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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PLAYS, WRITTEN BY SIR JOHN VANBRUGH,
VOLUME THE SECOND ***

PLAYS,

WRITTEN BY

Sir JOHN VANBRUGH.

VOLUME *the* SECOND.

CONTAINING

[The CONFEDERACY.](#)

[The MISTAKE.](#)

[The COUNTRY HOUSE.](#)

[A JOURNEY to LONDON.](#)

[The PROVOK'D HUSBAND.](#)

LONDON:

Printed for J. RIVINGTON, T. LONGMAN, T. LOWNDES, T. CASLON, C. CORBETT, S. BLADON, W. NICOLL, T. EVANS, and M.
WALLER.

MDCCLXXVI.

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by a Shabby Poet.

Y^E Gods! what crime had my poor father done,
That you should make a poet of his son?
Or is't for some great services of his,
Y'are pleas'd to compliment his boy——with this?

[Shewing his crown of laurel.

*The honour, I must needs confess is great,
If, with his crown, you'd tell him where to eat:
Tis well——But I have more complaints——look here!*

[Shewing his ragged coat.

*Hark ye; d'ye think this suit good winter wear?
In a cold morning; whu——at a Lord's gate,
How you have let the porter let me wait!
You'll say, perhaps, you knew I'd get no harm,
You'd given me fire enough to keep me warm.
Ah——
A world of blessings to that fire we owe;
Without it I'd ne'er made this princely show.
I have a brother too, now in my sight,*

[Looking behind the scenes.

*A busy man amongst us here to-night:
Your fire has made him play a thousand pranks,
For which, no doubt you've had his daily thanks:
He's thank'd you, fi fi, for all his decent plays,
Where he so nick'd it, when he writ for praise.
Next for his meddling with some folks in black,
And bringing——Souse——a priest upon his back;
For building houses here t'oblige the peers,
And fetching all their house about his ears;
For a new play, he'as now thought fit to write,
To sooth the town——which they——will damn to-night.
These benefits are such, no man can doubt
But he'll go on, and set your fancy out,
Till for reward of all his noble deeds,
At last, like other sprightly folks, he speeds:
Has this great recompence fix'd on his brow
As fam'd Parnassus; has your leave to bow
And walk about the streets——equip'd——as I am now.*

}
}
}

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

Gripe,
Money-trap,
Dick, a gamester, son to Mrs. *Amlet*.
Brass, his companion, passes for his *Valet de Chambre*.
Clip, a Goldsmith.
Jessamin, foot boy to *Clarissa*.

Two rich money-scriveners.

Mr. *Leigh*.
Mr. *Dogget*.
Mr. *Booth*.
Mr. *Pack*.
Mr. *Mimes*.

WOMEN.

Clarissa, wife to *Gripe*, an expensive luxurious woman, a great admirer of quality.
Araminta, wife to *Money-trap*, very intimate with *Clarissa*, of the same humour.
Corinna, daughter to *Gripe* by a former wife, a good fortune, young, and kept very close by her father.
Flippanta, *Clarissa*'s maid.
Mrs. *Amlet*, a seller of all sorts of private affairs to the ladies.
Mrs. *Cloggit* her neighbour.

Mrs. *Barry*.
Mrs. *Porter*.
Mrs.
Bradshaw.
Mrs.
Bracegirdle.
Mrs. *Willis*.
Mrs. *Baker*.

THE CONFEDERACY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE *Covent-garden.*

Enter Mrs. Amlet and Mrs. Cloggit, meeting.

AMLET.

GOOD-morrow, neighbour; good-morrow, neighbour *Cloggit!* How does all at your house this morning?

Clog. Think you kindly, *Mrs. Amlet*, thank you kindly; how do you do, I pray?

Aml. At the old rate, neighbour, poor and honest; these are hard times, good lack.

Clog. If they are hard with you, what are they with us? You have a good trade going, all the great folks in town help off with your merchandize.

Aml. Yes, they do help us off with 'em indeed; they buy all.

Clog. And pay—

Aml. For some.

Clog. Well, 'tis a thousand pities, *Mrs. Amlet*, they are not as ready at one, as they are at t'other: For, not to wrong 'em, they give very good rates.

Aml. O for that, let us do them justice, neighbour; they never make two words upon the price, all they haggle about is the day of payment.

Clog. There's all the dispute, as you say.

Aml. But that's a wicked one: For my part, neighbour, I'm just tir'd off my legs with trotting after 'em; beside, it eats out all our profit. Would you believe it, *Mrs. Cloggit*, I have worn out four pair of pattens, with following my old Lady *Youthful*, for one set of false teeth, and but three pots of paint.

Clog. Look you there now.

Aml. If they would but once let me get enough by 'em, to keep a coach to carry me a dunning after 'em, there would be some conscience in it.

Clog. Ay, that were something. But now you talk of conscience, *Mrs. Amlet*, how do you speed among your city customers?

Aml. My city customers! Now by my truth, neighbour, between the city and the court (with reverence be it spoken) there's not a — to choose. My ladies in the city in times past, were as full of gold as they were of religion, and as punctual in their payments as they were of their prayers; but since they have set their minds upon quality, adieu one, adieu t'other, their money and their conscience are gone, heaven knows where. There is not a goldsmith's wife to be found in town, but's as hard-hearted as an ancient judge, and as poor as a towering dutchess.

Clog. But what the murrain have they to do with quality, why don't their husbands make e'm mind their shops?

Aml. Their husbands! their husbands, say'st thou, woman? alack, alack, they mind their husbands, neighbour, no more than they do a sermon.

Clog. Good lack-a-day, that women born of sober parents, should be prone to follow ill examples! But now we talk of quality, when did you hear of your son *Richard*, *Mrs. Amlet*? My daughter *Flip* says she met him t'other day in a lac'd coat, with three fine ladies, his footman at his heels, and as gay as a bridegroom.

Aml. Is it possible? Ah the rogue! well, neighbour, all's well that ends well; but *Dick* will be hang'd.

Clog. That were pity.

Aml. Pity indeed; for he's a hopeful young man to look on; but he leads a life—Well—where he has it, heav'n knows; but they say, he pays his club with the best of 'em. I have seen him but once these three months, neighbour, and then the varlet wanted money; but I bid him march, and march he did to some purpose; for in less than an hour, back comes my gentleman into the house, walks to and fro in the room, with his wig over his shoulder, his hat on one side, whistling a minuet, and tossing a purse of gold from one hand to t'other, with no more respect (heaven bless us!) than if it had been an orange. Sirrah, says I, where have you got that? He answers me never a word, but sets his arms a kimbo, cocks his saucy hat in my face, turns about upon his ungracious heel, as much as to say kiss—and I've never set my eye on him since.

Clog. Look you there now; to see what the youth of this age are come to!

Aml. See what they will come to, neighbour. Heaven shield, I say; but *Dick's* upon the gallop. Well, I must bid you good-morrow; I'm going where I doubt I shall meet but a sorry welcome.

Clog. To get in some old debt, I'll warrant you?

Aml. Neither better or worse.

Clog. From a lady of quality?

Aml. No, she's but a scrivener's wife; but she lives as well, and pays as ill, as the stateliest countess of 'em all.

[*Exeunt several ways.*]

Enter Brass solus.

Brass. Well, surely thro' the world's wide extent, there never appeared so impudent a fellow as my schoolfellow *Dick*, pass himself upon the town for a gentleman, drop into all the best company with an easy air, as if his natural element were in the sphere of quality; when the rogue had a kettle-drum to his father, who was hang'd for robbing a church, and has a pedlar to his mother, who carries her shop under her arm. But here he comes.

Enter Dick.

Dick. Well, *Brass*, what news? Hast thou given my letter to *Flippanta*?

Brass. I'm but just come; I han't knock'd at the door yet. But I have a damn'd piece of news for you.

Dick. As how?

Brass. We must quit this country.

Dick. We'll be hang'd first.

Brass. So you will if you stay.

Dick. Why, what's the matter?

Brass. There's a storm a coming.

Dick. From whence?

Brass. From the worst point in the compass, the law.

Dick. The law! Why what have I to do with the law?

Brass. Nothing; and therefore it has something to do with you.

Dick. Explain.

Brass. You know you cheated a young fellow at picquet t'other day, of the money he had to raise his company.

Dick. Well, what then?

Brass. Why he's sorry he lost it.

Dick. Who doubts that?

Brass. Ay, but that's not all, he's such a fool to think of complaining on't.

Dick. Then I must be so wise as to stop his mouth.

Brass. How?

Dick. Give him a little back; if that won't do, strangle him.

Brass. You are very quick in your methods.

Dick. Men must be so that will dispatch business.

Brass. Hark you, Colonel, your father dy'd in's bed?

Dick. He might have done if he had not been a fool.

Brass. Why, he robbed a church.

Dick. Ay, but he forgot to make sure of the sexton.

Brass. Are not you a great rogue?

Dick. Or I should wear worse clothes.

Brass. Hark you, I would advise you to change your life.

Dick. And turn ballad-singer.

Brass. Not so neither.

Dick. What then?

Brass. Why, if you can get this young wench, reform, and live honest.

Dick. That's the way to be starv'd.

Brass. No, she has money enough to buy you a good place, and pay me into the bargain for helping her to so good a match. You have but this throw left to save you, for you are not ignorant, youngster, that your morals begin to be pretty well known about town; have a care your noble birth and your honourable relations are not discovered too: there needs but that to have you toss'd in a blanket, for the entertainment of the first company of ladies you intrude into: and then like a dutiful son, you may dangle about with your mother, and sell paint: she's old and weak, and wants somebody to carry her goods after her. How like a dog will you look, with a pair of plod shoes, your hair crop'd up to your ears, and a band-box under your arm?

Dick. Why faith, *Brass*, I think thou art in the right on't; I must fix my affairs quickly, or Madam *Fortune* will be playing some of her bitch-tricks with me: therefore I'll tell thee what we'll do;

we'll pursue this old rogue's daughter heartily; we'll cheat his family to purpose, and they shall atone for the rest of mankind.

Brass. Have at her then, I'll about your business presently.

Dick. One kiss——and success attend thee.

[*Exit Dick.*

Brass. A great rogue——Well, I say nothing. But when I have got the thing into a good posture, he shall sign and seal, or I'll have him tumbled out of the house like a cheese. Now for *Flippanta*.

[*He knocks.*

Enter Flippanta.

Flip. Who's that? *Brass!*

Brass. *Flippanta!*

Flip. What want you, rogue's-face?

Brass. Is your mistress dress'd?

Flip. What, already? Is the fellow drunk?

Brass. Why, with respect to her looking-glass, it's almost two.

Flip. What then, fool?

Brass. Why then it's time for the mistress of the house to come down, and look after her family.

Flip. Pr'ythee don't be an owl. Those that go to bed at night may rise in the morning; we that go to bed in the morning rise in the afternoon.

Brass. When does she make her visits then?

Flip. By candle-light; it helps off a muddy complexion; we women hate inquisitive sun-shine: but do you know that my Lady is going to turn good housewife?

Brass. What, is she going to die?

Flip. Die!

Brass. Why, that's the only way to save money for her family.

Flip. No; but she has thought of a project to save chair-hire.

Brass. As how?

Flip. Why all the company she us'd to keep abroad she now intends shall meet at her own house. Your master has advis'd her to set up a basset-table.

Brass. Nay, if he advis'd her to it, it's right; but has she acquainted her husband with it yet?

Flip. What to do? When the company meet he'll see them.

Brass. Nay, that's true, as you say, he'll know it soon enough.

Flip. Well, I must be gone; have you any business with my Lady?

Brass. Yes; as ambassador from *Araminta*, I have a letter for her.

Flip. Give it me.

Brass. Hold——and as first minister of state to the Colonel, I have an affair to communicate to thee.

Flip. What is't? quick.

Brass. Why——he's in love.

Flip. With what?

Brass. A woman——and her money together.

Flip. Who is she?

Brass. *Corinna*.

Flip. What wou'd he be at?

Brass. At her——if she's at leisure.

Flip. Which way?

Brass. Honourably——he has ordered me to demand her of thee in marriage.

Flip. Of me?

Brass. Why, when a man of quality has a mind to a city-fortune, wou'd'st have him apply to her father and mother?

Flip. No.

Brass. No, so I think: men of our end of the town are better bred than to use ceremony. With a long perriwig we strike the lady, with a you-know-what we soften the maid; and when the parson has done his job, we open the affair to the family. Will you slip this letter into her prayer-book, my little queen? It's a very passionate one——It's seal'd with a heart and a dagger; you may see by that what he intends to do with himself.

Flip. Are there any verses in it? If not, I won't touch it.

Brass. Not one word in prose, it's dated in rhyme.

[*She takes it.*]

Flip. Well, but have you brought nothing else?

Brass. Gad forgive me; I'm the forgetfullest dog—I have a letter for you too—here—'tis in a purse, but it's in prose, you won't touch it.

Flip. Yes, hang it, it is not good to be too dainty.

Brass. How useful a virtue is humility! Well, child, we shall have an answer to-morrow, shan't we?

Flip. I can't promise you that; for our young gentlewoman is not so often in my way as she would be. Her father (who is a citizen from the foot to the forehead of him) lets her seldom converse with her mother-in-law and me, for fear she should learn the airs of a woman of quality. But I'll take the first occasion: see, there's my lady, go in and deliver your letter to her.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, a Parlour.

Enter Clarissa, follow'd by Flippanta and Brass.

Clar. No messages this morning from any body, *Flippanta*? Lard how dull that is! O, there's *Brass*! I did not see thee, *Brass*. What news dost thou bring?

Brass. Only a letter from *Araminta*, Madam.

Clar. Give it me—open it for me, *Flippanta*, I am so lazy to-day.

[*Sitting down.*]

Brass. [*To Flip.*] Be sure now you deliver my master's as carefully as I do this.

Flip. Don't trouble thyself, I'm no novice.

Clar. [*to Brass.*] 'Tis well, there needs no answer, since she'll be here so soon.

Brass. Your ladyship has no farther commands then?

Clar. Not at this time, honest *Brass*. *Flippanta*!

[*Exit Brass.*]

Flip. Madam.

Clar. My husband's in love.

Flip. In love?

Clar. With *Araminta*.

Flip. Impossible!

Clar. This letter from her, is to give me an account of it.

Flip. Methinks you are not very much alarm'd.

Clar. No; thou know'st I'm not much tortur'd with jealousy.

Flip. Nay, you are much in the right on't, Madam, for jealousy's a city passion, 'tis a thing unknown amongst people of quality.

Clar. Fy! A woman must indeed be of a mechanick mould, who is either troubled or pleas'd with any thing her husband can do to her. Pr'ythee mention him no more; 'tis the dullest theme.

Flip. 'Tis splenetick indeed. But when once you open your basset table, I hope that will put him out of your head.

Clar. Alas, *Flippanta*, I begin to grow weary even of the thoughts of that too.

Flip. How so?

Clar. Why, I have thought on't a day and a night already, and four and twenty hours, thou know'st, is enough to make one weary of any thing.

Flip. Now by my conscience, you have more woman in you than all your sex together: you never know what you would have.

Clar. Thou mistakest the thing quite. I always know what I lack, but I am never pleas'd with what I have. The want of a thing is perplexing enough, but the possession of it is intolerable.

Flip. Well, I don't know what you are made of, but other women would think themselves blest in your case; handsome, witty, lov'd by every body, and of so happy a composure, to care a fig for nobody. You have no one passion, but that of your pleasures, and you have in me a servant devoted to all your desires, let them be as extravagant as they will: yet all this is nothing; you can still be out of humour.

Clar. Alas, I have but too much cause.

Flip. Why, what have you to complain of?

Clar. Alas, I have more subjects for spleen than one: is it not a most horrible thing that I should

be but a scrivener's wife?—Come,—don't flatter me, don't you think nature design'd me for something *plus élevé*?

Flip. Nay, that's certain; but on the other side, methinks, you ought to be in some measure content, since you live like a woman of quality, tho' you are none.

Clar. O fy! the very quintessence of it is wanting.

Flip. What's that?

Clar. Why, I dare abuse nobody: I'm afraid to affront people, tho' I don't like their faces; or to ruin their reputations, tho' they pique me to it, by taking ever so much pains to preserve 'em: I dare not raise a lye of a man, tho' he neglects to make love to me; nor report a woman to be a fool, tho' she's handsomer than I am. In short, I dare not so much as bid my footman kick the people out of doors, tho' they come to ask me for what I owe them.

Flip. All this is very hard indeed.

Clar. Ah, *Flippanta*, the perquisites of quality are of an unspeakable value.

Flip. They are of some use, I must confess; but we must not expect to have every thing. You have wit and beauty, and a fool to your husband: come come, madam, that's a good portion for one.

Clar. Alas, what signifies beauty and wit, when one dares neither jilt the men nor abuse the women? 'Tis a sad thing, *Flippanta*, when wit's confin'd, 'tis worse than the rising of the lights; I have been sometimes almost choak'd with scandal, and durst not cough it up for want of being a countess.

Flip. Poor lady!

Clar. O! Liberty is a fine thing, *Flippanta*; it's a great help in conversation to have leave to say what one will. I have seen a woman of quality, who has not had one grain of wit, entertain a whole company the most agreeably in the world, only with her malice. But 'tis in vain to repine, I can't mend my condition, till my husband dies: so I'll say no more on't, but think of making the most of the state I am in.

Flip. That's your best way, madam; and in order to it, pray consider how you'll get some ready money to set your basset-table a going; for that's necessary.

Clar. Thou say'st true; but what trick I shall play my husband to get some, I don't know: for my pretence of losing my diamond necklace has put the man into such a passion, I'm afraid he won't hear reason.

Flip. No matter; he begins to think 'tis lost in earnest: so I fancy you may venture to sell it, and raise money that way.

Clar. That can't be, for he has left odious notes with all the goldsmiths in town.

Flip. Well, we must pawn it then.

Clar. I'm quite tir'd with dealing with those pawnbrokers.

Flip. I'm afraid you'll continue the trade a great while, for all that.

[*Aside.*

Enter Jessamin.

Jess. Madam, there's the woman below that sells paint and patches, iron boddice, false teeth, and all sorts of things to the ladies; I can't think of her name.

Flip. 'Tis Mrs. *Amlet*, she wants money.

Clar. Well, I han't enough for myself, it's an unreasonable thing she should think I have any for her.

Flip. She's a troublesome jade.

Clar. So are all people that come a dunning.

Flip. What will you do with her?

Clar. I have just now thought on't. She's very rich, that woman is, *Flippanta*, I'll borrow some money of her.

Flip. Borrow! sure you jest, madam.

Clar. No, I'm in earnest; I give thee commission to do it for me.

Flip. Me!

Clar. Why dost thou stare, and look so ungainly? Don't I speak to be understood?

Flip. Yes, I understand you well enough; but Mrs. *Amlet*—

Clar. But Mrs. *Amlet* must lend me some money, where shall I have any to pay her else?

Flip. That's true; I never thought of that truly. But here she is.

Enter Mrs. Amlet.

Clar. How d'you do? How d'you do, Mrs. *Amlet*? I han't seen you these thousand years, and yet I believe I'm down in your books.

Aml. O, Madam, I don't come for that, alack.

Flip. Good-morrow, Mrs. *Amlet*.

Aml. Good-morrow, Mrs. *Flippanta*.

Clar. How much am I indebted to you, Mrs. *Amlet*?

Aml. Nay, if your ladyship desires to see your bill, I believe I may have it about me.—There, Madam, if it ben't too much fatigue to you to look it over.

Clar. Let me see it, for I hate to be in debt, where I am obliged to pay. [*Aside.*]—*Reads.*] Imprimis, *For bolstering out the Countess of Crump's left hip*—O fy, this does not belong to me.

Aml. I beg your Ladyship's pardon. I mistook indeed; 'tis a countess's bill I have writ out to little purpose. I furnish'd her two years ago with three pair of hips, and am not paid for them yet: but some are better customers than some. There's your Ladyship's bill, Madam.

