

To The Honourable the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled.

The Petition of Belinda an African, humbly

Shews.

That seventy years have rolled away since she on the banks of the Rio da Salta, received her existence — the mountains covered with spicy forests, the valley loaded with the richest fruits, spontaneously produced; joined to that happy temperature of air which excludes excess; would have yielded her the most compleat felicity, had not her mind received early impressions of the cruelty of men, whose faces were like the moon, and whose bows and arrows were like the thunder and the lightning of the clouds. — the idea of these, the most dreadful of all enemies, filled her infant thumbers with horror, and her noon tide moments with cruel apprehensions! — but her affrighted imagination, in its most alarming extension, never represented distresses equal to what she hath since really experienced — for before she had twelve years enjoyed the fragrance of her native groves, and e'er she realized, that Europeans placed their happiness in the yellow dust which she carelessly trod with her infant footsteps — even when she, in a sacred grove, with each hand in that of a tender Parent, was paying her devotions to the great Ovisa who made all things — an armed band of white men, driving many of her Countrymen in chains, refused into the hallowed shade! — could the Fear, the sighs, and supplications, bursting from the tortured of Parental affection, have blunted the keen edge of avarice, she might have been rescued from agony, which many of her

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her Country's Children have felt, but which now have ever yet
 described. — in vain she lifted her supplicating
 voice to an insulted father, and her guiltless hands to
 a dishonoured duty! She was ravished from the bosom
 of her Country, from the Arms of her friends, while the
 advanced Age of her Parents, rendering them unfit
 for servitude, cruelly separated her from them forever!

Scenes which her imagination had never conceived
 of a floating World — the sporting Monsters of the deep —
 and the familiar meetings of Willows and clouds, those,
 but in vain to divert her melancholly attention, from
 three hundred Africans in chains, suffering the most
 excruciating torments, and some of them rejoicing,
 that the pangs of death came like a balme to their wounds.

more — more her eyes were blest with a content —
 but alas! how unlike the Land where she was born —
 here all things appeared unpropitious — she learned to
 catch the Ideas, marked by the sounds of language, only
 to know that her doom was Slavery, from which death
 alone was to emancipate her. — ~~what~~ What did it
 avail her, that the Walls of her Lord were hung with
 Splendor, and that the dust troden underfoot in her Native
 Country crowded his Gates with sordid worshipers — the Laws
 had rendered her incapable of receiving property — and
 though she was a free Moral agent, accountable for her actions,
 yet she never had a moment at her own disposal! —
 fifty years her faithful ^{hands} have been compelled to ignoble
 servitude, for the benefit of An Isaac Hoyal, until,
 as if Nations must be agitated, and the world convulsed,
 for the preservation of that freedom, which the Almighty Father
 intended for all the human Race, the present war was
 commenced — the terrors of men armed in the Cause
 of

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of freedom, compelled her Master to fly - and to breathe
away his Life in a Land, where, Lawless domination,
sits enthroned, pouring bloody outrage and cruelty, on all
who dare to be free.

The face of your Petitioner, is now marked
with the furrows of time, and her frame feebly bending
under the oppression of years, while she, by the Laws of the
Land, is denied the enjoyment of one morsel of that
immense wealth, a part whereof hath been accumulated
by her own industry, and the whole augmented by
her servitude.

~~Wherefore protesting~~

Wherefore casting herself at the feet of your
honours, as to a body of men, formed by the extirpation
of usages, for the reward of virtue, and the just
returns of honest industry - she prays, that such
allowance ^{may} be made her out of the Estate of
Colonel Mayall, as ^{will} prevent her, and her more
infirm daughter, from misery in the greatest extreme,
and scatter comfort over the short and downward
paths of their Lives -

and she will every Day

Boston 14th February 1783 me

[Signature]
Belinda

