Aphra Behn, The Rover 800-900 words Act II, scene ii

Aphra Behn’s *The Rover* follows an entourage of “banished cavaliers”—colonel Belvile, Ned Blunt, Captain Willmore (the rover), and their friend Fredrick—while they peruse Naples during Carnival. The entourage is increasingly enthralled with the atmosphere of masquerade and the freedoms awarded by dawning vizard masks. The plot kicks off when their group intersects with that of Hellena and Florinda who are Spanish ladies and sisters to Don Pedro—a Spanish nobleman. The men instantly attempt to seduce the cache of ladies to no avail, leaving their lustful appetites whetted but far from satisfied. Willmore decides to look for prostitutes to satisfy himself and this leads him to Angellica, the courtesan where he successfully convinces her to lay with him by seduction alone. Belvile finds favor with Florinda and takes the place of Antonio to gain her hand and approval from Pedro. Ned Blunt falls into a trap laid out by a whore and her pimp and finds himself remiss of his belongings and maddened to the point of violence. He nearly carries out violent abuse against Florinda in his rage until she is saved by Fredrick and he calms down. Willmore continuously pursues every woman he encounters and finds himself enamoured by Hellena. Angellica overhears his sultry seductions employed on Hellena and becomes enraged. She confronts Willmore with a pistol intending to kill him for his inconsistency but she is talked down by Pedro, Antonio and Willmore. Hellena returns and Willmore having seemingly met his mischievous match in her, takes her hand in marriage and the play concludes.

Act II scene ii of *The Rover* presents Willmore’s seduction of Angellica, the courtesan. This begins in the previous scene with Willmore seizing a picture of Angellica that is seen as an act of rudeness by Antonio and Angellica’s bravo. The resulting conflict belittles Antonio and grants Willmore an avenue for having speaks with Angellica. She summons Willmore because she is curious as to why he took her portrait, this gesture implies that she is somewhat flattered by the action. Willmore then takes it upon himself to seduce the courtesan without paying her sum of one hundred thousand crowns and providing her with “love” instead. After some back and forth discussion, Angellica eventually gives in to Willmore’s proposition to her companion, Moretta’s amazement.

The chosen scene contributes to the play’s overall development as it provides an important plot arc that is pivotal for the play’s conclusion. Moreover, act II scene ii includes critiques of marriage that are integral to the play’s theme. Act II scene ii oversees the sub-plot of Willmore’s seduction of Angellica. In the events of the scene, the discourse between the two characters elicits a comparison of marriage to prostitution. Both of these attributes of the scene play a role in the overall dynamic of the play in terms of plot development and theme.