The satire, of course, is clear. So too the anger at the Phyllis-and-Corydon poets with their romantic nonsense. Here was London life, writ bold. EC

EC
Apr98