Clar. *For the idea of a new invented commode.*—Ay, this may be mine, but 'tis of a preposterous length. Do you think I can waste time to read every article, Mrs. *Amlet*? I'd as lief read a sermon.

Aml. Alack-a-day, there's no need of fatiguing yourself at that rate; cast an eye only, if your honour pleases, upon the sum total.

Clar. Total; fifty-six pounds—and odd things.

Flip. But six and fifty pounds!

Aml. Nay, another body would have made it twice as much; but there's a blessing goes along with a moderate profit.

Clar. *Flippanta*, go to my cashier, let him give you six and fifty pounds. Make haste: don't you hear me? Six and fifty pounds. Is it so difficult to be comprehended?

Flip. No, Madam, I, I comprehend six and fifty pounds, but—

Clar. But go and fetch it then.

Flip. What she means, I don't know; [*Aside.*] but I shall, I suppose, before I bring her the money.

[*Exit.* *Flip.*]

Clar. [*Setting her hair in a pocket glass.*] The trade you follow gives you a great deal of trouble, Mrs. *Amlet*.

Aml. Alack-a-day, a world of pain, Madam, and yet there's small profit, as your honour sees by your bill.

Clar. Poor woman! sometimes you have great losses, Mrs. *Amlet*?

Aml. I have two thousand pounds owing me, of which I shall never get ten shillings.

Clar. Poor woman! You have a great charge of children, Mrs. *Amlet*?

Aml. Only one wicked rogue, Madam, who I think, will break my heart.

Clar. Poor woman!

Aml. He'll be hang'd, Madam—that will be the end of him. Where he gets it, heav'n knows; but he's always shaking his heels with the ladies, and his elbows with the lords. He's as fine as a prince, and as grim as the best of them; but the ungracious rogue tells all that comes near that his mother is dead, and I am but his nurse.

Clar. Poor woman!

Aml. Alas, Madam, he's like the rest of the world; every body's for appearing to be more than they are, and that ruins all.

Clar. Well, Mrs. *Amlet*, you'll excuse me, I have a little business, *Flippanta* will bring you your money presently. Adieu, Mrs. *Amlet*.

[*Exit* Clarissa.]

Aml. I return your honour many thanks [*Sola.*] Ah, there's my good lady, not so much as read her bill; if the rest were like her, I should soon have money enough to go as fine as *Dick* himself.

Enter Dick.

Dick. Sure *Flippanta* must have given my letter by this time; [*Aside.*] I long to know how it has been received.

Aml. *Misericorde!* what do I see!

Dick. Fiends and hags—the witch my mother!

Aml. Nay, 'tis he! ah, my poor *Dick*, what art thou doing here?

Dick. What a misfortune—

[*Aside.*]

Aml. Good lard! how bravely deck'd art thou. But it's all one, I am thy mother still: and tho' thou art a wicked child, nature will speak, I love thee still, ah, *Dick*, my poor *Dick*.

[*Embracing him.*]

Dick. Blood and thunder! will you ruin me?

[*Breaking from her.*]

Aml. Ah the blasphemous rogue, how he swears!

Dick. You destroy all my hopes.

Aml. Will your mother's kiss destroy you, varlet? Thou art an ungracious bird; kneel down, and ask my blessing, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies!

Aml. Ah, he's a proper young man, see what a shape he has: ah, poor child.

[*Running to embrace him, he still avoiding her.*]

Dick. Oons, keep off, the woman's mad. If any body comes, my fortune's lost.

Aml. What fortune, ah? speak, graceless. Ah *Dick*, thou'lt be hang'd, *Dick*.

Dick. Good, dear mother, now don't call me *Dick* here.

Aml. Not call thee *Dick*! Is not that thy name? What shall I call thee? Mr. *Amlet*? ha! Art not thou a presumptuous rascal? Hark you, sirrah, I hear of your tricks; you disown me for your mother, and say I'm but your nurse. Is not this true?

Dick. No, I love you; I respect you; [*Taking her hand.*] I am all duty. But if you discover me here, you ruin the fairest prospect that man ever had.

Aml. What prospect? ha! come, this is a lie now.

Dick. No, my honour'd parent, what I say is true, I'm about a great fortune, I'll bring you home a daughter-in-law, in a coach and six horses, if you'll but be quiet; I can't tell you more now.

Aml. Is it possible!

Dick. It's true, by *Jupiter*.

Aml. My dear lad——

Dick. For Heaven's sake——

Aml. But tell me, *Dick*——

Dick. I'll follow you home in a moment, and tell you all.

Aml. What a shape is there——

Dick. Pray mother go.

Aml. I must receive some money here first, which shall go for thy wedding-dinner.

Dick. Here's somebody coming; s'death, she'll betray me.

Enter Flippanta.

[*He makes signs to his Mother.*]

Dick. Good-morrow, dear *Flippanta*; how do all the ladies within?

Flip. At your service, Colonel; as far at least as my interest goes.

Aml. Colonel!—Law you now, how *Dick*'s respected!

[*Aside.*]

Dick. Waiting for thee, *Flippanta*, I was making acquaintance with this old gentlewoman here.

Aml. The pretty lad, he's as impudent as a Page.

[*Aside.*]

Dick. Who is this good woman, *Flippanta*?

Flip. A gin of all trades; an old daggling cheat, that hobbles about from house to house to bubble the ladies of their money. I have a small business of your's in my pocket, Colonel.

Dick. An answer to my letter?

Flip. So quick indeed! No, it's your letter itself.

Dick. Hast thou not given it then yet?

Flip. I han't had an opportunity; but 'twon't be long first. Won't you go in and see my Lady?

Dick. Yes, I'll go make her a short visit. But dear *Flippanta*, don't forget: my life and fortune are in your hands.

Flip. Ne'er fear, I'll take care of 'em.

Aml. How he traps 'em; let *Dick* alone.

[*Aside.*]

Dick. Your servant, good Madam.

[*To his Mother.*]

[*Exit Dick.*]

Aml. Your Honour's most devoted.—A pretty, civil, well-bred gentleman this, Mrs. *Flippanta*. Pray whom may he be?

Flip. A man of great note; Colonel *Shapely*.

Aml. Is it possible! I have heard much of him indeed, but never saw him before: one may see quality in every limb of him: he's a fine man truly.

Flip. I think you are in love with him, Mrs. *Amlet*.

Aml. Alas, those days are done with me; but if I were as fair as I was once, and had as much money as some folks, Colonel *Shapely* should not catch cold for want of a bed-fellow. I love your men of rank, they have something in their air does so distinguish 'em from the rascality.

Flip. People of Quality are fine things indeed, Mrs. *Amlet*, if they had but a little more money; but for want of that, they are forced to do things their great souls are asham'd of. For example—here's my Lady—she owes you but six and fifty pounds—

Aml. Well!

Flip. And she has it not by her to pay you.

Aml. How can that be?

Flip. I don't know; her cash-keeper's out of humour, he says he has no money.

Aml. What a presumptuous piece of vermin is a cash-keeper! Tell his Lady he has no money?—Now, Mrs. *Flippanta*, you may see his bags are full by his being so saucy.

Flip. If they are, there's no help for't; he'll do what he pleases, till he comes to make up his yearly accounts.

Aml. But Madam plays sometimes, so when she has good fortune, she may pay me out of her winnings.

Flip. O ne'er think of that, Mrs. *Amlet*: if she had won a thousand pounds, she'd rather die in a gaol, than pay off a farthing with it; play money, Mrs. *Amlet*, amongst people of quality, is a sacred thing, and not to be profan'd. 'Tis consecrated to their pleasures, 'twould be sacrilege to pay their debts with it.

Aml. Why what shall we do then? For I han't one penny to buy bread.

Flip.—I'll tell you—it just now comes in my head: I know my Lady has a little occasion for money at this time; so—if you lend her—a hundred pounds—do you see, then she may pay you your six and fifty out of it.

Aml. Sure, Mrs. *Flippanta*, you think to make a fool of me.

Flip. No, the Devil fetch me if I do—You shall have a diamond necklace in pawn.

Aml. O ho, a pawn! That's another case. And when must she have this money?

Flip. In a quarter of an hour.

Aml. Say no more. Bring the necklace to my house, it shall be ready for you.

Flip. I'll be with you in a moment.

Aml. Adieu, Mrs. *Flippanta*.

Flip. Adieu, Mrs. *Amlet*.

[*Exit Amlet.*]

Flippanta sola.

So—this ready money will make us all happy. This spring will set our basset going, and that's a wheel will turn twenty others. My Lady's young and handsome; she'll have a dozen intrigues upon her hands, before she has been twice at her prayers. So much the better; the more the grist, the richer the miller. Sure never wench got into so hopeful a place: Here's a fortune to be sold, a mistress to be debauched, and a master to be ruin'd. If I don't feather my nest, and get a good husband, I deserve to die both a maid and a beggar.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE, *Mr. Gripe's House.*

Enter Clarissa and Dick.

Clar. **W**HAT in the name of dulness is the matter with you, Colonel? you are as studious as a crack'd chymist.

Dick. My head, Madam, is full of your husband.

Clar. The worst furniture for a head in the universe.

Dick. I am thinking of his passion for your friend *Araminta*.

Clar. Passion!—Dear Colonel, give it a less violent name.

Enter Brass.

Dick. Well, Sir, what want you?

Brass. The affair I told you of goes ill. [*To Dick, aside.*] There's an action out.

Dick. The Devil there is!

Clar. What news brings *Brass*?

Dick. Before Gad I cannot tell, Madam; the dog will never speak out. My Lord what-d'ye-call him waits, for me at my lodging: Is not that it?

Brass. Yes, Sir.

Dick. Madam, I ask your pardon.

Clar. Your servant, Sir.

[*Exeunt Dick and Brass.*]

Jessamin!

[*She sits down.*]

Enter Jessamin.

Jes. Madam.

Clar. Where's *Corinna*? Call her to me, if her father han't lock'd her up: I want her company.

Jes. Madam, her guitar-master is with her.

Clar. Psha! she's taken up with her impertinent Guitar-Man. *Flippanta* stays an age with that old fool, Mrs. *Amlet*. And *Araminta*, before she can come abroad, is so long a placing her coquet-patch, that I must be a year without company. How insupportable is a moment's uneasiness to a woman of spirit and pleasure!

Enter Flippanta.

Clar. O, art thou come at last? Pr'ythee, *Flippanta*, learn to move a little quicker, thou know'st how impatient I am.

Flip. Yes, when you expect money: If you had sent me to buy a Prayer-Book, you'd have thought I had flown.

Clar. Well, hast thou brought me any, after all?

Flip. Yes, I have brought some. There [*Giving her a purse.*] the old hag has struck off her bill, the rest is in that purse.

Clar. 'Tis well; but take care, *Flippanta*, my husband don't suspect any thing of this; 'twould vex him, and I don't love to make him uneasy: So I would spare him these little sort of troubles, by keeping 'em from his knowledge.

Flip. See the tenderness she has for him, and yet he's always complaining of you.

Clar. 'Tis the nature of 'em, *Flippanta*; a husband is a growling animal.

Flip. How exactly you define 'em!

Clar. O! I know 'em, *Flippanta*: though I confess my poor wretch diverts me sometimes with his ill-humours. I wish he wou'd quarrel with me to-day a little, to pass away the time, for I find myself in a violent spleen.

Flip. Why, if you please to drop yourself in his way, six to four but he scolds one rubbers with you.

Clar. Ay, but thou know'st he's as uncertain as the wind; and if instead of quarrelling with me, he should chance to be fond, he'd make me as sick as a dog.

Flip. If he's kind, you must provoke him; if he kisses you, spit in his face.

Clar. Alas, when men are in the kissing fit, (like lap-dogs) they take that for a favour.

Flip. Nay, then, I don't know what you'll do with him.

Clar. I'll e'en do nothing at all with him—Flippanta.

[*Yawning.*]

Flip. Madam.

Clar. My hood and scarf, and a coach to the door.

Flip. Why, whither are you going?

Clar. I can't tell yet, but I would go spend some money, since I have it.

Flip. Why, you want nothing that I know of.

Clar. How awkward an objection now is that, as if a woman of education bought things because she wanted 'em. Quality always distinguishes itself; and therefore, as the mechanick people buy things, because they have occasion for 'em, you see women of rank always buy things because they have not occasion for 'em. Now, there, *Flippanta*, you see the difference between a woman that has breeding, and one that has none. O ho, here's *Araminta* come at last.

Enter Araminta.

Clar. Lard, what a tedious while you have let me expect you! I was afraid you were not well; how d'ye do to-day?

Aram. As well as a woman can do, that has not slept all night.

Flip. Methinks, Madam, you are pretty well-awake, however.

Aram. O, 'tis not a little thing will make a woman of my vigour look drowsy.

Clar. But, pr'ythee, what was't disturb'd you?

Aram. Not your husband, don't trouble yourself; at least, I am not in love with him yet.

Clar. Well remember'd, I had quite forgot that matter. I wish you much joy, you have made a noble conquest indeed.

Aram. But now I have subdu'd the country, pray is it worth my keeping? You know the ground, you have try'd it.

Clar. A barren soil, heaven can tell.

Aram. Yet if it were well cultivated, it would produce something to my knowledge. Do you know 'tis in my power to ruin this poor thing of yours? His whole Estate is at my Service.

Flip. Cods-fish, strike him, Madam, and let my Lady go your halves. There's no sin in plundering a husband, so his wife has share of the booty.

Aram. Whenever she gives me her orders, I shall be very ready to obey 'em.

Clar. Why, as odd a thing as such a project may seem, *Araminta*, I believe I shall have a little serious discourse with you about it. But, pr'ythee, tell me how you have pass'd the night? For I am sure your mind has been roving upon some pretty thing or other.

Aram. Why, I have been studying all the ways my brain could produce to plague my husband.

Clar. No wonder indeed you look so fresh this morning, after the satisfaction of such pleasing ideas all night.

Aram. Why, can a woman do less than study mischief, when she has tumbled and toss'd herself into a burning-fever, for want of sleep, and sees a fellow lie snoring by her, stock-still, in a fine breathing sweat?

Clar. Now see the difference of women's tempers: If my dear would make but one nap of his whole life, and only waken to make his will, I shou'd be the happiest wife in the universe. But we'll discourse more of these matters as we go, for I must make a *tour* among the Shops.

Aram. I have a coach waits at the door, we'll talk of 'em as we rattle along.

Clar. The best place in nature, for you know a hackney-coach is a natural enemy to a husband.

[*Exit Clar. and Aram.*]

Flippanta sola.

What a pretty little pair of amiable persons are there gone to hold a council of war together! Poor birds! What would they do with their time, if the plaguing their husbands did not help 'em to employment! Well, if idleness be the root of all evil, then matrimony's good for something, for it sets many a poor woman to work. But here comes Miss. I hope I shall help her into the Holy State too ere long. And when she's once there, if she don't play her part as well as the best of 'em, I'm mistaken. Han't I lost the letter I'm to give her?—No, here 'tis; so, now we shall see how pure nature will work with her, for art she knows none yet.

Enter Corinna.

Cor. What does my mother-in-law want with me, *Flippanta*? They tell me, she was asking for me.

Flip. She's just gone out, so I suppose 'twas no great business.

Cor. Then I'll go into my chamber again.

Flip. Nay, hold a little if you please. I have some business with you myself, of more concern than

what she had to say to you.

Cor. Make haste then, for you know my father won't let me keep you company; he says, you'll spoil me.

Flip. I spoil you! He's an unworthy man to give you such ill impressions of a woman of my honour.

Cor. Nay, never take it to heart, *Flippanta*, for I don't believe a word he says. But he does so plague me with his continual scolding, I'm almost weary of my life.

Flip. Why, what is't he finds fault with?

Cor. Nay, I don't know, for I never mind him; when he has babbled for two hours together, methinks I have heard a mill going, that's all. It does not at all change my opinion, *Flippanta*, it only makes my head ache.

Flip. Nay, if you can bear it so, you are not to be pity'd so much as I thought.

Cor. Not pity'd! Why is it not a miserable thing, such a young creature as I am should be kept in perpetual solitude, with no other company but a parcel of old fumbling masters to teach me geography, arithmetic, philosophy, and a thousand useless things. Fine entertainment, indeed, for a young maid at sixteen! methinks one's time might be better employ'd.

Flip. Those things will improve your wit.

Cor. Fiddle-faddle; han't I wit enough already? My mother-in-law has learn'd none of this trumpery, and is not she as happy as the day is long?

Flip. Then you envy her, I find?

Cor. And well I may. Does she not do what she has a mind to, in spite of her husband's teeth?

Flip. Look you there now [*Aside.*] if she has not already conceived that, as the supreme blessing of life.

Cor. I'll tell you what, *Flippanta*, if my mother-in-law would but stand by me a little, and encourage me, and let me keep her company, I'd rebel against my father to-morrow, and throw all my books in the fire. Why, he can't touch a groat of my portion; do you know that, *Flippanta*?

Flip. So—I shall spoil her. [*Aside.*] Pray heaven the girl don't debauch me.

Cor. Look you: In short, he may think what he pleases, he may think himself wise: but thoughts are free, and I may think in my turn. I'm but a girl, 'tis true, and a fool too, if you believe him; but let him know, a foolish girl may make a wise man's heart ache; so he had as good be quiet—Now it's out—

Flip. Very well, I love to see a young woman have spirit, it's a sign she'll come to something.

Cor. Ah, *Flippanta*, if you wou'd but encourage me, you'll find me quite another thing. I'm a devilish girl in the bottom; I wish you'd but let me make one amongst you.

Flip. That never can be, 'till you are marry'd. Come, examine your Strength a little. Do you think, you durst venture upon a husband?

Cor. A husband! Why a—if you wou'd but encourage me. Come, *Flippanta*, be a true friend now. I'll give you advice, when I have got a little more experience. Do you in your very conscience and soul think I am old enough to be marry'd?

Flip. Old enough! Why you are sixteen, are you not?

Cor. Sixteen! I am sixteen, two months, and odd days, woman. I keep an exact account.

Flip. The duce you are!

Cor. Why do you then truly and sincerely think I am old enough?

Flip. I do, upon my faith, child.

Cor. Why then, to deal as fairly with you, *Flippanta*, as you do with me, I have thought so any time these three years.

Flip. Now I find you have more wit than ever I thought you had; and to shew you what an opinion I have of your discretion, I'll shew you a thing I thought to have thrown in the fire.

Cor. What is it, for *Jupiter's* sake?

Flip. Something will make your heart chuck within you.

Cor. My dear *Flippanta*!

Flip. What do you think it is?

Cor. I don't know, nor I don't care, but I'm mad to have it.

Flip. It's a four corner'd thing.

Cor. What, like a cardinal's cap?

Flip. No, 'tis worth a whole conclave of 'em. How do you like it?

[*Shewing the letter.*

Car. O Lard, a letter!—Is there ever a token in it?

Flip. Yes, and a precious one too. There's a handsome young gentleman's heart.

Cor. A handsome young gentleman's heart! [*Aside.*] Nay, then 'tis time to look grave.

Flip. There.

Cor. I shan't touch it.

Flip. What's the matter now?

Cor. I shan't receive it.

Flip. Sure you jest.

Cor. You'll find I don't. I understand myself better, than to take letters, when I don't know who they are from.

Flip. I am afraid I commended your wit too soon.

Cor. 'Tis all one, I shan't touch it, unless I know who it comes from.

Flip. Hey-day, open it, and you'll see.

Cor. Indeed I shall not.

Flip. Well——then I must return it where I had it.

Cor. That won't serve your turn, madam. My father must have an account of this.

Flip. Sure you are not in earnest?

Cor. You'll find I am.

Flip. So, here's fine work. This 'tis to deal with girls before they come to know the distinction of sexes.

Cor. Confess who you had it from, and perhaps, for this once, I mayn't tell my father.

Flip. Why then, since it must out, 'twas the Colonel: But why are you so scrupulous, madam?

Cor. Because if it had come from any body else——I would not have given a farthing for it.

