

Language and thematic analysis of the excerpt from the rover



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LANGUAGE AND THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE EXCERPT FROM THE ROVER BY

To 12 April This excerpt has been taken from the play 'The Rover'. This scene projects three characters Willmore, Angelica and Moretta. The scene depicts a mild battle of wills between Willmore and Angelica for Angelica because apparently Angelica is an expensive and popular courtesan and Willmore is a merchant with charm, wit and is an expert at utilizing words for persuasion however he has no money. The major themes observed in this excerpt include prostitution or women liberation according to the author's perspective, love and lust. Behn uses the profession of prostitution as a tool to demonstrate her definition of women liberation where men and women are treated as equals with same rights. This theme is apparent from the line, "is all this heaven of beauty shown to move despair in those who cannot buy?" as Hunter (1993, p. 103). also states, "in the Rover the chaotic, unrepressed "other" body of woman is idealized to allow Behn to express a cultural longing for a prelapsarian Golden Age where sexes love mutually and women are desiring subjects rather than passive objects" The character of Willmore and Angelica are used as an aid to symbolically represent the theme of lust and love because the whole episode that is depicted in this scene is a matter of lust for Willmore while it is love for Angelica. Behn (1967, p. xiv) states, "for Willmore... women are objects to be bought and sold, love is merely lust". This statement is also supported by the non serious demeanor of Willmore in the scene where he is intent on getting his way and uses words as the weapon to persuade Angelica. While on contrary Angelica on the other hand accepts her feelings for him in this scene and her acceptance of her feelings also reiterates her vulnerability which she tries to hide. As it is observed that she says at the end of the excerpt, "sure this

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from any other man would anger me, nor shall he know the conquest he has made, poor angry man how I despise this railing." This excerpt comprises of easy and simple diction. Since this scene has an air of mischief and cajoling punctuation marks such as exclamation marks and brief pauses have been used to further beautify the depiction of a humorous mood. The mode of conversation carried out is in turn taking style. Twice the technique of aside has been used that helps in making the readers a part of the play's action and high lighting the inner dilemma and the inner battle of the protagonist i. e. Angelica. Since this excerpt demonstrates a scene between a courtesan and a customer so it should be performed with the backdrop and setting of a courtesan's quarters in which the courtesan should be dressed in all the glory of flashy and vibrant colors and should be adorned in jewels to enhance her beauty. On the other hand Willmore should be dressed in a garb that is dusty and a little worn out so that his lack of being able to generate the money that Angelica charges will also reflect in his apparel. Moreover the room itself should be furnished with solid yet sparse furniture in order to provide the character/actors enough room to wander about as this scene comprises of a variety of emotions that should be illustrated from the gestures and body movements of the actors such as mild furry and censure, surprise, cajoling and reprimand. Hence this scene should be performed in a setting rich with colors and that reflects wealth although it should not be overly furnished. Reference: Behn, A., 1967. *The rover*. Omaha: University of Nebraska Press. Hunter, H., 1993. *Rereading Aphra Behn: history, theory and criticism*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.