

"Upon the Double Murder of King Charles I"

By Katherine Philips

*Transcription, correction, editorial commentary, and markup
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*Upon the double Murder of K. CHARLES I., ^{Murder} in Answer to a
Libellous Copy of Rimes made by Vavasor Powell, ^{Powell}*

1 I think not on the State, nor am concern'd
2 Which way soever the great Helm is turn'd
3 But as that son whose father's dangers nigh
4 Did force his native dumbness, and untie
5 The fetter'd, ^{fettered} organs; so here's a fair cause
6 That will excuse the breach of Nature's laws.
7 Silence were now a sin, nay Passion now
8 Wise men themselves for Merit would allow.
9 What noble eye could see (and careless pass)
10 The dying Lion kick'd by every Ass, ^{Lion?}
11 Has Charles so broke God's Laws, he must not have
12 A quiet Crown, nor yet a quiet Grave?
13 Tombs have been Sanctuaries; Thieves lie there
14 Secure from all their penalty and fear.
15 Great Charleshis double misery was this,
16 Unfaithful Friends, ignoble Enemies.
17 Had any Heathen been this Prince's foe,
18 He would have wept to see him injur'd so.
19 His Title was his Crime, they'd reason good
20 To quarrel at the Right they had withstood.
21 He broke God's Laws, and therefore he must die;
22 And what shall then become of thee and I?
23 Slander must follow Treason; but yet stay,
24 Take not our Reason with our King away.
25 Though you have seiz'd upon all our defence,
26 Yet do not sequester, ^{sequester} our common Sense.

27 But I admire not at this new supply:
28 No bounds will hold those who at Sceptres fly.
29 Christ will be King, but I ne're understood
30 His Subjects built his Kingdom up with blood,
31 Except their own; or that he would dispence
32 Oh! to what height of horreur are they come
33 Who dare pull down a Crown, tear up a Tomb!

Footnotes

Murder Charles I was beheaded on January 30th, 1649.

Powell Vavasor Powell was a nonconformist Puritan preacher who published poetry in praise of the execution of Charles I. Philips wrote in respond to Powell's poem.

fettered Shackled or chained (Oxford English Dictionary).

Lion Philips is referencing an Aesop fable in which a dying lion is attacked by several animals seeking their revenge on him. After being kicked by an ass, the lion declares: "this is a double death."

sequesterTo confiscate or take forcibly (Oxford English Dictionary).