[*Twitching it eagerly out of her hand.*]

Flip. Ah, my dear little rogue! [*Kissing her.*] You frighten'd me out of my wits.

Cor. Let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, I say. Um, um, um, *Cupid's* um, um, um, *Darts*, um, um, um, *Beauty*, um, *Charms*, um, um, um, *Angel*, um, *Goddess*, um—[*Kissing the letter.*]—um, um, um, um, *truest Lover*, hum, um, *Eternal Constancy*, um, um, um, *Cruel*, um, um, um, *Racks*, um, um, *Tortures*, um, um, *fifty Daggers*, um, um, *bleeding Heart*, um, um, *dead Man*.

Very well, a mighty civil letter, I promise you; not one smutty word in it: I'll go lock it up in my comb-box.

Flip. Well—but what does he say to you?

Cor. Not a word of news, *Flippanta*, 'tis all about business.

Flip. Does he not tell you he's in love with you?

Cor. Ay, but he told me that before.

Flip. How so? He never spoke to you.

Cor. He sent me word by his eyes.

Flip. Did he so? mighty well. I thought you had been to learn that language.

Cor. O, but you thought wrong, *Flippanta*. What, because I don't go a visiting, and see the world, you think I know nothing. But you should consider, *Flippanta*, that the more one's alone, the more one thinks; and 'tis thinking that improves a girl. I'll have you to know, when I was younger than I am now, by more than I'll boast of, I thought of things would have made you stare again.

Flip. Well, since you are so well versed in your business, I suppose I need not inform you, that if you don't write your gallant an answer—he'll die.

Cor. Nay, now, *Flippanta*, I confess you tell me something I did not know before. Do you speak in serious sadness? Are men given to die, if their mistresses are sour to 'em?

Flip. Um——I can't say they all die——No, I can't say they all do; but truly, I believe it wou'd go very hard with the Colonel.

Cor. Lard, I would not have my hands in blood for thousands; and therefore, *Flippanta*,——if you'll encourage me——

Flip. O, by all means an answer.

Cor. Well, since you say it then, I'll e'en in and do it, tho' I protest to you (lest you should think me too forward now) he's the only man that wears a beard, I'd ink my fingers for. May be, if I marry him, in a year or two's time I mayn't be so nice.

[*Aside.*]

[*Exit* Corinna.]

Flippanta sola.

Now heaven give him joy: he's like to have a rare wife o'thee. But where there's money, a man

has a plaister to his sore. They have a blessed time on't, who marry for love. See!—here comes an example—*Araminta's* dread lord.

Enter Money-trap.

Mon. Ah, *Flippanta!* How do you do, good *Flippanta!* How do you do?

Flip. Thank you, Sir, well, at your service.

Mon. And how does the good family, your master, and your fair mistress? Are they at home?

Flip. Neither of them; my master has been gone out these two hours, and my lady is just gone with your wife.

Mon. Well, I won't say I have lost my labour however, as long as I have met with you, *Flippanta.* For I have wish'd a great while for an opportunity to talk with you a little. You won't take it amiss, if I should ask you a few questions?

Flip. Provided you leave me to my liberty in my answers. What's this Cot-quean going to pry into now?

[*Aside.*

Mon. Pr'ythee, good *Flippanta,* how do your master and mistress live together?

Flip. Live! Why—like man and wife, generally out of humour, quarrel often, seldom agree, complain of one another; and perhaps have both reason. In short, 'tis much as 'tis at your house.

Mon. Good-lack! but whose side are you generally of?

Flip. O' the right side always, my lady's. And if you'll have me give you my opinion of these matters, Sir, I do not think a husband can ever be in the right.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Little, peeking, creeping, sneaking, stingy, covetous, cowardly, dirty, cuckoldy things.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Fit for nothing but taylors and dry-nurses.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A dog in a manger, snarling and biting, to starve gentlemen with good stomachs.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A centry upon pleasure, set to be a plague on lovers, and damn poor women before their time.

Mon. A husband is indeed—

Flip. Sir, I say he is nothing—A beetle without wings, a windmill without sails, a ship in a calm.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A bag without money—an empty bottle—dead small beer.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A quack without drugs.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A lawyer without knavery.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A courtier without flattery.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A king without an army—or a people with one. Have I drawn him, Sir?

Mon. Why truly, *Flippanta,* I can't deny but there are some general lines of resemblance. But you know there may be exceptions.

Flip. Hark you, Sir, shall I deal plainly with you? Had I got a husband, I wou'd put him in mind, that he was marry'd as well as I.

Sings.

*For were I the thing call'd a wife,
And my fool grew too fond of his pow'r,
He shou'd look like an ass all his life,
For a prank that I'd play him in an hour.*

Tol lol la ra tol lol, &c.—Do you observe that, Sir?

Mon. I do: and think you wou'd be in the right on't. But, pr'ythee, why dost not give this advice to thy mistress?

Flip. For fear it should go round to your wife, Sir, for you know they are play-fellows.

Mon. O, there's no danger of my wife; she knows I'm none of those husbands.

Flip. Are you sure she knows that, Sir?

Mon. I'm sure she ought to know it, *Flippanta*, for really I have but four faults in the world.

Flip. And, pray what may they be?

Mon. Why I'm a little slovenly, I shift but once a week.

Flip. Fough!

Mon. I am sometimes out of humour.

Flip. Provoking!

Mon. I don't give her so much money as she'd have.

Flip. Insolent!

Mon. And a—perhaps I mayn't be quite so young as I was.

Flip. The devil!

Mon. O, but then consider how 'tis on her side, *Flippanta*. She ruins me with washing, is always out of humour, ever wanting money, and will never be older.

Flip. That last article, I must confess, is a little hard upon you.

Mon. Ah, *Flippanta*, didst thou but know the daily provocations I have, thoud'st be the first to excuse my faults. But now I think on't—Thou art none of my friend, thou dost not love me at all; no, not at all.

Flip. And whither is this little reproach going to lead us now?

Mon. You have power over your fair mistress, *Flippanta*.

Flip. Sir!

Mon. But what then? You hate me.

Flip. I understand you not.

Mon. There's not a moment's trouble her naughty husband gives her, but I feel it too.

Flip. I don't know what you mean.

Mon. If she did but know what part I take in her sufferings—

Flip. Mighty obscure.

Mon. Well, I'll say no more; but—

Flip. All Hebrew.

Mon. If thou wou'dst but tell her on't.

Flip. Still darker and darker.

Mon. I should not be ungrateful.

Flip. Ah, now I begin to understand you.

Mon. *Flippanta*—there's my purse.

Flip. Say no more; now you explain, indeed—You are in love?

Mon. Bitterly—and I do swear by all the Gods—

Flip. Hold—Spare 'em for another time, you stand in no need of 'em now. A usurer that parts with his purse, gives sufficient proof of his sincerity.

Mon. I hate my wife, *Flippanta*.

Flip. That we'll take upon your bare word.

Mon. She's the devil, *Flippanta*.

Flip. You like your neighbour's better.

Mon. Oh!—an angel.

Flip. What pity it is the law don't allow trucking!

Mon. If it did, *Flippanta*!

Flip. But since it don't, Sir—keep the reins upon your passion: Don't let your flame rage too high, lest my lady shou'd be cruel, and it should dry you up to a mummy.

Mon. 'Tis impossible she can be so barbarous, to let me die. Alas, *Flippanta*, a very small matter wou'd save my life.

Flip. Then y'are dead—for we women never grant any thing to a man who will be satisfied with a little.

Mon. Dear *Flippanta*, that was only my modesty; but since you'll have it out—I am a very dragon; and so your lady'll find—if ever she thinks fit to be—Now I hope you'll stand my friend.

Flip. Well, Sir, as far as my credit goes, it shall be employ'd in your service.

Mon. My best *Flippanta*—tell her—I'm all hers—tell her—my body's hers—tell her—my soul's hers

—and tell her—my estate's hers. Lord have mercy upon me, how I'm in love!

Flip. Poor man! what a sweat he's in! But hark—I hear my master; for heaven's sake compose yourself a little; you are in such a fit, o' my conscience he'll smell you out.

Mon. Ah dear, I'm in such an emotion, I dare not be seen; put me in this closet for a moment.

Flip. Closet, man! it's too little, your love wou'd stifle you. Go air yourself in the garden a little, you have need on't, i'faith.

[*She puts him out.*]

Flippanta sola.

A rare adventure, by my troth. This will be curious news to the wives. Fortune has now put their husbands into their hands, and I think they are too sharp to neglect its favours.

Enter Gripe.

Gripe. O, here's the right hand; the rest of the body can't be far off. Where's my wife, huswife?

Flip. An admirable question!—Why, she's gone abroad, Sir.

Gripe. Abroad, abroad, abroad already? Why, she uses to be stewing in her bed three hours after this time, as late as 'tis: What makes her gadding so soon?

Flip. Business, I suppose.

Gripe. Business! she has a pretty head for business truly: O ho, let her change her way of living, or I'll make her change a light heart for a heavy one.

Flip. And why would you have her change her way of living, Sir? You see it agrees with her. She never look'd better in her life.

Gripe. Don't tell me of her looks, I have done with her looks long since. But I'll make her change her life, or—

Flip. Indeed, Sir, you won't.

Gripe. Why, what shall hinder me, insolence?

Flip. That which hinders most husbands; contradiction.

Gripe. Suppose I resolve I won't be contradicted?

Flip. Suppose she resolves you shall?

Gripe. A wife's resolution is not good by law.

Flip. Nor a husband's by custom.

Gripe. I tell thee I will not bear it.

Flip. I tell you, Sir, you will bear it.

Gripe. Oons, I have borne it three years already.

Flip. By that you see 'tis but giving your mind to it.

Gripe. My mind to it! Death and the devil! My mind to it!

Flip. Look ye, Sir, you may swear and damn, and call the furies to assist you! but 'till you apply the remedy to the right place, you'll never cure the disease. You fancy you have got an extravagant wife, is't not so?

Gripe. Pr'ythee change me that word fancy, and it is so.

Flip. Why there's it. Men are strangely troubled with the vapours of late. You'll wonder now if I tell you, you have the most reasonable wife in town: And that all the disorders you think you see in her, are only here, here, here, in your own head.

[*Thumping his forehead.*]

Gripe. She is then, in thy opinion, a reasonable woman?

Flip. By my faith, I think so.

Gripe. I shall run mad—Name me an extravagance in the world she is not guilty of.

Flip. Name me an extravagance in the world she is guilty of.

Gripe. Come then: Does not she put the whole house in disorder?

Flip. Not that I know of, for she never comes into it but to sleep.

Gripe. 'Tis very well: Does she employ any one moment of her life in the government of her family?

Flip. She is so submissive a wife, she leaves it entirely to you.

Gripe. Admirable! Does she not spend more money in coach-hire, and chair-hire, than would maintain six children?

Flip. She's too nice of your credit to be seen daggling in the streets.

Gripe. Good! Do I set eye on her sometimes in a week together?

Flip. That, Sir, is because you are never stirring at the same time; you keep odd hours; you are always going to bed when she's rising, and rising just when she's coming to bed.

Gripe. Yes, truly, night into day, and day into night, bawdy-house play, that's her trade; but these are trifles: Has she not lost her diamond necklace? Answer me to that, *Trapes*.

Flip. Yes; and has sent as many tears after it, as if it had been her husband.

Gripe. Ah—the pox take her; but enough. 'Tis resolv'd, and I will put a stop to the course of her life, or I will put a stop to the course of her blood, and so she shall know, the first time I meet with her; [*Aside.*] which tho' we are man and wife, and lie under one roof, 'tis very possible may not be this fortnight.

[*Exit Gripe.*]

Flippanta sola.

Nay, thou hast a blessed time on't, that must be confess'd. What a miserable devil is a husband! Insupportable to himself, and a plague to every thing about them. Their wives do by them, as children do by dogs, teaze and provoke 'em, 'till they make them so curs'd, they snarl and bite at every thing that comes in their reach. This wretch here is grown perverse to that degree, he's for his wife's keeping home, and making hell of his house, so he may be the devil in it to torment her. How niggardly soever he is of all things he possesses, he is willing to purchase her misery at the expence of his own peace. But he'd as good be still, for he'll miss of his aim. If I know her (which I think I do) she'll set his blood in such a ferment, it shall bubble out at every pore of him; whilst hers is so quiet in her veins, her pulse shall go like a pendulum.

[*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE, *Mrs. Amlet's House.*

Enter Dick.

WHERE'S this old woman?—A hey. What the devil, nobody at home? Ha! her strong box!—And the key in't! 'tis so. Now fortune be my friend. What the duce—Not a penny of money in cash!—Nor a chequer note!—Nor a Bank bill—[*Searching the strong box.*]—Nor a crooked stick! Nor a—Mum—here's something—A diamond necklace, by all the Gods! Oons the old woman—Zest.

[*Claps the necklace in his pocket, then runs and asks her blessing.*]

Enter Mrs. Amlet.

---Pray mother, pray to, &c.

Aml. Is it possible!—*Dick* upon his humble knee! Ah my dear child!—May heaven be good unto thee.

Dick. I'm come, my dear mother, to pay my duty to you, and to ask your consent to—

Aml. What a shape is there!

Dick. To ask your consent, I say, to marry a great fortune; for what is riches in this world without a blessing? And how can there be a blessing without respect and duty to parents?

Aml. What a nose he has!

Dick. And therefore it being the duty of every good child not to dispose of himself in marriage, without the—

Aml. Now the Lord love thee [*Kissing him.*]—for thou art a goodly young man: Well, *Dick*—And how goes it with the lady? Are her eyes open to thy charms? Does she see what's for her own good? Is she sensible of the blessings thou hast in store for her? Ha! is all sure? Hast thou broke a piece of money with her? Speak, bird, do: Don't be modest, and hide thy love from thy mother, for I'm an indulgent parent.

Dick. Nothing under heaven can prevent my good fortune, but its being discover'd I'm your son—

Aml. Then thou art still asham'd of thy natural mother.—Graceless! Why, I'm no whore, sirrah.

Dick. I know you are not—A whore! Bless us all—

Aml. No; My reputation's as good as the best of 'em; and tho' I'm old, I'm chaste, you rascal you.

Dick. Lord, that is not the thing we talk of, mother; but—

Aml. I think, as the world goes, they may be proud of marrying their daughter into a vartuous family.

Dick. Oons, vartue is not the case—

Aml. Where she may have a good example before her eyes.

Dick. O Lord! O Lord! O Lord!

Aml. I'm a woman that don't so much as encourage an incontinent look towards me.

Dick. I tell you, 'sdeath, I tell you—

Aml. If a man shou'd make an uncivil motion to me, I'd spit in his lascivious face: And all this you may tell them, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies! the woman's out of her—

Aml. Don't you swear, you rascal you, don't you swear; we shall have thee damn'd at last, and then I shall be disgrac'd.

Dick. Why then in cold blood hear me speak to you: I tell you it's a city-fortune I'm about, she cares not a fig for your virtue; she'll hear of nothing but quality: She has quarrell'd with one of her friends for having a better complexion, and is resolved she'll marry, to take place of her.

Aml. What a cherry lip is there!

Dick. Therefore, good dear mother, now have a care and don't discover me; for if you do, all's lost.

Aml. Dear, dear, how thy fair bride will be delighted: Go, get thee gone, go: Go fetch her home, go fetch her home; I'll give her a sack-posset, and a pillow of down she shall lay her head upon. Go fetch her home, I say.

Dick. Take care then of the main chance, my dear mother; remember, if you discover me—

Aml. Go, fetch her home, I say.

Dick. You promise me then—

Aml. March.

Dick. But swear to me——

Aml. Be gone, sirrah.

Dick. Well, I'll rely upon you—But one kiss before I go.

[*Kisses her heartily, and runs off.*]

Aml. Now the Lord love thee! for thou art a comfortable young man.

[*Exit Mrs. Amlet.*]

SCENE, Gripe's House.

Enter Corinna and Flippanta.

Cor. But hark you, *Flippanta*, if you don't think he loves me dearly, don't give him my letter, after all.

Flip. Let me alone.

Cor. When he has read it, let him give it you again.

Flip. Don't trouble yourself.

Cor. And not a word of the pudding to my mother-in-law.

Flip. Enough.

Cor. When we come to love one another to the purpose, she shall know all.

Flip. Ay, then 'twill be time.

Cor. But remember 'tis you make me do all this now, so if any mischief comes on't, 'tis you must answer for't.

Flip. I'll be your security.

Cor. I'm young, and know nothing of the matter; but you have experience, so it's your business to conduct me safe.

Flip. Poor innocence!

Cor. But tell me in serious sadness, *Flippanta*, does he love me with the very soul of him?

Flip. I have told you so an hundred times, and yet you are not satisfied.

Cor. But, methinks, I'd fain have him tell me so himself.

Flip. Have patience, and it shall be done.

Cor. Why, patience is a virtue; that we must all confess——But I fancy, the sooner it's done the better, *Flippanta*.

Enter Jessamin.

Jess. Madam, yonder's your Geography-Master waiting for you.

[*Exit.*]

Cor. Ah! how I am tir'd with these old fumbling fellows, *Flippanta*.

Flip. Well, don't let 'em break your heart, you shall be rid of them all ere long.

Cor. Nay, 'tis not the study I'm so weary of, *Flippanta*, 'tis the odious thing that teaches me. Were the Colonel my master, I fancy I could take pleasure in learning every thing he could shew me.

Flip. And he can shew you a great deal, I can tell you that. But get you gone in, here's somebody coming, we must not be seen together.

Cor. I will, I will, I will——O the dear Colonel.

[*Running off.*]

Enter Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. O ho, it's Mrs. *Amlet*——What brings you so soon to us again, Mrs. *Amlet*?

Aml. Ah! my dear Mrs. *Flippanta*, I'm in a furious fright.

Flip. Why, what's come to you?

Aml. Ah! Mercy on us all——Madam's diamond necklace——

Flip. What of that?

Aml. Are you sure you left it at my house?

Flip. Sure I left it! a very pretty question truly!

Aml. Nay, don't be angry; say nothing to madam of it, I beseech you: It will be found again, if it be heaven's good will. At least 'tis I must bear the loss on't. 'Tis my rogue of a son has laid his birdlime fingers on't.

Flip. Your son, Mrs. *Amlet*! Do you breed your children up to such tricks as these then?

Aml. What shall I say to you, Mrs. *Flippanta*? Can I help it? He has been a rogue from his cradle,

Dick has. But he has his deserts too. And now it comes in my head, mayhap he may have no ill design in this neither.

Flip. No ill design, woman! He's a pretty fellow if he can steal a diamond necklace with a good one.

Aml. You don't know him, Mrs. *Flippanta*, so well as I that bore him. *Dick's* a rogue, 'tis true, but —Mum—

Flip. What does the woman mean?

Aml. Hark you, Mrs. *Flippanta*, is not here a young gentlewoman in your house that wants a husband?

Flip. Why do you ask?

Aml. By way of conversation only, it does not concern me; but when she marries I may chance to dance at the wedding. Remember I tell you so: I who am but Mrs. *Amlet*.

Flip. You dance at her wedding! you!

Aml. Yes, I, I; but don't trouble madam about her necklace, perhaps it mayn't go out of the family. Adieu, Mrs. *Flippanta*.

[Exit Mrs. Amlet.]

Flip. What—what—what does the woman mean? Mad! What a capilotade of a story's here? The necklace lost; and her son *Dick*; and a fortune to marry; and she shall dance at the wedding; and —She does not intend, I hope, to propose a match between her son *Dick* and *Corinna*! By my conscience I believe she does. An old beldam!

Enter Brass.

Brass. Well, hussy, how stand our affairs? Has miss writ us an answer yet? My master's very impatient yonder.

Flip. And why the duce does he not come himself? What does he send such idle fellows as thee of his errands? Here I had her alone just now: He won't have such an opportunity again this month, I can tell him that.

Brass. So much the worse for him; 'tis his business—But now, my dear, let thee and I talk a little of our own: I grow most damnably in love with thee; dost hear that?

Flip. Phu! thou art always timeing things wrong; my head is full, at present, of more important things than love.

Brass. Then it's full of important things indeed: Dost want a privy-counsellor?

Flip. I want an assistant.

Brass. To do what?

Flip. Mischief.

Brass. I'm thy man—touch.

Flip. But before I venture to let thee into my project, pr'ythee tell me, whether thou find'st a natural disposition to ruin a husband to oblige his wife?

Brass. Is she handsome?

Flip. Yes.

Brass. Why then my disposition's at her service.

Flip. She's beholden to thee.

Brass. Not she alone neither, therefore don't let her grow vain upon't; for I have three or four affairs of that kind going at this time.

Flip. Well, go carry this epistle from miss to thy master; and when thou com'st back, I'll tell thee thy business.

Brass. I'll know it before I go, if you please.

Flip. Thy master waits for an answer.

Brass. I'd rather he should wait than I.

Flip. Why then, in short, *Araminta's* husband is in love with my lady.

Brass. Very well, child, we have a *Rowland* for her *Oliver*: Thy lady's husband is in love with *Araminta*.

Flip. Who told you that, sirrah?

Brass. 'Tis a negociation I am charged with, Pert. Did not I tell thee I did business for half the town? I have managed Master *Gripe's* little affairs for him these ten years, you slut you.

Flip. Hark thee, *Brass*, the game's in our hands, if we can but play the cards.

Brass. Pique and repique, you jade you, if the wives will fall into a good intelligence.

Flip. Let them alone; I'll answer for them they don't slip the occasion.—See here they come. They little think what a piece of good news we have for 'em.

Enter Clarissa and Araminta.

Clar. *Jessamin!* here, boy, carry up these things into my dressing-room, and break as many of them by the way as you can, be sure.—O! art thou there, *Brass!* What news?

Brass. Madam, I only call'd in as I was going by—But some little propositions Mrs. *Flippanta* has been starting have kept me here to offer your ladyship my humble service.

Clar. What propositions?

Brass. She'll acquaint you, madam.

Aram. Is there any thing new, *Flippanta?*

Flip. Yes, and pretty too.

Clar. That follows of course, but let's have it quick.

Flip. Why, Madam, you have made a conquest.

Clar. Hussy—But of who? quick.

Flip. Of Mr. *Money-trap*, that's all.

Aram. My husband?

Flip. Yes, your husband, Madam: You thought fit to corrupt ours, so now we are even with you.

Aram. Sure thou art in jest, *Flippanta.*

Flip. Serious as my devotions.

Brass. And the cross intrigue, ladies, is what our brains have been at work about.

Aram. My dear!

[*To Clarissa.*

Clar. My life!

Aram. My angel!

Clar. My soul!

[*Hugging one another.*

Aram. The stars have done this.

Clar. The pretty little twinklers.

Flip. And what will you do for them now?

Clar. What grateful creatures ought; shew 'em we don't despise their favours.

Aram. But is not this a wager between these two blockheads?

Clar. I would not give a shilling to go the winner's halves.

Aram. Then 'tis the most fortunate thing that ever cou'd have happen'd.

Clar. All your last night's ideas, *Araminta*, were trifles to it.

Aram. *Brass*, my dear, will be useful to us.

Brass. At your service, Madam.

Clar. *Flippanta* will be necessary, my life!

Flip. She waits your commands, Madam.

Aram. For my part then, I recommend my husband to thee, *Flippanta*, and make it my earnest request thou won't leave him one half-crown.

Flip. I'll do all I can to obey you, Madam.

Brass. [*To Clarissa.*] If your ladyship wou'd give me the same kind orders for yours.

Clar. O—if thou spar'st him, *Brass*, I'm thy enemy till I die.

Brass. 'Tis enough, Madam, I'll be sure to give you a reasonable account of him. But how do you intend we shall proceed, ladies? Must we storm the purse at once, or break ground in form, and carry it by little and little?

Clar. Storm, dear *Brass*, storm: ever whilst you live, storm.

Aram. O by all means; must it not be so, *Flippanta?*

Flip. In four and twenty hours, two hundred pounds a-piece, that's my sentence.

Brass. Very well. But, ladies, you'll give me leave to put you in mind of some little expence in favours, 'twill be necessary you are at, to these honest gentlemen.

Aram. Favours, *Brass!*

Brass. Um—a—some small matters, Madam, I doubt must be.

Clar. Now that's a vile article, *Araminta*; for that thing your husband is so like mine—

Flip. Phu, there's a scruple, indeed. Pray, Madam, don't be so squeamish; tho' the meat be a little flat, we'll find you savoury sauce to it.

Clar. This wench is so mad.

Flip. Why, what in the name of *Lucifer*, is it you have to do, that's so terrible?

Brass. A civil look only.

Aram. There's no great harm in that.

Flip. An obliging word.

Clar. That one may afford 'em.

Brass. A little smile, *a propos*.

Aram. That's but giving one's self an air.

Flip. Receive a little letter, perhaps.

Clar. Women of quality do that from fifty odious fellows.

Brass. Suffer, may be, a squeeze by the hand.

Aram. One's so us'd to that, one does not feel it.

Flip. Or if a kiss wou'd do't?

Clar. I'd die first.

Brass. Indeed, ladies, I doubt 'twill be necessary to—

Clar. Get their wretched money without paying so dear for it.

Flip. Well, just as you please for that, my ladies: But I suppose you'll play upon the square with your favours, and not pique yourselves upon being one more grateful than another.

Brass. And state a fair account of receipts and disbursements.

Aram. That I think should be, indeed.

Clar. With all my heart, and *Brass* shall be our book-keeper. So get thee to work, man, as fast as thou canst: but not a word of all this to my master.

Brass. I'll observe my orders, Madam.

[*Exit Brass.*]

Clar. I'll have the pleasure of telling him myself; he'll be violently delighted with it: 'tis the best man in the world, *Araminta*; he'll bring us rare company to-morrow, all sorts of gamesters; and thou shalt see my husband will be such a beast to be out of humour at it.

Aram. The monster—But hush, here's my dear approaching; pr'ythee let's leave him to *Flippanta*.

Flip. Ah, pray do, I'll bring you a good account of him, I'll warrant you.

Clar. Dispatch then, for the basset-table's in haste.

[*Exit Clar. and Aram.*]

Flippanta sola.

So, now have at him; here he comes: We'll try if we can pillage the usurer, as he does other folks.

Enter Money-trap.

Mon. Well, my pretty *Flippanta*, is thy mistress come home?

Flip. Yes, Sir.

Mon. And where is she, pr'ythee?

Flip. Gone abroad, Sir.

Mon. How dost mean?

Flip. I mean right, Sir; my lady'll come home and go abroad ten times in an hour, when she's either in very good humour, or very bad.

Mon. Good lack! But I'll warrant, in general, 'tis her naughty husband that makes her house uneasy to her. But hast thou said a little something to her, chicken, for an expiring lover? ha!

Flip. Said—yes, I have said, much good may it do me.

Mon. Well! and how?

Flip. And how!—And how do you think you would have me do't? And you have such a way with you, one can refuse you nothing. But I have brought myself into a fine business by it.

Mon. Good lack:—But, I hope, *Flippanta*—

Flip. Yes, your hopes will do much, when I am turn'd out of doors.

Mon. Was she then terrible angry?

Flip. Oh! had you seen how she flew, when she saw where I was pointing; for you must know I went round the bush and round the bush, before I came to the matter.

Mon. Nay, 'tis a ticklish point, that must be own'd.

Flip. On my word is it—I mean where a lady's truly virtuous; for that's our case you must know.

Mon. A very dangerous case indeed.

Flip. But I can tell you one thing—she has an inclination to you.

Mon. Is it possible!

Flip. Yes, and I told her so at last.

Mon. Well, and what did she answer thee?

Flip. Slap—and bid me bring it you for a token.

[*Giving him a slap on the face.*

Mon. And you have lost none on't by the way, with a pox t'ye.

[*Aside.*

Flip. Now this, I think, looks the best in the world.

Mon. Yea, but really it feels a little oddly.

Flip. Why, you must know, ladies have different ways of expressing their kindness, according to the humour they are in: if she had been in a good one, it had been a kiss; but as long as she sent you something, your affairs go well.

Mon. Why, truly, I am a little ignorant in the mysterious parts of love, so I must be guided by thee. But pr'ythee take her in a good humour next token she sends me.

Flip. Ah—good humour?

Mon. What's the matter?

Flip. Poor lady!

Man. Ha!

Flip. If I durst tell you all—

Mon. What then?

Flip. You would not expect to see her in one a good while.

Mon. Why, I pray?

Flip. I must own I did take an unseasonable time to talk of love-matters to her.

Mon. Why, what's the matter?

Flip. Nothing.

Mon. Nay, pr'ythee tell me.

Flip. I dare not.

Mon. You must indeed.

Flip. Why, when women are in difficulties, how can they think of pleasure?

Mon. Why, what difficulties can she be in?

Flip. Nay, I do but guess after all; for she has that grandeur of soul, she'd die before she'd tell.

Mon. But what dost thou suspect?

Flip. Why, what should one suspect, where a husband loves nothing but getting of money, and a wife nothing but spending on't?

Mon. So she wants that same, then?

Flip. I say no such thing, I know nothing of the matter; pray make no wrong interpretation of what I say, my Lady wants nothing that I know of. 'Tis true—she has had ill luck at cards of late, I believe she has not won once this month: but what of that?

Mon. Ha!

Flip. 'Tis true, I know her spirit's that she'd see her husband hanged before she'd ask him for a farthing.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. And then I know him again, he'd see her drown'd before he'd give her a farthing; but that's a help to your affair, you know.

Mon. 'Tis so, indeed.

Flip. Ah—well, I'll say nothing; but if she had none of these things to fret her—

Mon. Why really, *Flippanta*—

Flip. I know what you are going to say now; you are going to offer your service, but 'twon't do; you have a mind to play the gallant now, but it must not be; you want to be shewing your liberality, but 'twon't be allowed; you'll be pressing me to offer it, and she'll be in a rage. We shall have the Devil to do.

Mon. You mistake me, *Flippanta*, I was only going to say—

Flip. Ay, I know what you were going to say well enough; but I tell you it will never do so. If one cou'd find out some way now—ay—let me see—

Mon. Indeed I hope—

Flip. Pray be quiet—no—but I'm thinking—hum—she'll smoke that tho'—let us consider—If one you'd find a way to—'Tis the nicest point in the world to bring about, she'll never touch it, if she knows from whence it comes.

Mon. Shall I try if I can reason her husband out of twenty pounds, to make her easy the rest of her life?

Flip. Twenty pounds, man?—why you shall see her set that upon a card. O—she has a great soul.—Besides, if her husband should oblige her, it might, in time, take off her aversion to him, and by consequence, her inclination to you. No, no, it must never come that way.

Mon. What shall we do then?

Flip. Hold still—I have it. I'll tell you what you shall do.

Mon. Ay.

Flip. You shall make her a restitution of two hundred pounds.

Mon. Ha! Restitution!

Flip. Yes, yes, 'tis the luckiest thought in the world; Madam often plays, you know, and folks who do so, meet now and then with sharpers. Now you shall be a sharper.

Mon. A sharper!

Flip. Ay, ay, a sharper; and having cheated her of two hundred pounds, shall be troubled in mind, and send it her back again. You comprehend me?

Mon. Yes, I comprehend, but a—won't she suspect if it be so much?

Flip. No, no, the more the better.

Mon. Two hundred pounds!

Flip. Yes, two hundred pounds—Or let me see—so even a sum may look a little suspicious—ay—let it be two hundred and thirty; that odd thirty will make it look so natural, the devil won't find it out.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Pounds, too, look I don't know how; guineas I fancy were better—ay, guineas, it shall be guineas. You are of that mind, are you not?

Mon. Um—a guinea, you know, *Flippanta*, is—

Flip. A thousand times genteeler, you are certainly in the right on't; it shall be as you say, two hundred and thirty guineas.

Mon. Ho—well, if it must be guineas, let's see, two hundred guineas.

Flip. And thirty; two hundred and thirty: If you mistake the sum, you spoil all. So go put them in a purse, while it's fresh in your head, and send 'em to me with a penitential letter, desiring I'll do you the favour to restore them to her.

Mon. Two hundred and thirty pounds in a bag!

Flip. Guineas, I say, guineas.

Mon. Ay, guineas, that's true. But *Flippanta*, if she don't know they come from me, then I give my money for nothing, you know.

Flip. Phu, leave that to me, I'll manage the flock for you; I'll make it produce something I'll warrant you.

Mon. Well, *Flippanta*, 'tis a great sum indeed; but I'll go try what I can do for her. You say, two hundred guineas in a purse?

Flip. And thirty; if the man's in his senses.

Mon. And thirty, 'tis true, I always forget that thirty.

[*Exit Money-trap.*]

Flip. So, get thee gone, thou art a rare fellow, i'faith. Brass!—it's thee, is't not?

Enter Brass.

Brass. It is, Huswife. How go matters? I staid till thy gentleman was gone. Hast done any thing towards our common purse?

Flip. I think I have; he's going to make us a restitution of two or three hundred pounds.

Brass. A restitution!—good.

Flip. A new way, sirrah, to make a lady take a present without putting her to the blush.

Brass. 'Tis very well, mighty well indeed. Pr'ythee where's thy master? let me try if I can perswade him to be troubled in mind too.

Flip. Not so hasty; he's gone into his closet to prepare himself for a quarrel, I have advis'd him to—with his wife.

Brass. What to do?

Flip. Why to make her stay at home, now she has resolved to do it beforehand. You must know, sirrah, we intend to make a merit of our basset table, and get a good pretence for the merry companions we intend to fill his house with.

Brass. Very nicely spun, truly, thy husband will be a happy man.

Flip. Hold your tongue, you fool you. See here comes your master.

Brass. He's welcome.

Enter Dick.

Dick. My dear *Flippanta!* how many thanks have I to pay thee?

Flip. Do you like her style?

Dick. The kindest little rogue! there's nothing but she gives me leave to hope. I am the happiest man the world has in its care.

Flip. Not so happy as you think for neither, perhaps; you have a rival, Sir, I can tell you that.

Dick. A rival!

Flip. Yes, and a dangerous one too.

Dick. Who in the name of terror?

Flip. A devilish fellow, one Mr. *Amlet.*

Dick. *Amlet!* I know no such man.

Flip. You know the man's mother tho'; you met her here, and are in her favour, I can tell you. If he worst you, in your mistress, you shall e'en marry her and disinherit him.

Dick. If I have no other rival but Mr. *Amlet,* I believe I shan't be disturb'd in my amour. But can't I see *Corinna?*

Flip. I don't know, she has always some of her masters with her: but I'll go and see if she can spare you a moment, and bring you word.

[Exit Flippanta.]

Dick. I wish my old hobbling mother han't been blabbing something here she should not do.

Brass. Fear nothing, all's safe on that side yet. But, how speaks young mistress's epistle? soft and tender?

Dick. As pen can write.

Brass. So you think all goes well there?

Dick. As my heart can wish.

Brass. You are sure on't?

Dick. Sure on't!

Brass. Why then, ceremony aside, *[Putting on his hat.]* You and I must have a little talk, Mr. *Amlet.*

Dick. Ah, *Brass,* what art thou going to do? Wou't ruin me?

Brass. Look you, *Dick,* few words; you are in a smooth way of making your fortune. I hope all will roll on. But how do you intend matters shall pass 'twixt you and me in this business?

Dick. Death and Furies! What a time dost take to talk on't?

Brass. Good words, or I betray you; they have already heard of one Mr. *Amlet* in the house.

Dick. Here's a son of a whore!

[Aside.]

Brass. In short, look smooth, and be a good prince: I am your valet, 'tis true: your footman sometimes, which I'm enrag'd at; but you have always had the ascendant, I confess: when we were school-fellows, you made me carry your books, make your exercise, own your rogueries, and sometimes take a whipping for you. When we were fellow-prentices, tho' I was your senior, you made me open the shop, clean my master's shoes, cut last at dinner, and eat all the crust. In our sins too, I must own you still kept me under; you soar'd up to adultery with our mistress, while I was at humble fornication with the maid. Nay, in our punishments you still made good your post: for when once upon a time I was sentenced but to be whipp'd, I cannot deny but you were condemn'd to be hang'd. So that in all times, I must confess, your inclinations have been greater and nobler than mine; however, I cannot consent that you shou'd at once fix fortune for life, and I dwell in my humilities for the rest of my days.

Dick. Hark thee, *Brass,* if I do not most nobly by thee, I'm a dog.

Brass. And when?

Dick. As soon as ever I am married.

Brass. Ah, the pox take thee.

Dick. Then you mistrust me?

Brass. I do by my faith. Look you, Sir, some folks we mistrust, because we don't know them;

others we mistrust, because we do know them: and for one of these reasons I desire there may be a bargain beforehand: If not [*Raising his voice.*] look ye *Dick Amlet*—

Dick. Soft, my dear friend and companion. The dog will ruin me. [*Aside.*] Say, what is't will content thee?

Brass. O ho!

Dick. But how canst thou be such a barbarian?

Brass. I learnt it at *Algiers*.

Dick. Come, make thy *Turkish* demand then.

Brass. You know you gave me a bank-bill this morning to receive for you.

Dick. I did so, of fifty pounds, 'tis thine. So, now thou are satisfy'd, all's fix'd.

Brass. It is not indeed. There's a diamond necklace you robb'd your mother of ev'n now.

Dick. Ah, you *Jew*.

Brass. No words.

Dick. My dear *Brass*!

Brass. I insist.

Dick. My old friend.

Brass. *Dick Amlet* [*Raising his voice.*] I insist.

Dick. Ah the *Cormorant*—Well, 'tis thine: but thou'lt never thrive with it.

Brass. When I find it begins to do me mischief, I'll give it you again. But I must have a wedding-suit.

Dick. Well.

Brass. Some good lace.

Dick. Thou shalt.

Brass. A stock of linen.

Dick. Enough.

Brass. Not yet—a silver sword.

Dick. Well, thou shalt have that too. Now thou hast every thing.

Brass. God forgive me, I forgot a ring of remembrance; I wou'd not forget all these favours for the world: a sparkling diamond I will be always playing in my eye, and put me in mind of them.

Dick. This unconscionable rogue! [*Aside.*] Well, I'll bespeak one for thee.

Brass. Brilliant.

Dick. It shall. But if the thing don't succeed after all?—

Brass. I'm a man of honour, and restore: and so the treaty being finish'd, I strike my flag of defiance, and fall into my respects again.

[*Taking off his hat.*]

Enter Flippanta.

Flip. I have made you wait a little, but I cou'd not help it, her master is but just gone. He has been shewing her Prince *Eugene's* march into *Italy*.

Dick. Pr'ythee let me come to her, I'll shew her a part of the world he has never shewn her yet.

Flip. So I told her, you must know; and she said, she cou'd like to travel in good company: so if you'll slip up those back-stairs, you shall try if you can agree upon the journey.

Dick. My dear *Flippanta*!

Flip. None of your dear acknowledgments, I beseech you, but up stairs as hard as you can drive.

Dick. I'm gone.

[*Exit Dick.*]

Flip. And do you follow him *Jack-a-dandy*, and see he is not surpriz'd.

Brass. I thought that was your post, Mrs. *Useful*: But if you'll come and keep me in humour, I don't care if I share the duty with you.

Flip. No words, sirrah, but follow him, I have somewhat else to do.

Brass. The jade's so absolute there's no contesting with her. One kiss tho' to keep the centinel warm. [*Gives her a long kiss.*]—So.

[*Exit Brass.*]

Flippanta sola.

---A nasty rogue [*Wiping her mouth.*] But, let me see what have I to do now? This *restitution* will be here quickly, I suppose; in the mean time I'll go know if my lady's ready for the quarrel yet. Master yonder is so full on't, he's ready to burst; but we'll give him vent by and by with a witness.

ACT IV.

SCENE, Gripe's House.

Enter Corinna, Dick, and Brass.

Brass. DON't fear, I'll give you timely notice.

[*Goes to the door.*]

Dick. Come, you must consent, you shall consent. How can you leave me thus upon the rack? a man who loves you to that excess that I do.

Cor. Nay, that you love me, Sir, that I'm satisfy'd in, for you have sworn you do: And I'm so pleas'd with it, I'd fain have you do so as long as you live, so we must never marry.

Dick. Not marry, my dear! why what's our love good for if we don't marry!

Cor. Ah——I'm afraid 'twill be good for little if we do.

Dick. Why do you think so?

Cor. Because I hear my father and mother, and my uncle and aunt, and *Araminta* and her husband, and twenty other married folks, say so from morning to night.

Dick. Oh, that's because they are bad husbands and bad wives; but in our case there will be a good husband and a good wife, and so we shall love for ever.

Cor. Why there may be something in that truly; and I'm always willing to hear reason, as a reasonable young woman ought to do. But are you sure, Sir, tho' we are very good now, we shall be so when we come to be better acquainted?

Dick. I can answer for myself, at least.

Cor. I wish you cou'd answer for me too. You see I am a plain-dealer, Sir, I hope you don't like me the worse for it.

Dick. O, by no means, 'tis a sign of admirable morals; and I hope, since you practise it yourself, you'll approve of it in your lover. In one word, therefore, (for 'tis in vain to mince the matter) my resolution's fix'd, and the world can't stagger me, I marry——or I die.

Cor. Indeed, Sir, I have much ado to believe you; the disease of love is seldom so violent.

Dick. Madam, I have two diseases to end my miseries; If the first don't do't, the latter shall; [*Drawing his sword.*] one's in my heart, t'other's in my scabbard.

Cor. Not for a diadem, [*Catching hold of him.*] Ah, put it up, put it up.

Dick. How absolute is your command! [*Dropping his sword.*] A word, you see, disarms me.

Cor. What a power I have over him! [*Aside.*] The wondrous deeds of love!——Pray, Sir, let me have no more of these rash doings tho'; perhaps I mayn't be always in the saving humour——I'm sure if I had let him stick himself, I should have been envy'd by all the great ladies in the town.

[*Aside.*]

Dick. Well, madam, have I then your promise? you'll make me the happiest of mankind.

Cor. I don't know what to say to you; but I believe I had as good promise, for I find I shall certainly do't.

Dick. Then let us seal the contract thus.

[*Kisses her.*]

Cor. Um——he has almost taken away my breath: He kisses purely.

[*Aside.*]

Dick. Hark——somebody comes.

[*Brass peeping in.*]

Brass. Gar there, the enemy——no, hold y'are safe, 'tis *Flippanta*.

Enter Flippanta.

Flip. Come, have you agreed the matter? If not, you must end it another time, for your father's in motion, so pray kiss and part.

Cor. That's sweet and sour. [*They kiss.*] Adieu t'ye, Sir.

[*Exit Dick and Cor.*]

Enter Clarissa.

Clar. Have you told him I'm at home, *Flippanta*?

Flip. Yes, Madam.

Clar. And that I'll see him?

Flip. Yes, that too: But here's news for you; I have just now receiv'd the restitution.

Clar. That's killing pleasure: and how much has he restor'd me?

Flip. Two hundred and thirty.

Clar. Wretched rogue! but retreat, your Master's coming to quarrel.

Flip. I'll be within call, if things run high.

[*Ex. Flip.*

Enter Gripe.

Gripe. O ho!—are you there, i'faith? Madam, your humble servant, I'm very glad to see you at home. I thought I should never have had that honour again.

Clar. Good-morrow, my dear, how d'ye do? *Flippanta* says you are out of humour, and that you have a mind to quarrel with me: Is it true? ha!—I have a terrible pain in my head, I give you notice on't beforehand.

Gripe. And how the pox shou'd it be otherwise? It's a wonder you are not dead [as a' wou'd you were, *Aside.*] with the life you lead. Are you not ashamed? And do you not blush to—

Clar. My dear child, you crack my brain; soften the harshness of your voice: say what thou wou't, but let it be in an agreeable tone—

Gripe. Tone, Madam, don't tell me of a tone—

Clar. O—if you will quarrel, do it with temperance; let it be all in cool blood, even and smooth, as if you were not moved with what you said; and then I'll hear you as if I were not mov'd with it neither.

Gripe. Had ever man such need of patience? Madam, Madam, I must tell you, Madam—

Clar. Another key, or I'll walk off.

Gripe. Don't provoke me.

Clar. Shall you be long, my dear, in your remonstrances?

Gripe. Yes, Madam, and very long.

Clar. If you would quarrel *en abrégé*, I shou'd have a world of obligation to you.

Gripe. What I have to say, forsooth, is not to be expressed *en abrégé*, my complaints are too numerous.

Clar. Complaints! of what my dear? have I ever given you subject of complaint, my life?

Gripe. O Pox! my dear and my life! I desire none of your *tendres*.

Clar. How! find fault with my kindness, and my expressions of affection and respect! the world will guess by this what the rest of your complaints may be. I must tell you, I am scandaliz'd at your procedure.

Gripe. I must tell you I am running mad with yours.

Clar. Ah! how insupportable are the humours of some husbands, so full of fancies, and so ungovernable: What have you in the world to disturb you?

Gripe. What have I to disturb me! I have you, Death and the Devil.

Clar. Ah, merciful heaven! how he swears! You should never accustom yourself to such words as these; indeed, my dear, you shou'd not; your mouth's always full of them.

Gripe. Blood and thunder! Madam—

Clar. Ah, he'll fetch the house down: Do you know you make me tremble for you? *Flippanta!* who's there? *Flippanta!*

Gripe. Here's a provoking devil for you!

Enter Flippanta.

Flip. What in the name of *Jove's* the matter? you raise the neighbourhood.

Clar. Why here's your master in a most violent fuss, and no mortal soul can tell for what.

Gripe. Not tell for what!

Clar. No, my life. I have begged him to tell me his griefs, *Flippanta*; and then he swears, good Lord! how he does swear.

Gripe. Ah, you wicked jade! Ah, you wicked jade!

Clar. Do you hear him *Flippanta!* do you hear him!

Flip. Pray, Sir, let's know a little what puts you in all this fury?

Clar. Pr'ythee stand near me, *Flippanta*, there's an odd froth about his mouth, looks as if his poor head were going wrong, I'm afraid he'll bite.

Gripe. The wicked woman, *Flippanta*, the wicked woman.

Clar. Can any body wonder I shun my own house, when he treats me at this rate in it?

Gripe. At this rate! why in the devil's name—

Clar. Do you hear him again?

Flip. Come, a little moderation, Sir, and try what that will produce.

Gripe. Hang her, 'tis all a pretence to justify her going abroad.

Clar. A pretence! a pretence! Do you hear how black a charge he loads me with? Charges me with a pretence? Is this the return for all my downright open actions? You know, my dear, I scorn pretences: Whenever I go abroad, it is without pretence.

Gripe. Give me patience.

Flip. You have a great deal, Sir.

Clar. And yet he's never content, *Flippanta*.

Gripe. What shall I do?

Clar. What a reasonable man wou'd do; own your self in the wrong, and be quiet. Here's *Flippanta* has understanding, and I have moderation; I'm willing to make her judge of our differences.

Flip. You do me a great deal of honour, Madam: but I tell you beforehand, I shall be a little on Master's side.

Gripe. Right, *Flippanta* has sense. Come, let her decide. Have I not reason to be in a passion? tell me that.

Clar. You must tell her for what, my life.

Gripe. Why, for the trade you drive, my soul.

Flip. Look you, Sir, pray take things right. I know Madam does fret you a little now and then, that's true; but in the fund, she is the softest, sweetest, gentlest lady breathing: let her but live entirely to her own fancy, and she'll never say a word to you from morning to night.

Gripe. Oons, let her but stay at home, and she shall do what she will: in reason, that is.

Flip. D'ye hear that, Madam? nay, now I must be on master's side; you see how he loves you, he desires only your company, pray give him that satisfaction, or I must pronounce against you.

Clar. Well, I agree. Thou know'st I don't love to grieve him: let him be always in good humour, and I'll be always at home.

Flip. Look you there, Sir, what would you have more?

Gripe. Well, let her keep her word, and I'll have done quarrelling.

Clar. I must not, however, so far lose the merit of my consent, as to let you think I'm weary of going abroad, my dear: what I do is purely to oblige you; which, that I may be able to perform, without a relapse, I'll invent what ways I can to make my prison supportable to me.

Flip. Her prison! pretty bird! her prison! do'nt that word melt you, Sir?

Gripe. I must confess I did not expect to find her so reasonable.

Flip. O, Sir, soon or late wives come into good humour: husbands must only have a little patience to wait for it.

Clar. The innocent little diversions, dear, that I shall content myself with, will be chiefly play and company.

Gripe. O, I'll find you employment, your time shan't lie upon your hands, tho' if you have a mind now for such a companion as a—let me see—*Araminta* for example, why I shan't be against her being with you from morning till nigh.

Clar. You can't oblige me more, 'tis the best woman in the world.

Gripe. Is not she?

Flip. Ah, the old satyr!

[*Aside.*

Gripe. Then we'll have, besides her, may be sometimes—her husband; and we shall see my niece that writes verses, and my sister *Fidget*: with her husband's brother that's always merry; and his little cousin that's to marry the fat curate; and my uncle the apothecary, with his wife and all his children. O we shall divert ourselves rarely.

Flip. Good.

[*Aside.*

Clar. O, for that, my dear child, I must be plain with you, I'll see none of them but *Araminta*, who has the manners of the court; for I'll converse with none but women of quality.

Gripe. Ay, ay, they shall all have one quality or other.

Clar. Then, my dear, to make our home pleasant, we'll have consorts of music sometimes.

Gripe. Music in my house!

Clar. Yes, my child, we must have music or the house will be so dull I shall get the spleen, and be going abroad again.

Flip. Nay, she has so much complaisance for you, Sir, you can't dispute such things with her.

Gripe. Ay, but if I have music——

Clar. Ay, but Sir, I must have music——

Flip. Not every day, Madam don't mean.

Clar. No, bless me, no; but three consorts a week: three days more we'll play after dinner at *Ombre*, *Picquet*, *Basset*, and so forth, and close the evening with a handsome supper and a ball.

Gripe. A ball!

Clar. Then, my love, you know there is but one day more upon our hands, and that shall be the day of conversation, we'll read verses, talk of books, invent modes, tell lyes, scandalize our friends, be pert upon religion; and in short, employ every moment of it in some pretty witty exercise or other.

Flip. What order you see 'tis she proposes to live in! A most wonderful regularity!

Gripe. Regularity with a pox——

[*Aside.*

Clar. And as this kind of life, so soft, so smooth, so agreeable, must needs invite a vast deal of company to partake of it, 'twill be necessary to have the decency of a porter at our door, you know.

Gripe. A porter——A scrivener have a porter, Madam!

Clar. Positively a porter.

Gripe. Why no scrivener since *Adam* ever had a porter, woman!

Clar. You will therefore be renown'd in story, for having the first, my life.

Gripe. *Flippanta.*

Flip. Hang it, Sir, never dispute a trifle; if you vex her, perhaps she'll insist upon a Swiss.

[*Aside to Gripe.*

Gripe. But, Madam——

Clar. But, Sir, a porter, positively a porter; without that the treaty's null, and I go abroad this moment.

Flip. Come, Sir, never lose so advantageous a peace for a pitiful porter.

Gripe. Why, I shall be hooted at, the boys will throw stones at my porter. Besides, where shall I have money for all this expence?

Clar. My dear, who asks you for any? Don't be in a fright, chicken.

Gripe. Don't be in a fright, Madam! But where I say——

Flip. Madam plays, Sir, think on that; women that play have inexhaustible mines, and wives who receive least money from their husbands, are many times those who spend the most.

Clar. So, my dear, let what *Flippanta* says content you. Go, my life, trouble yourself with nothing, but let me do just as I please, and all will be well. I'm going into my closet, to consider of some more things to enable me to give you the pleasure of my company at home, without making it too great a misery to a yielding wife.

[*Exit Clarissa.*

Flip. Mirror of goodness! Pattern to all wives! well sure, Sir, you are the happiest of all husbands.

Gripe. Yes——and a miserable dog for all that too, perhaps.

Flip. Why, what can you ask more, than this matchless complaisance?

Gripe. I don't know what I can ask, and yet I'm not satisfy'd with what I have neither, the devil mixes in it all, I think; complaisant or perverse, it feels just as it did.

Flip. Why then your uneasiness is only a disease, Sir, perhaps a little bleeding and purging wou'd relieve you.

Clar. *Flippanta?*

[*Clarissa calls within.*

Flip. Madam calls. I come, Madam. Come, be merry, be merry, Sir, you have cause, take my word for't. Poor devil.

[*Aside.*]

[*Exit Flippanta.*

Gripe. I don't know that, I don't know that: But this I do know, that an honest man, who has marry'd a jade, whether she's pleas'd to spend her time at home or abroad, had better have liv'd a batchelor.

Enter Brass.

Brass. O, Sir, I'm mighty glad I have found you.

Gripe. Why, what's the matter, pr'ythee?

Brass. Can no body hear us?

Gripe. No, no, speak quickly.

Brass. You han't seen *Araminta*, since the last letter I carry'd her from you?

Gripe. Not I, I go prudently; I don't press things like your young firebrand lovers.

Brass. But seriously, Sir, are you very much in love with her?

Gripe. As mortal man has been.

Brass. I'm sorry for't.

Gripe. Why so, dear *Brass*?

Brass. If you were never to see her more now? Suppose such a thing, d'ye think 'twou'd break your heart?

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Nay, now I see you love her; wou'd you did not.

Gripe. My dear friend.

Brass. I'm in your interest deep: you see it.

Gripe. I do: but speak, what miserable story hast thou for me?

Brass. I had rather the devil had, phu—flown away with you quick, than to see you so much in love, as I perceive you are, since—

Gripe. Since what?—ho.

Brass. *Araminta*, Sir.

Gripe. Dead?

Brass. No.

Gripe. How then?

Brass. Worse.

Gripe. Out with't.

Brass. Broke.

Gripe. Broke!

Brass. She is, poor lady, in a most unfortunate situation of affairs. But I have said too much.

Gripe. No, no, 'tis very sad, but let's hear it.

Brass. Sir, she charg'd me on my life never to mention it to you, of all men living.

Gripe. Why, who should'st thou tell it to, but to the best of her friends?

Brass. Ay, why there's it now, it's going just as I fancy'd. Now will I be hang'd if you are not enough in love to be engaging in this matter. But I must tell you, Sir, that as much concern as I have for that most excellent, beautiful, agreeable, distress'd, unfortunate lady, I'm too much your friend and servant, ever to let it be said, 'twas the means of your being ruin'd for a woman—by letting you know she esteem'd you more than any other man upon earth.

Gripe. Ruin'd! what dost thou mean?

Brass. Mean! Why! I mean that women always ruin those that love 'em, that's the rule.

Gripe. The rule!

Brass. Yes, the rule; why wou'd you have them ruin those that don't? How shall they bring that about?

Gripe. But is there a necessity then, they shou'd ruin somebody?

Brass. Yes, marry is there; how wou'd you have 'em support their expence else? Why, Sir, you can't conceive now—you can't conceive what *Araminta's* privy-purse requires. Only her privy purse, Sir! Why, what do you imagine now she gave me for the last letter I carry'd her from you? 'Tis true, 'twas from a man she lik'd, else, perhaps, I had had my bones broke. But what do you think she gave me?

Gripe. Why, mayhap—a shilling.

Brass. A guinea, Sir, a guinea. You see by that how fond she was on't, by the bye. But then, Sir, her coach-hire; her chair-hire, her pin-money, her play-money, her china, and her charity—wou'd consume peers: A great soul, a very great soul! but what's the end of all this?

Gripe. Ha!

Brass. Why, I'll tell you what the end is—a nunnery.

Gripe. A nunnery!

Brass. A nunnery.—In short she is at last reduc'd to that extremity, and attack'd with such a battalion of duns, that rather than tell her husband (who you know is such a dog, he'd let her go if she did) she has e'en determin'd to turn papist, and bid the world adieu for life.

Gripe. O terrible! a papist!

Brass. Yes, when a handsome woman has brought herself into difficulties, the devil can't help her out of—To a nunnery, that's another rule, Sir.

Gripe. But, but, but, pr'ythee *Brass*, but—

Brass. But all the buts in the world, Sir, won't stop her: she's a woman of a noble resolution. So, Sir, your humble servant; I pity her, I pity you. Turtle and mate; but the Fates will have it so, all's packt up, and I'm now going to call her a coach, for she resolves to slip off without saying a word: and the next visit she receives from her friends, will be through a melancholy grate, with a veil instead of a top-knot.

[*Going.*

Gripe. It must not be, by the Powers it must not; she was made for the world, and the world was made for her.

Brass. And yet you see, Sir, how small a share she has on't.

Gripe. Poor woman! Is there no way to save her?

Brass. Save her! No, how can she be saved? why she owes above five hundred pounds.

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Five hundred pounds, Sir; she's like to be sav'd indeed.—Not but that I know them in this town wou'd give me one of the five, if I wou'd persuade her to accept of th' other four: but she has forbid me mentioning it to any soul living; and I have disobey'd her only to you; and so—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold!—dost think, my poor *Brass*, one might not order it so, as to compound those debts for—for—twelve pence in the pound?

Brass. Sir, d'ye hear? I have already try'd 'em with ten shillings, and not a rogue will prick up his ear at it. Tho' after all, for three hundred pounds all in glittering gold, I could set their chaps a watering. But where's that to be had with honour? there's the thing, Sir,—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold, once more: I have a note in my closet of two hundred, ay—and fifty, I'll go and give it her myself.

Brass. You will; very genteel, truly. Go slap-dash, and offer a woman of her scruples, money! bolt in her face: Why, you might as well offer her a scorpion, and she'd as soon touch it.

Gripe. Shall I carry it to her creditors then, and treat with them?

Brass. Ay, that's a rare thought.

Gripe. Is not it, *Brass*?

Brass. Only one little inconvenience by the way.

Gripe. As how?

Brass. That they are your wife's creditors as well as hers; and perhaps it might not be altogether so well to see you clearing the debts of your neighbour's wife, and leaving those of your own unpaid.

Gripe. Why that's true now.

Brass. I'm wise you see, Sir.

Gripe. Thou art; and I'm but a young lover: But what shall we do then?

Brass. Why I'm thinking, that if you give me the note, do you see; and that I promise to give you an account of it—

Gripe. Ay, but look you, *Brass*—

Brass. But look you!—Why what, d'ye think I'm a pickpocket? D'ye think I intend to run away with your note? your paltry note.

Gripe. I don't say so—I say only that in case—

Brass. Case, Sir, there is no case but the case I have put you; and since you heap cases upon cases, where there is but three hundred rascally pounds in the case—I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Pr'ythee don't be so testy; come, no more words, follow me to my closet, and I'll give thee the money.

Brass. A terrible effort you make indeed; you are so much in love, your wits are all upon the wing, just a going; and for three hundred pounds you put a stop to their flight: Sir, your wits are worth that, or your wits are worth nothing. Come away.

Gripe. Well, say no more, thou shalt be satisfy'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Dick.

Dick. S't—*Brass!* S't—

Re-enter Brass.

Brass. Well, Sir!

Dick. 'Tis not well, Sir, 'tis very ill, Sir; we shall be all blown up.

Brass. What, with pride and plenty?

Dick. No, Sir, with an officious slut that will spoil all. In short, *Flippanta* has been telling her mistress and *Araminta* of my passion for the young gentlewoman; and truly to oblige me (supposed no ill match by the bye) they are resolv'd to propose it immediately to her father.

Brass. That's the devil! we shall come to papers and parchments, jointures and settlements, relations meet on both sides; that's the devil.

Dick. I intended this very day to propose to *Flippanta*, the carrying her off: and I'm sure the young housewife wou'd have tuck'd up her coats, and have march'd.

Brass. Ay, with the body and the soul of her.

Dick. Why then, what damn'd luck is this?

Brass. 'Tis your damn'd luck, not mine: I have always seen it in your ugly phiz, in spite of your powder'd perriwig—pox take ye—he'll be hang'd at last. Why don't you try to get her off yet?

Dick. I have no money, you dog; you know you have stript me of every penny.

Brass. Come, damn it. I'll venture one cargo more upon your rotten bottom: But if ever I see one glance of your hempen fortune again, I'm off of your partnership for ever—I shall never thrive with him.

Dick. An impudent rogue, but he's in possession of my estate, so I must bear with him.

[*Aside.*

Brass. Well, come, I'll raise a hundred pounds for your use, upon my wife's jewels here; [*Pulling out the necklace.*] her necklace shall pawn for't.

Dick. Remember tho', that if things fail, I'm to have the necklace again; you know you agreed to that.

Brass. Yes, and if I make it good, you'll be the better for't; if not, I shall: so you see where the cause will pinch.

Dick. Why, you barbarous dog, you won't offer to—

Brass. No words now; about your business, march. Go stay for me at the next tavern: I'll go to *Flippanta*, and try what I can do for you.

Dick. Well, I'll go, but don't think to—O pox, Sir—

[*Exit Dick.*

Brass solus.

Brass. Will you be gone? A pretty title you'd have to sue me upon truly, if I shou'd have a mind to stand upon the defensive, as perhaps I may; I have done the rascal service enough to lull my conscience upon't I'm sure: But 'tis time enough for that. Let me see—First I'll go to *Flippanta*, and put a stop to this family way of match-making, then sell our necklace for what ready money 'twill produce; and by this time to-morrow I hope we shall be in possession of—t'other jewel here; a precious jewel, as she's set in gold: I believe for the stone itself we may part with it again to a friend—for a tester.

[*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE, Gripe's House.

Enter Brass and Flippanta.

Brass. WELL, you agree I'm in the right, don't you?

Flip. I don't know; if your master has the estate he talks of, why not do't all above-board? Well, tho' I am not much of his mind, I'm much in his interest, and will therefore endeavour to serve him in his own way.

Brass. That's kindly said, my child, and I believe I shall reward thee one of these days, with as pretty a fellow to thy husband for't, as—

Flip. Hold your prating, Jack-a-dandy, and leave me to my business.

Brass. I obey—adieu. [*Kisses her.*]

[*Exit Brass.*]

Flip. Rascal!

Enter Corinna.

Cor. Ah, *Flippanta*, I'm ready to sink down, my legs tremble under me, my dear *Flippy*.

Flip. And what's the affair?

Cor. My father's there within, with my mother and *Araminta*; I never saw him in so good a humour in my life.

Flip. And is that it that frightens you so?

Cor. Ah, *Flippanta*, they are just going to speak to him, about my marrying the Colonel.

Flip. Are they so? so much the worse; they're too hasty.

Cor. O no, not a bit: I slipt out on purpose, you must know, to give them an opportunity; wou'd 'twere done already.

Flip. I tell you no; get you in again immediately, and prevent it.

Cor. My dear, dear, I am not able; I never was in such a way before.

Flip. Never in a way to be marry'd before, ha? is not that it?

Cor. Ah, Lord, if I'm thus before I come to't, *Flippanta*, what shall I be upon the very spot? Do but feel with what a thumpaty thump it goes.

[*Putting her hand to her heart.*]

Flip. Nay it does make a filthy bustle, that's the truth on't, child. But I believe I shall make it leap another way, when I tell you, I'm cruelly afraid your father won't consent, after all.

Cor. Why, he won't be the death of o'me, will he?

Flip. I don't know, old folk are cruel; but we'll have a trick for him. *Brass* and I have been consulting upon the matter, and agreed upon a surer way of doing it in spite of his teeth.

Cor. Ay, marry, Sir, that were something.

Flip. But then he must not know a word of any thing towards it.

Cor. No, no.

Flip. So, get you in immediately.

Cor. One, two, three and away.

[*Running off.*]

Flip. And prevent your mother's speaking on't.

Cor. But is t'other way sure, *Flippanta*?

Flip. Fear nothing, 'twill only depend upon you.

Cor. Nay then—O ho, ho, ho, how pure that is!

[*Exit Corinna.*]

Flippanta sola.

Poor child! we may do what we will with her, as far as marrying her goes; when that's over, 'tis possible she mayn't prove altogether so tractable. But who's here? my sharper, I think: yes.

Enter Money-trap.

Mon. Well, my best friend, how go matters? Has the restitution been received, ha? Was she pleas'd with it?

Flip. Yes, truly; that is, she was pleas'd to see there was so honest a man in this immoral age.

Mon. Well, but a—does she know that 'twas I that—

Flip. Why, you must know I begun to give her a little sort of a hint, and—and so—why, and so she begun to put on a sort of a severe, haughty, reserv'd, angry, forgiving air. But soft; here she comes: you'll see how you stand with her presently: but don't be afraid. Courage.

Mon. He, hem.

Enter Clarissa.

'Tis no small piece of good fortune, Madam, to find you at home: I have often endeavour'd it in vain.

Clar. 'Twas then unknown to me, for if I cou'd often receive the visits of so good a friend at home, I shou'd be more reasonably blam'd for being so much abroad.

Mon. Madam, you make me—

Clar. You are the man of the world whose company I think is most to be desir'd. I don't compliment you when I tell you so, I assure you.

Mon. Alas, Madam, your poor humble servant—

Clar. My poor humble servant however (with all the esteem I have for him) stands suspected with me for a vile trick, I doubt he has play'd me, which if I could prove upon him, I'm afraid I should punish him very severely.

Mon. I hope, Madam, you'll believe I am not capable of—

Clar. Look you, look you, you are capable of whatever you please, you have a great deal of wit, and know how to give a nice and gallant turn to every thing; but if you will have me continue your friend, you must leave me in some uncertainty in this matter.

Mon. Madam, I do then protest to you—

Clar. Come protest nothing about it, I am but too penetrating, as you may perceive; but we sometimes shut our eyes, rather than break with our friends; for a thorough knowledge of the truth of this business, wou'd make me very seriously angry.

Mon. 'Tis very certain, Madam, that—

Clar. Come, say no more on't, I beseech you, for I'm in a good deal of heat while I but think on't; if you'll walk in, I'll follow you presently.

Mon. Your goodness, Madam, is—

Flip. War, horse.

[*Aside to Money-trap.*

No fine speeches, you'll spoil all.

Mon. Thou art a most incomparable person.

Flip. Nay, it goes rarely; but get you in, and I'll say a little something to my Lady for you, while she's warm.

Mon. But S't, *Flippanta*, how long do'st think she may hold out?

Flip. Phu, not a Twelvemonth.

Mon. Boo.

Flip. Away, I say.

[*Pushing him out.*

Clar. Is he gone? What a wretch it is! he never was quite such a beast before.

Flip. Poor mortal, his money's finely laid out truly.

Clar. I suppose there may have been much such another scene within between *Araminta* and my dear: but I left him so insupportably brisk, 'tis impossible he can have parted with any money: I'm afraid *Brass* has not succeeded as thou hast done, *Flippanta*.

Flip. By my faith but he has, and better too; he presents his humble duty to *Araminta*, and has sent her—this.

[*Shewing the note.*

Clar. A bill for my love for two hundred and fifty pounds. The monster! he wou'd not part with ten to save his lawful wife from everlasting torment.

Flip. Never complain of his avarice, Madam, as long as you have his money.

Clar. But is not he a beast, *Flippanta*? methinks the restitution look'd better by half.

Flip. Madam, the man's beast enough, that's certain; but which way will you go to receive his beastly money, for I must not appear with his note?

Clar. That's true; why send for Mrs. *Amlet*; that's a mighty useful woman, that Mrs. *Amlet*.

Flip. Marry is she; we shou'd have been basely puzzled how to dispose of the necklace without her, 'twould have been dangerous offering it to sale.

Clar. It wou'd so, for I know your master has been laying out for't amongst the goldsmiths. But I

stay here too long. I must in and coquet it a little more to my lover, *Araminta* will get ground on me else.

[*Exit Clarissa.*]

Flip. And I'll go send for Mrs. *Amlet*.

[*Exit Flip.*]

SCENE opens.

Araminta, Corinna, Gripe, and Money-trap at a tea-table, very gay and laughing. Clarissa comes in to 'em.

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mon. Mighty well, O mighty well indeed!

Clar. Save you, save you good folks, you are all in rare humour methinks.

Gripe. Why, what shou'd we be otherwise for, Madam?

Clar. Nay, I don't know, not I, my dear; but I han't had the happiness of seeing you since our honey-moon was over, I think.

Gripe. Why to tell you the truth, my dear, 'tis the joy of seeing you at home; [*Kisses her.*] You see what charms you have, when you are pleased to make use of 'em.

Aram. Very gallant truly.

Clar. Nay, and what's more, you must know, he's never to be otherwise henceforwards; we have come to an agreement about it.

Mon. Why, here's my love and I have been upon just such another treaty too.

Aram. Well, sure there's some very peaceful star rules at present. Pray heaven continue its reign.

Mon. Pray do you continue its reign, you ladies; for 'tis all in your power.

[*Leering at Clarissa.*]

Gripe. My neighbour *Money-trap* says true at least I'll confess frankly [*Ogling Araminta.*] 'tis in one lady's power to make me the best-humour'd man on earth.

Mon. And I'll answer for another, that has the same over me.

[*Ogling Clarissa.*]

Clar. 'Tis mighty fine, gentlemen, mighty civil husbands indeed.

Gripe. Nay, what I say's true, and so true, that all quarrels being now at an end, I am willing, if you please, to dispense with all that fine company we talk'd of to-day, be content with the friendly conversation of our two good neighbours here, and spend all my toying hours alone with my sweet wife.

Mon. Why, truly, I think now, if these good women pleas'd, we might make up the prettiest little neighbourly company between our two families, and set a defiance to all the impertinent people in the world.

[*Aside.*]

Clar. The rascals!

Aram. Indeed I doubt you'd soon grow weary, if we grew fond.

Gripe. Never, never, for our wives have wit, neighbour, and that never palls.

Clar. And our husbands have generosity, *Araminta*, and that seldom palls.

Gripe. So that's a wipe for me now, because I did not give her a new-year's gift last time; but be good, and I'll think of some tea-cups for you, next year.

Mon. And perhaps I mayn't forget a fan, or as good a thing—hum, hussy.

Clar. Well, upon these encouragements, *Araminta*, we'll try how good we can be.

Gripe. Well, this goes most rarely: poor *Money-trap*, he little thinks what makes his wife so easy in his company.

[*Aside.*]

Mon. I can but pity poor neighbour *Gripe*. Lard, Lard, what a fool does his wife and I make of him?

[*Aside.*]

Clar. Are not these two wretched rogues, *Araminta*?

[*Aside to Araminta.*]

Aram. They are indeed.

[*Aside to Clarissa.*]

Enter Jessamin.

Jess. Sir, here's Mr. *Clip*, the goldsmith, desires to speak with you.

Gripe. Cods so, perhaps some news of your necklace, my dear.

Clar. That would be news indeed.

Gripe. Let him come in.

Enter Mr. Clip.

Gripe. Mr. *Clip*, your servant, I'm glad to see you: how do you do?

Clip. At your service, Sir, very well. Your servant, Madam *Gripe*.

Clar. Horrid fellow!

[*Aside.*

Gripe. Well, Mr. *Clip*, no news yet of my wife's necklace?

Clip. If you please to let me speak with you in the next room, I have something to say to you.

Gripe. Ay, with all my heart. Shut the door after us. [*They come forward, and the Scene shuts behind them.*] Well, any news?

Clip. Look you, Sir, here's a necklace brought me to sell, at least very like that you describ'd to me.

Gripe. Let's see't—*Victoria!* the very same. Ah my dear Mr. *Clip*—[*Kisses him.*] But who brought it you? you should have seiz'd him.

Clip. 'Twas a young fellow that I know: I can't tell whether he may be guilty, tho' its like enough. But he has only left it me now, to shew a brother of our trade, and will call upon me again presently.

Gripe. Wheedle him hither, dear Mr. *Clip*. Here's my neighbour *Money-trap* in the house; he's a justice, and will commit him presently.

Clip. 'Tis enough.

Enter Brass.

Gripe. O, my friend *Brass!*

Brass. Hold, Sir, I think that's a gentleman I'm looking for. Mr. *Clip*, O your servant; what, are you acquainted here? I have just been at your shop.

Clip. I only stept here to shew Mr. *Gripe* the necklace you left.

Brass. Why, Sir, you understand jewels? [*To Gripe.*] I thought you had dealt only in gold. But I smoak the matter; hark you—a word in your ear—you are going to play the gallant again, and make a purchase on't for *Araminta*; ha, ha?

Gripe. Where had you the necklace?

Brass. Look you, don't trouble yourself about that; it's in commission with me, and I can help you to a pennyworth on't.

Gripe. A pennyworth on't, villain?

[*Strikes at him.*

Brass. Villain! a hey, a hey. Is't you or me, Mr. *Clip*, he's pleas'd to compliment?

Clip. What do you think on't, Sir?

Brass. Think on't, now the devil fetch me if I know what to think on't.

Gripe. You'll sell a pennyworth, rogue! of a thing you have stol'n from me.

Brass. Stol'n! pray, Sir—what wine have you drank to-day? It has a very merry effect upon you.

Gripe. You villain; either give me an account how you stole it, or—

Brass. O ho, Sir, if you please, don't carry your jest too far, I don't understand hard words, I give you warning on't: if you han't a mind to buy the necklace, you may let it alone, I know how to dispose on't. What a pox!—

Gripe. O, you shan't have that trouble, Sir. Dear Mr. *Clip*, you may leave the necklace here. I'll call at your shop, and thank you for your care.

Clip. Sir, your humble servant.

[*Going.*

Brass. O ho, Mr. *Clip*, if you please, Sir, this won't do, [*Stopping him.*] I don't understand rallery in such matters.

Clip. I leave it with Mr *Gripe*, do you and he dispute it.

[*Exit Clip.*

Brass. Ay, but 'tis from you, by your leave, Sir, that I expect it.

[*Going after him.*

Gripe. You expect, you rogue, to make your escape, do you? But I have other accounts besides this, to make up with you. To be sure the dog has cheated me of two hundred and fifty pounds.

Come, villain, give me an account of—

Brass. Account of!—Sir, give me an account of my necklace, or I'll make such a noise in your house, I'll raise the devil in't.

Gripe. Well said, courage.

Brass. Blood and thunder, give it me, or—

Gripe. Come, hush, be wise, and I'll make no noise of this affair.

Brass. You'll make no noise! But I'll make a noise; and a damn'd noise too. O, don't think to—

Gripe. I tell thee I will not hang thee.

Brass. But I tell you I will hang you, if you don't give me my necklace, I will, rot me.

Gripe. Speak softly, be wise; how came it thine? who gave it thee?

Brass. A gentleman, a friend of mine.

Gripe. What's his name?

Brass. His name!—I'm in such a passion I have forgot it.

Gripe. Ah, brazen rogue—thou hast stole it from my wife: 'tis the same she lost six weeks ago.

Brass. This has not been in *England* a month.

Gripe. You are a son of a whore.

Brass. Give me my necklace.

Gripe. Give me my two hundred and fifty pound note.

Brass. Yet I offer peace: one word without passion. The case stands thus, either I'm out of my wits, or you are out of yours: now 'tis plain I am not out of my wits, *Ergo*—

Gripe. My bill, hang-dog, or I'll strangle thee.

[*They struggle.*]

Brass. Murder, murder!

*Enter Clarissa, Araminta, Corinna, Flippanta,
and Money-trap.*

Flip. What's the matter? What's the matter here?

Gripe. I'll matter him.

Clar. Who makes thee cry out thus, poor *Brass*?

Brass. Why, your husband, Madam, he's in his altitudes here.

Gripe. Robber.

Brass. Here, he has cheated me of a diamond necklace.

Cor. Who, Papa? Ah dear me!

Clar. Pr'ythee what's the meaning of this great emotion, my dear?

Gripe. The meaning is that—I'm quite out of breath—this son of a whore has got our necklace, that's all.

Clar. My necklace!

Gripe. That birdlime there—stole it.

Clar. Impossible!

Brass. Madam, you see master's a little—touch'd, that's all. Twenty ounces of blood let loose, wou'd set all right again.

Gripe. Here, call a constable presently. Neighbour *Money-trap*, you'll commit him.

Brass. D'ye hear? d'ye hear? See how wild he looks: how his eyes roll in his head: tye him down, or he'll do some mischief or other.

Gripe. Let me come at him.

Clar. Hold—pr'ythee, my dear, reduce things to a little temperance, and let us coolly into the secret of this disagreeable rupture.

Gripe. Well then, without passion; why, you must know, (but I'll have him hang'd) you must know that he came to Mr. *Clip*, to Mr. *Clip* the dog did—with a necklace to sell; so Mr. *Clip* having notice before that (can you deny this, Sirrah?) that you had lost yours, brings it to me: Look at it here, do you know it again? Ah, you traitor.

[*To Brass.*]

Brass. He makes me mad. Here's an appearance of something now to the company, and yet nothing in't in the bottom.

Enter Constable.

Clar. *Flippanta!*

[*Aside to Flippanta, shewing the necklace.*]

Flip. 'Tis it, faith; here's some mystery in this, we must look about us.

Clar. The safest way is point blank to disown the necklace.

Flip. Right, stick to that.

Gripe. Well, Madam, do you know your old acquaintance, ha?

Clar. Why, truly, my dear, tho' (as you may all imagine) I shou'd be very glad to recover so valuable a thing as my necklace, yet I must be just to all the world, this necklace is not mine.

Brass. Huzza—here constable do your duty; Mr. Justice, I demand my necklace, and satisfaction of him.

Gripe. I'll die before I part with it, I'll keep it, and have him hang'd.

Clar. But be a little calm, my dear, do my bird, and then thou'lt be able to judge rightly of things.

Gripe. O good lack, O good lack.

Clar. No, but don't give way to fury and interest both, either of 'em are passions strong enough to lead a wise man out of the way. The necklace not being really mine, give it the man again, and come drink a dish of tea.

Brass. Ay, Madam says right.

Gripe. Oons, if you with your addle head don't know your own jewels, I with my solid one do. And if I part with it, may famine be my portion.

Clar. But don't swear and curse thyself at this fearful rate; don't, my dove: Be temperate in your words, and just in all your actions, 'twill bring a blessing upon you and all your family.

Gripe. Bring thunder and lightning upon me and my family, if I part with my necklace.

Clar. Why, you'll have the lightning burn your house about your ears, my dear, if you go on in these practices.

Mon. A most excellent woman this!

[*Aside.*

Enter Mrs. Amlet.

Gripe. I'll keep my necklace.

Brass. Will you so? then here comes one has a title to it, if I han't; let *Dick* bring himself off with her as he can. Mrs. *Amlet*, you are come in very good time, you lost a necklace t'other day, and who do you think has got it?

Aml. Marry, that I know not, I wish I did.

Brass. Why then here's Mr. *Gripe* has it, and swears 'tis his wife's.

Gripe. And so I do, sirrah—look here, Mistress, do you pretend this is yours?

Aml. Not for the round world I wou'd not say it; I only kept it to do Madam a small courtesy? that's all.

Clar. Ah, *Flippanta*, all will out now.

[*Aside to Flip.*

Gripe. Courtesy! what courtesy?

Aml. A little money only that madam had present need of, please to pay me that, and I demand no more.

Brass. So here's fresh game, I have started a new hare, I find.

[*Aside.*

Gripe. How forsooth, is this true?

[*To Clarissa.*

Clar. You are in a humour at present, love, to believe any thing, so I won't take the pains to contradict it.

Brass. This damn'd necklace will spoil all our affairs, this is *Dick's* luck again.

[*Aside.*

Gripe. Are you not asham'd of these ways? Do you see how you are expos'd before your best friends here? don't you blush at it?

Clar. I do blush, my dear, but 'tis for you, that here it shou'd appear to the world, you keep me so bare of money, I'm forc'd to pawn my jewels.

Gripe. Impudent houswife!

[*Raising his hand to strike her.*

Clar. Softly, chicken: you might have prevented all this by giving me the two hundred and fifty pounds you sent to *Araminta* e'en now.

Brass. You see, Sir, I deliver'd your note: how I have been abus'd to-day!

Gripe. I'm betray'd—jades on both sides, I see that.

[*Aside.*]

Mon. But, Madam, Madam, is this true I hear? Have you taken a present of two hundred and fifty pounds? Pray what were you to return for these pounds, Madam, ha?

Aram. Nothing, my dear, I only took 'em to reimburse you of about the same sum you sent to *Clarissa*.

Mon. Hum, hum, hum.

Gripe. How, gentlewoman, did you receive money from him?

Clar. O, my dear, 'twas only in jest, I knew you'd give it again to his wife.

Aml. But amongst all this tintamar, I don't hear a word of my hundred pounds. Is it Madam will pay me, or Master?

Gripe. I pay, the Devil shall pay.

Clar. Look you, my dear, malice apart, pay Mrs. *Amlet* her money, and I'll forgive you the wrong you intended my bed with *Araminta*: Am not I a good wife now?

Gripe. I burst with rage, and will get rid of this noose, tho' I tuck myself up in another.

Mon. Nay, pray, e'en tuck me up with you.

[*Exit Mon. and Gripe.*]

Clar. & Aram. B'ye, dearies.

Enter Dick.

Cor. Look, look, *Flippanta*, here's the colonel come at last.

Dick. Ladies, I ask your pardon, I have stay'd so long, but——

Aml. Ah rogue's face, have I got thee, old Good-for-nought? sirrah, sirrah, do you think to amuse me with your marriages, and your great fortunes? Thou hast play'd me a rare prank by my conscience. Why you ungracious rascal, what do you think will be the end of all this? Now Heaven forgive me, but I have a great mind to hang thee for't.

Cor. She talks to him very familiarly, *Flippanta*.

Flip. So methinks, by my faith.

Brass. Now the rogue's star is making an end of him.

[*Aside.*]

Dick. What shall I do with her?

[*Aside.*]

Aml. Do but look at him, my dames, he has the countenance of a cherubim, but he's a rogue in his heart.

Clar. What is the meaning of all this, Mrs. *Amlet*?

Aml. The meaning, good lack! Why this all-to-be powder'd rascal here, is my son, an't please you; ha, graceless? Now I'll make you own your mother, vermine.

Clar. What, the colonel your son?

Aml. 'Tis *Dick*, Madam, that rogue *Dick*, I have so often told you of, with tears trickling down my old cheeks.

Aram. The woman's mad, it can never be.

Aml. Speak, rogue, am I not thy mother, ha? Did I not bring thee forth? say then.

Dick. What will you have me say? you had a mind to ruin me, and you have done't; wou'd you do any more?

Clar. Then, sir, you are son to good Mrs. *Amlet*?

Aram. And have had the assurance to put upon us all this while?

Flip. And the confidence to think of marrying *Corinna*.

Brass. And the impudence to hire me for your servant, who am as well born as yourself.

Clar. Indeed I think he shou'd be corrected.

Aram. Indeed I think he deserves to be cudgell'd.

Flip. Indeed I think he might be pumpt.

Brass. Indeed I think he will be hang'd.

Aml. Good lack-a-day, good lack-a-day! there's no need to be so smart upon him neither: if he is not a gentleman, he's a gentleman's fellow. Come hither, *Dick*, they shan't run thee down neither: cock up thy hat, *Dick*, and tell them tho' Mrs. *Amlet* is thy mother, she can make thee amends, with ten thousand good pounds to buy thee some lands, and build thee a house in the midst on't.

Omnnes. How!

Clar. Ten thousand pounds, Mrs. *Amlet*?

Aml. Yes, forsooth; tho' I shou'd lose the hundred, you pawn'd your necklace for. Tell 'em that,

Dick.

Cor. Look you, *Flippanta*, I can hold no longer, and I hate to see the young man abus'd. And so, Sir, if you please, I'm your friend and servant, and what's mine is yours; and when our estates are put together, I don't doubt but we shall do as well as the best of 'em.

Dick. Say'st thou so, my little queen? Why then if dear mother will give us her blessing, the parson shall give us a tack. We'll get her a score of grand-children, and a merry house we'll make her.

[*They kneel to Mrs. Amlet.*

Aml. Ah—ha, ha, ha, the pretty pair, the pretty pair! rise my chickens, rise, rise and face the proudest of them. And if Madam does not deign to give her consent, a fig for her *Dick*—Why how now?

Clar. Pray, Mrs. *Amlet*, don't be in a passion, the girl is my husband's girl, and if you can have his consent, upon my word you shall have mine, for any thing that belongs to him.

Flip. Then all is peace again, but we have been more lucky than wise.

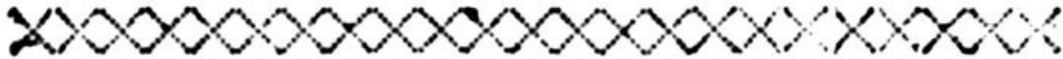
Aram. And I suppose, for us, *Clarissa*, we are to go on with our dears, as we us'd to do.

Clar. Just in the same track, for this late treaty of agreement with 'em, was so unnatural, you see it cou'd not hold. But 'tis just as well with us, as if it had. Well, 'tis a strange fate, good folks. But while you live, every thing gets well out of a broil, but a husband.

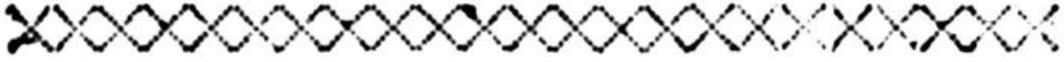
EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. BARRY.

I've heard wise men in politicks lay down }
What feats by little England might be done, }
Were all agreed, and all would act as one. }
Ye wives a useful hint from this might take, }
The heavy, old, despotick kingdom shake, }
And make your matrimonial Monsieus quake. }
Our heads are feeble, and we're cramp'd by laws; }
Our hands are weak, and not too strong our cause: }
Yet would those heads and hands, such as they are, }
In firm confed'racy resolve on war, }
You'd find your tyrants—what I've found my dear. }
What only two united can produce }
You've seen to-night, a sample for your use: }
Single, we found we nothing could obtain; }
We join our force—and we subdu'd our men. }
Believe me (my dear sex) they are not brave; }
Try each your man, you'll quickly find your slave. }
I know they'll make campaigns, risk blood and life; }
But this is a more terrifying strife; }
They'll stand a shot, who'll tremble at a wife. }
Beat then your drums, and your shrill trumpets sound, }
Let all your visits of your feats resound: }
And deeds of war in cups of tea go round: }
The stars are with you, fate is in your hand, }
In twelve months time you've vanquish'd half the land; }
Be wise, and keep 'em under good command. }
This year will to your glory long be known, }
And deathless ballads hand your triumphs down; }
Your late atchievements ever will remain, }
For tho' you cannot boast of many slain, }
Your pris'ners shew, you've made a brave campaign. }



**THE
MISTAKE.
A
COMEDY.**



PROLOGUE,

Written by Mr. STEELE.

Spoken by Mr. Booth.

OUR author's wit and rallery to-night }
}

Perhaps might please, but that your stage delight }
No more is in your minds, but ears and sight. }
With audiences compos'd of belles and beaux,
The first dramatick rule is, have good clothes,
To charm the gay spectator's gentle breast, }
In lace and feather Tragedy's express'd, }
And heroes die unpity'd, if ill-dress'd. }

The other stile you full as well advance;
If 'tis a comedy, you ask— who dance?
For oh! what dire convulsions have of late
Torn and distracted each dramatick state,
On this great question, which house first should sell
The new French steps imported by Ruel!
Desbarques can't rise so high, we must agree,
They've half a foot in height more wit than we.
But tho' the genius of our learned age }
Thinks fit to dance and sing, quite off the stage, }
True action, comic mirth, and tragic rage; }
Yet as your taste now stands, our author draws
Some hopes of your indulgence and applause.
For that great end this edifice he made,
Where humble swain at lady's feet is laid;
Where the pleas'd nymph her conquer'd lover spies,
Then to glass pillars turns her conscious eyes, }
And points anew each charm, for which he dies. }

The muse, before nor terrible nor great,
Enjoys by him this awful gilded seat:
By him theatric angels mount more high,
And mimick thunders shake a broader sky.

Thus all must own, our author has done more
For your delight, than any bard before.
His thoughts are still to raise your pleasures fill'd;
To write, translate, to blazon, or to build.
Then take him in a lump, nor nicely pry
Into small faults that 'scape a busy eye;
But kindly, Sirs, consider, he to-day
Finds you the house, the actors, and the play:
So, tho' we stage-mechanick rules omit,
You must allow it in a whole-sale wit.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

Don *Alvarez*, father to *Leonora*. Mr. *Betterton*.
Don *Felix*, father to *Lorenzo*. Mr. *Bright*.
Don *Carlos*, in love with *Leonora*. Mr. *Booth*.
Don *Lorenzo*, in love with *Leonora*. Mr. *Husbands*.
Metaphrastus, tutor to *Camillo*. Mr. *Freeman*.
Sancho, Servant to *Carlos*. Mr. *Dogget*.
Lopez, servant to *Lorenzo*. Mr. *Pack*.
A Bravo.

WOMEN.

Leonora, daughter to *Alvarez*. Mrs. *Bowman*.
Camillo, suppos'd son to *Alvarez*. Mrs. *Harcourt*.
Isabella, her friend. Mrs. *Porter*.
Jacinta, servant to *Leonora*. Mrs. *Baker*.

THE MISTAKE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Street.*

Enter Carlos and Sancho.

Car. I Tell thee, I am satisfy'd, I'm in love enough to be suspicious of every body.

San. And yet methinks, Sir, you shou'd leave me out.

Car. It may be so; I can't tell: but I'm not at ease. If they don't make a knave, at least they will make a fool of thee.

San. I don't believe a word on't: but good faith, Master, your love makes somewhat of you; I don't know what 'tis; but methinks when you suspect me, you don't seem a man of half those parts I us'd to take you for. Look in my face, 'tis round and comely, not one hollow line of a villain in it: men of my fabrick don't use to be suspected for knaves; and when you take us for fools, we never take you for wise men. For my part, in this present case, I take myself to be mighty deep. A stander-by, Sir, sees more than a gamester. You are pleased to be jealous of your poor Mistress without a cause, she uses you but too well, in my humble opinion; she sees you, and talks with you, till I'm quite tir'd on't sometimes; and your rival that you are so scar'd about, forces a visit upon her about once in a fortnight.

Car. Alas, thou art ignorant of these affairs, he that's the civilest received is often the least car'd for: women appear warm to one, to hide a flame for another. *Lorenzo* in short appears too compos'd of late to be a rejected lover, and the indifference he shews upon the favours I seem to receive from her, poisons the pleasure I else shou'd taste in them, and keeps me upon a perpetual rack. No—I would fain see some of his jealous transports, have him fire at the sight of me, contradict me whenever I speak, affront me wherever he meets me, challenge me, fight me—

San. —Run you through the guts.

Car. But he's too calm, his heart's too much at ease, to leave me mine at rest.

San. But, Sir, you forget that there are two ways for our hearts to get at ease; when our mistresses come to be very fond of us, or we—not to care a fig for them. Now suppose upon the rebukes you know he has had, it shou'd chance to be the latter.

Car. Again thy ignorance appears; alas, a lover who has broke his chain, will shun the tyrant that enslaved him. Indifference never is his lot; he loves or hates for ever; and if his mistress proves another's prize, he cannot calmly see her in his arms.

San. For my part, Master, I am not so great a philosopher as you be, nor (thank my stars) so bitter a lover, but what I see—that I generally believe; and when *Jacinta* tells me she loves me dearly, I have good thoughts enough of my person never to doubt the truth on't. See here the baggage comes.

Enter Jacinta with a letter.

Hist! *Jacinta!* my dear.

Jacin. Who's that? Blunderbuss! Where's your Master?

San. Hard by.

[*Shewing him.*

Jacin. O, Sir, I'm glad I have found you at last; I believe I have travel'd five miles after you, and could neither find you at home, nor in the walks, nor at church, nor at the opera nor—

San. Nor any where else, where he was not to be found: if you had look'd for him where he was, 'twas ten to one but you had met with him.

Jacin. I had, Jack-a-dandy!

Car. But pr'ythee what's the matter? Who sent you after me?

Jacin. One who's never well but when she sees you, I think; 'twas my Lady.

Car. Dear *Jacinta*, I fain would flatter myself, but am not able; the blessing's too great to be my lot: yet 'tis not well to trifle with me; how short soe'er I am in other merit, the tenderness I have for *Leonora* claims something from her generosity. I should not be deluded.

Jacin. And why do you think you are? methinks she's pretty well above board with you: what must be done more to satisfy you?

San. Why *Lorenzo* must hang himself, and then we are content.

Jacin. How! *Lorenzo?*

San. If less will do, he'll tell you.

Jacin. Why, you are not mad, Sir, are you? Jealous of him! Pray which way may this have got into your head? I took you for a man of sense before—Is this your doings, dog?

[*To Sancho.*

San. No, forsooth *Pert*, I'm not much given to suspicion, as you can tell, Mrs. *Forward*—if I

were, I might find more cause I guess, than your Mistress has given our Master here. But I have so many pretty thoughts of my own person, hussy, more than I have of yours, that I stand in dread of no man.

Jacin. That's the way to prosper; however, so far I'll confess the truth to thee; at least if that don't do, nothing else will. Men are mighty simple in love-matters, Sir: when you suspect woman's a falling off, you fall a plaguing her to bring her on again, attack her with reason and a sour face: udslife, Sir, attack her with a fiddle, double your good humour—give her a ball—powder your perriwig at her—let her cheat you at cards a little, and I'll warrant all's right again. But to come upon a poor woman with the gloomy face of jealousy, before she gives the least occasion for't, is to set a complaisant rival in too favourable a light. Sir, Sir, I must tell you, I have seen those have ow'd their success to nothing else.

Car. Say no more; I have been to blame, but there shall be no more on't.

Jac. I should punish you but justly however for what's past, if I carried back what I have brought you; but I'm good-natur'd, so here 'tis; open it, and see how wrong you tim'd your jealousy.

Car. [Reads.] *If you love me with that tenderness you have made me long believe you do, this letter will be welcome; 'tis to tell you, you have leave to plead a daughter's weakness to a father's indulgence: and if you prevail with him to lay his commands upon me, you shall be as happy as my obedience to them can make you.* Leonora.

Then I shall be what man was never yet [*Kissing the Letter.*] Ten thousand blessings on thee for thy news, I could adore thee as a Deity.

[*Embracing Jacin.*]

Jacin. True flesh and blood, every inch of her, for all that.

Car. [Reads again.] *And if you prevail with him to lay his commands upon me, you shall be as happy as my obedience to them can make you.*

O happy, happy *Carlos!* But what shall I say to thee for this welcome message? [*To Jacinta.*] Alas! I want words—But let this speak for me, and this, and this, and—

[*Giving her his ring, watch, and purse.*]

San. Hold, Sir; pray leave a little something for our board-wages. You can't carry 'em all, I believe: [*To Jacinta.*] shall I ease thee of this?

[*Offering to take the purse.*]

Jacin. No; but you may carry—That, sirrah.

[*Giving him a box o' th' ear.*]

San. The jade's grown purse-proud already.

Car. Well, dear *Jacinta*, say something to your charming mistress, that I am not able to say myself: But, above all, excuse my late unpardonable folly, and offer her my life to expiate my crime.

Jacin. The best plea for pardon will be never to repeat the fault.

Car. If that will do 'tis seal'd for ever.

Jacin. Enough; but I must be gone; success attend you with the old gentleman. Good-by t'ye, Sir.

[*Exit Jacin.*]

Car. Eternal blessings follow thee.

San. I think she has taken them all with her; the jade has got her apron full.

Car. Is not that *Lorenzo* coming this way?

San. Yes, 'tis he; for my part now I pity the poor gentleman.

[*Enter Lorenzo.*]

Car. I'll let him see at last I can be chearful too. Your servant, Don *Lorenzo*; how do you do this morning?

Lor. I thank you, Don *Carlos*, perfectly well both in body and mind.

Car. What! cur'd of your love, then?

Lor. No, nor I hope I never shall. May I ask you how 'tis with yours?

Car. Increasing every hour; we are very constant both.

Lor. I find so much delight in being so, I hope I never shall be otherwise.

Car. Those joys I am well acquainted with. But should lose them soon, were I to meet a cool reception.

Lor. That's every generous lover's case, no doubt; an angel could not fire my heart but with an equal flame.

Car. And yet you said you still lov'd *Leonora*.

Lor. And yet I said I lov'd her.

Car. Does she then return you—

Lor. Everything my passion can require.

Car. Its wants are small, I find.

Lor. Extended as the Heavens.

Car. I pity you.

Lor. He must be a Deity that does so.

Car. Yet I'm a mortal, and once more can pity you. Alas, *Lorenzo*, 'tis a poor cordial to an aching heart, to have the tongue alone announce it happy; besides 'tis mean, you should be more a man.

Lor. I find I have made you an unhappy one, so can forgive the boilings of your spleen.

Car. This seeming calmness might have the effect your vanity proposes by it; had I not a testimony of her love would (should I shew it) sink you to the center.

Lor. Yet still I'm calm as ever.

Car. Nay then have at your peace. Read that, and end the farce.

[Gives him Leonora's letter.]

Lor. [Reads.] I have read it.

Car. And know the hand?

Lor. 'Tis *Leonora's*; I have often seen it.

Car. I hope you then at last are satisfied.

Lor. I am, [Smiling.] Good-morrow, *Carlos*.

[Exit Lor.]

San. Sure he's mad, Master.

Car. Mad! say'st thou?

San. And yet by'r lady, that was a sort of a dry sober smile at going off.

Car. A very sober one! Had he shewn me such a letter, I had put on another countenance.

San. Ay, o' my conscience had you.

Car. Here's mystery in this—I like it not.

San. I see his man and confidant there, *Lopez*. Shall I draw on a *Scotch* pair of boots, Master, and make him tell all?

Car. Some questions I must ask him; call him hither.

San. Hem, *Lopez*, hem!

Enter Lopez.

Lop. Who calls?

San. I, and my master.

Lop. I can't stay.

San. You can indeed, Sir.

[Laying hold on him.]

Car. Whither in such haste, honest *Lopez*! What! upon some love errand?

Lop. Sir, your servant; I ask your pardon, but I was going—

Car. I guess where; but you need not be shy of me any more, thy master and I are no longer rivals; I have yielded up the cause; the lady will have it so, so I submit.

Lop. Is it possible, Sir, shall I then live to see my master and you friends again?

San. Yes; and what's better, thou and I shall be friends too. There will be no more fear of Christian bloodshed. I give thee up *Jacinta*; she's a slippery hussy, so master and I are going to match ourselves elsewhere.

Lop. But is it possible, Sir, your honour should be in earnest? I'm afraid you are pleased to be merry with your poor humble servant.

Car. I'm not at present much dispos'd to mirth, my indifference in this matter is not so thoroughly form'd; but my reason has so far master'd my passion, to shew me 'tis in vain to pursue a woman whose heart already is another's. 'Tis what I have so plainly seen of late, I have rous'd my resolution to my aid, and broke my chains for ever.

Lop. Well, Sir, to be plain with you, this is the joyfullest news I have heard this long time; for I always knew you to be a mighty honest gentleman, and good faith it often went to the heart o' me to see you so abused. Dear, dear have I often said to myself (when they have had a private meeting just after you have been gone)—

Car. Ha!

San. Hold, Master, don't kill him yet.

[To Car. aside.]

Lop. I say I have said to myself, what wicked things are women, and what pity it is they should be suffer'd in a Christian country; what a shame they should be allow'd to play Will-in-the-wisp with men of honour, and lead them thro' thorns and briars, and rocks, and rugged ways, 'till their hearts are all torn to pieces, like an old coat in a fox-chace; I say, I have said to myself—

Car. Thou hast said enough to thyself, but say a little more to me: Where were these secret meetings thou talk'st of?

Lop. In sundry places, and by divers ways; sometimes in the cellar, sometimes in the garret, sometimes in the court, sometimes in the gutter; but the place where the kiss of kisses was given was—

Car. In Hell.

Lop. Sir!

Car. Speak, fury, what dost thou mean by the kiss of kisses?

Lop. The kiss of peace, Sir, the kiss of union; the kiss of consummation.

Car. Thou ly'st, villain.

Lop. I don't know but I may, Sir,—What the Devil's the matter now?

[*Aside.*]

Car. There's not a word of truth in all thy cursed tongue has utter'd.

Lop. No, Sir, I—I—believe there is not.

Car. Why then didst thou say it, wretch?

Lop. O—only in jest. Sir.

Car. I am not in a jesting condition.

Lop. Nor I at present, Sir.

Car. Speak then the truth, as thou wouldst do it at the hour of death.

Lop. Yes, at the gallows, and be turn'd off as soon as I've done.

[*Aside.*]

Car. What's that you murmur?

Lop. Nothing but a short prayer.

Car. I am distracted, and fright the wretch from telling me what I am upon the rack to know. [*Aside.*] Forgive me, *Lopez*, I am to blame to speak thus harshly to thee: let this obtain thy pardon. [*Gives him money.*] Thou see'st I am disturb'd.

Lop. Yes, Sir, I see I have been led into a snare; I have said too much.

Car. And yet you must say more; nothing can lessen my torment, but a farther knowledge of what causes my misery. Speak then! Have I any thing to hope?

Lop. Nothing; but that you may be a happier bachelor, than my master may probably be a married man.

Car. Married, say'st thou?

Lop. I did, Sir, and believe he'll say so too in a twelvemonth.

Car. O torment!—But give me more on't: When, how, to whom, where?

Lop. Yesterday, to *Leonora*, by the parson, in the pantry.

Car. Look to't, if this be false, thy life shall pay the torment thou hast given me: be gone.

Lop. With the body and the soul o'me.

[*Ex. Lopez.*]

San. Base news, Master.

Car. Now my insulting rival's smile speaks out: O cursed, cursed woman!

Enter Jacinta.

Jacin. I'm come in haste to tell you, Sir, that as soon as the moon's up, my lady will give you a meeting in the close-walk by the back-door of the garden; she thinks she has something to propose to you will certainly get her father's consent to marry you.

Car. Past sufferance! this aggravation is not to be borne: go, thank her—with my curses: fly—and let them blast her, while their venom is strong.

[*Exit Car.*]

Jacin.—Won't thou explain? What's this storm for?

San. And dar'st thou ask me questions, smooth-faced iniquity, crocodile of *Nile*, syren of the rocks? Go carry back the too gentle answer thou hast received: only let me add with the poet:

*We are no fools, trollop, my Master nor me;
And thy Mistress may go—to the Devil with thee.*

[*Exit* Sancho.

Jacinta *sola*.

Am I awake!—-I fancy not; a very idle dream this. Well: I'll go talk in my sleep to my lady about it; and when I awake, we'll try what interpretation we can make on't.

[*Exit*.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Camillo and Isabella.

ISABELLA.

How can you doubt my secrecy? Have you not proofs of it?

Cam. Nay I am determin'd to trust you; but are we safe here? can no body over-hear us?

Isab. Much safer than in a room. No body can come within hearing, before we see them.

Cam. And yet how hard 'tis for me to break silence!

Isab. Your secret sure must be of great importance.

Cam. You may be sure it is, when I confess 'tis with regret I own it e'en to you; and were it possible, you should not know it.

Isab. 'Tis frankly own'd, indeed; but 'tis not kind, perhaps not prudent; after what you know I already am acquainted with. Have not I been bred up with you? And am I ignorant of a secret, which were it known——

Cam. Would be my ruin; I confess it would. I own you know why both my birth and sex are thus disguised; you know how I was taken from my cradle to secure the estate, which had else been lost by young *Camillo's* death; but which is now safe in my supposed father's hands, by my passing for his son; and 'tis because you know all this, I have resolved to open farther wonders to you. But before I say any more, you must resolve one doubt, which often gives me great disturbance; whether Don *Alvarez* ever was himself privy to the Mystery which has disguised my sex, and made me pass for his son?

Isab. What you ask me, is a thing has often perplex'd my thoughts, as well as yours, nor could my mother ever resolve the doubt. You know when that young child *Camillo* dy'd, in whom was wrapt up so much expectation, from the great estate his uncle's will (even before he came into the world) had left him; his mother made a secret of his death to her husband *Alvarez*, and readily fell in with a proposal made her to take you (who then was just *Camillo's* Age) and bring you up in his room. You have heard how you were then at nurse with my mother, and how your own was privy and consenting to the plot; but Don *Alvarez* was never led into it by 'em.

Cam. Don't you then think it probable his wife might after tell him?

Isab. 'Twas ever thought nothing but a death-bed repentance cou'd draw it from her to any one; and that was prevented by the suddenness of her exit to t'other world, which did not give her even time to call Heaven's mercy on her. And yet now I have said all this, I own the correspondence and friendship I observe he holds with your real mother, gives me some suspicion, and the presents he often makes her (which people seldom do for nothing) confirm it. But since this is all I can say to you on that point, pray let us come to the secret, which you have made me impatient to hear.

Cam. Know then, that tho' *Cupid* is blind, he is not to be deceived: I can hide my sex from the world but not from him; his dart has found the way thro' the manly garb I wear to pierce a virgin's tender heart——I love——

Isab. How!

Cam. Nay be'nt surpriz'd at that, I have other wonders for you.

Isab. Quick, let me hear 'em.

Cam. I love *Lorenzo*.

Isab. *Lorenzo*! Most nicely hit. The very man from whom your imposture keeps this vast estate; and who on the first knowledge of your being a woman wou'd enter into possession of it. This is indeed a wonder.

Cam. Then wonder still, I am his wife.

Isab. Ha! his wife!

Cam. His wife, *Isabella*; and yet thou hast not all my wonders, I am his wife without his knowledge: he does not even know I am a woman.

Isab. Madam, your humble servant; if you please to go on, I won't interrupt you, indeed I won't.

Cam. Then hear how these strange things have past; *Lorenzo*, bound unregarded in my sister's chains, seem'd in my eyes a conquest worth her care. Nor cou'd I see him treated with contempt, without growing warm in his interest: I blam'd *Leonora* for not being touch'd with his merit; I blam'd her so long, 'till I grew touch'd with it myself: and the reasons I urg'd to vanquish her heart, insensibly made a conquest of my own: 'Twas thus, my friend, I fell. What was next to be done my passion pointed out; my heart I felt was warm'd to a noble enterprize, I gave it way, and boldly on it led me. *Leonora's* name and voice, in the dark shades of night, I borrow'd, to engage the object of my wishes. I met him, *Isabella*, and so deceived him; he cannot blame me sure, for much I blest him. But to finish this strange story: in short I own, I long had lov'd, but finding my father most averse to my desires, I at last had forc'd myself to this secret correspondence; I urg'd the mischiefs would attend the knowledge on't, I urg'd them so, he thought them full of weight, so yielded to observe what rules I gave him: they were, to pass the day in cold indifference, to

avoid even signs or looks of intimacy, but gather for the still, the secret night, a flood of love to recompence the losses of the day. I will not trouble you with lovers cares, nor what contrivances we form'd to bring this toying to a solid bliss. Know only, when three nights we thus had pass'd, the fourth it was agreed should make us one for ever; each kept their promise, and last night has join'd us.

Isab. Indeed your talents pass my poor extent; you serious ladies are well form'd for business: What wretched work a poor coquet had made on't! But still there's that remains will try your skill; you have your man, but——

Cam. Lovers think no farther, the object of that passion possesses all desire; however I have open'd to you my wond'rous situation. If you can advise me in my difficulties to come, you will. But see——My husband!

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. You look as if you were busy, pray tell me if I interrupt you, I'll retire.

Cam. No, no, you have a right to interrupt us, since you were the subject of our discourse.

Lor. Was I?

Cam. You were; nay, I'll tell you how you entertain'd us too.

Lor. Perhaps I had as good avoid hearing that.

Cam. You need not fear, it was not to your disadvantage; I was commending you and saying, if I had been a woman I had been in danger; nay I think I said I shou'd infallibly have been in love with you.

Lor. While such an If is in the way, you run no great risque in declaring; but you'd be finely catch'd now, shou'd some wonderful transformation give me a claim to your heart.

Cam. Not sorry for't at all, for I ne'er expect to find a mistress please me half so well as you would do if I were yours.

Lor. Since you are so well inclin'd to me in your wishes, Sir, I suppose (as the fates have ordain'd it) you wou'd have some pleasure in helping me to a mistress, since you can't be mine yourself.

Cam. Indeed I shou'd not.

Lor. Then my obligation is but small to you.

Cam. Why, wou'd you have a woman, that is in love with you herself, employ her interest to help you to another?

Lor. No, but you being no woman might.

Cam. Sir, 'tis as a woman I say what I do, and I suppose myself a woman when I design all these favours to you: therefore out of that supposition, I have no other good intentions to you than you may expect from one that says he's——Sir, your humble servant.

Lor. So unless Heaven is pleas'd to work a miracle, and from a sturdy young fellow, make you a kind-hearted young lady, I'm to get little by your good opinion of me.

Cam. Yes; there is one means yet left (on this side a miracle) that wou'd perhaps engage me, if with an honest oath you could declare, were I woman, I might dispute your heart even with the first of my pretending sex.

Lor. Then solemnly and honestly I swear, that had you been a woman, and I the master of the world, I think I should have laid it at your feet.

Cam. Then honestly and solemnly I swear, henceforwards all your interest shall be mine.

Lor. I have a secret to impart to you will quickly try your friendship.

Cam. I've a secret to unfold to you will put you even to a fiery trial.

Lor. What do you mean, *Camillo*?

Cam. I mean that I love, where I never durst yet own it, yet where 'tis in your power to make me the happiest of——

Lor. Explain, *Camillo*; and be assur'd if your happiness is in my power, 'tis in your own.

Cam. Alas! you promise me you know not what.

Lor. I promise nothing but what I will perform; name the person.

Cam. 'Tis one who is very near to you.

Lor. If 'tis my sister, why all this pain in bringing forth the secret?

Cam. Alas! it is your——

Lor. Speak!

Cam. I cannot yet; farewell.

Lor. Hold! Pray speak it now.

Cam. I must not: but when you tell me your secret, you shall know mine.

Lor. Mine is not in my power, without the consent of another.

Cam. Get that consent, and then we'll try who best will keep their oaths.

Lor. I am content.

Cam. And I. Adieu.

Lor. Farewel.

[*Exit* Lorenzo.]

Enter Leonora and Jacinta.

Leo. 'Tis enough: I will revenge myself this way; if it does but torment him, I shall be content to find no other pleasure in it. Brother, you'll wonder at my change; after all my ill usage of *Lorenzo*, I am determin'd to be his wife.

Cam. How, sister! so sudden a turn? This inequality of temper indeed is not commendable.

Leo. Your change, brother, is much more justly surprizing; you hitherto have pleaded for him strongly, accus'd me of blindness, cruelty, and pride; and now I yield to your reasons, and resolve in his favour, you blame my compliance, and appear against his interest.

Cam. I quit his service for what's dearer to me, yours. I have learn'd from sure intelligence, the attack he made on you was but a feint, and that his heart is in another's chain; I would not therefore see you expos'd, to offer up yourself to one who must refuse you.

Leo. If that be all, leave me my honour to take care of; I am no stranger to his wishes, he won't refuse me, brother, nor I hope will you, to tell him of my resolution: if you do, this moment with my own tongue (thro' all the virgin's blushes) I'll own to him I am determin'd in his favour—You pause as if you'd let the task lie on me.

Cam. Neither on you, nor me; I have a reason you are yet a stranger to: know then there is a virgin young and tender, whose peace and happiness so much are mine, I cannot see her miserable; she loves him with that torrent of desire, that were the world resign'd her in his stead, she'd still be wretched: I will not pique you to a female strife, by saying you have not charms to tear him from her; but I would move you to a female softness, by telling you her death wou'd wait your conquest. What I have more to plead is as a brother, I hope that gives me some small interest in you; whate'er it is, you see how I'd employ it.

Leo. You ne'er cou'd put it to a harder service. I beg a little time to think: pray leave me to myself a while.

Cam. I shall; I only ask that you wou'd think, and then you won't refuse me.

[*Exit* Cam.]

Jacin. Indeed, Madam, I'm of your brother's mind, tho' for another cause; but sure 'tis worth thinking twice on for your own sake: you are too violent.

Leo. A slighted woman knows no bounds. Vengeance is all the cordial she can have, so snatches at the nearest. Ungrateful wretch! to use me with such insolence.

Jacin. You see me as much enrag'd at it, as you are yourself, yet my brain is roving after the cause, for something there must be: never letter was receiv'd by man with more passion and transport; I was almost as charming a goddess as yourself, only for bringing it. Yet when in a moment after I come with a message worth a dozen on't, never was witch so handled; something must have pass'd between one and t'other, that's sure.

Leo. Nothing cou'd pass worth my enquiring after, since nothing cou'd happen that can excuse his usage of me; he had a letter under my hand which own'd him master of my heart; and till I contradicted it with my mouth, he ought not to doubt the truth on't.

Jacin. Nay I confess, madam, I han't a word to say for him, I'm afraid he's a rogue at bottom, as well as my shameless that attends him; we are bit, by my troth, and haply well enough serv'd, for list'ning to the glib tongues of the rascals: but be comforted, Madam; they'll fall into the hands of some foul sluts or other, before they die, that will set our account even with e'm.

Leo. Well: let him laugh; let him glory in what he has done: he shall see I have a spirit can use him as I ought.

Jacin. And let one thing be your comfort by the way, Madam, that in spite of all your dear affections to him, you have had the grace to keep him at arms length. You han't thank'd me for't; but good faith 'twas well I did not stir out of the chamber that fond night. For there are times the stoutest of us are in danger, the rascals wheedle so.

Leo. In short, my very soul is fir'd with his treatment: and if ever that perfidious monster should relent, though he should crawl like a poor worm beneath my feet, nay plunge a dagger in his heart, to bleed for pardon; I charge thee strictly, charge thee on thy life, thou do not urge a look to melt me toward him, but strongly buoy me up in brave resentment; and if thou see'st (which heav'ns avert) a glance of weakness in me, rouse to my memory the vile wrongs I've borne, and blazon them with skill in all their glaring colours.

Jacin. Madam, never doubt me; I'm charged to the mouth with fury, and if ever I meet that fat traitor of mine, such a volley will I pour about his ears—Now heav'n prevent all hasty vows; but in the humour I am, methinks I'd carry my maiden-head to my cold grave with me, before I'd let it simper at the rascal. But soft; here comes your father.

Enter Alvarez.

Alv. *Leonora*, I'd have you retire a little, and send your brother's tutor to me, *Metaphrastus*.

Solus.

I'll try if I can discover, by his tutor, what it is that seems so much to work his brain of late; for something more than common there plainly does appear, yet nothing sure that can disturb his soul, like what I have to torture mine upon his account. Sure nothing in this world is worth a troubled mind: what racks has avarice stretch'd me on! I wanted nothing, kind heav'n had given me a plenteous lot, and seated me in great abundance; why then approve I of this imposture? What have I gain'd by it? Wealth and misery. I have barter'd peaceful days for restless nights; a wretched bargain! and he that merchandises thus, must be undone at last.

Enter Metaphrastus.

Metaph. *Mandatum tuum curo diligenter.*

Alv. Master, I had a mind to ask you—

Metaph. The title, master, comes from *Magis* and *Ter*, which is as much, to say, *thrice worthy*.

Alv. I never heard so much before, but it may be true for ought I know: but, master—

Metaph. Go on.

Alv. Why so I will if you'll let me, but don't interrupt me then.

Metaph. Enough, proceed.

Alv. Why then, master, for a third time, my son *Camillo* gives me much uneasiness of late; you know I love him, and have many careful thoughts about him.

Metaph. 'Tis true. *Filio non potest præferri nisi filius.*

Alv. Master, when one has business to talk on, these scholastic expressions are not of use; I believe you a great Latinist; possibly you may understand *Greek*: those who recommended you to me, said so, and I am willing it should be true: but the thing I want to discourse you about at present, does not properly give you an occasion to display your learning. Besides, to tell you truth, 'twill at all times be lost upon me; my father was a wise man, but he taught me nothing beyond common sense; I know but one tongue in the world, which luckily being understood by you as well as me, I fancy whatever thoughts we have to communicate to one another, may reasonably be convey'd in that, without having recourse to the language of *Julius Cæsar*.

Metaph. You are wrong, but may proceed.

Alv. I thank you: what is the matter, I do not know; but tho' it is of the utmost consequence to me to marry my son, what match soever I propose to him, he still finds some pretence or other to decline it.

Metaph. He is, perhaps, of the humour of a brother of *Marcus Tullius*, who—

Alv. Dear master, leave the *Greeks*, and the *Latins*, and the *Scotch*, and the *Welsh*, and let me go on in my business; what have those people to do with my son's marriage?

Metaph. Again you are wrong; but go on.

Alv. I say then, that I have strong apprehensions from his refusing all my proposals, that he may have some secret inclination of his own; and to confirm me in this fear, I yesterday observed him (without his knowing it) in a corner of the grove, where nobody comes—

Metaph. A place out of the way, you would say; a place of retreat.

Alv. Why, the corner of the grove, where nobody comes, is a place of retreat, is it not?

Metaph. In *Latin*, *secessus*.

Alv. Ha!

Metaph. As *Virgil* has it. *Est in secessu locus.*

Alv. How could *Virgil* have it, when I tell you no soul was there but he and I?

Metaph. *Virgil* is a famous author, I quote his saying as a phrase more proper to the occasion than that you use, and not as one who was in the wood with you.

Alv. And I tell you, I hope to be as famous as any *Virgil* of 'em all, when I have been dead as long, and have no need of a better phrase than my own to tell you my meaning.

Metaph. You ought however to make choice of the words most us'd by the best authors. *Tu vivendo bonos*, as they say, *scribendo sequere peritos.*

Alv. Again!

Metaph. 'Tis *Quintilian's* own precept.

Alv. Oons—

Metaph. And he hath something very learned upon it, that may be of service to you to hear.

Alv. You son of a whore, will you hear me speak?

Metaph. What may be the occasion of this unmanly passion? What is it you would have with me?

Alv. What you might have known an hour ago, if you had pleas'd.

Metaph. You would then have me hold my peace.—I shall.

Alv. You will do very well.

Metaph. You see I do; well, go on.

Alv. Why then, to begin once again, I say my son *Camillo*—

Metaph. Proceed; I shan't interrupt you.

Alv. I say, my son *Camillo*—

Metaph. What is it you say of your son *Camillo*?

Alv. That he has got a dog of a tutor, whose brains I'll beat out, if he won't hear me speak.

Metaph. That dog is a philosopher, contemns passion, and yet will hear you.

Alv. I don't believe a word on't, but I'll try once again; I have a mind to know from you, whether you have observ'd any thing in my son—

Metaph. Nothing that is like his father. Go on.

Alv. Have a care.

Metaph. I do not interrupt you; but you are long in coming to a conclusion.

Alv. Why, thou hast not let me begin yet.

Metaph. And yet 'tis high time to have made an end.

Alv. Dost thou know thy danger? I have not—thus much patience left.

[*Shewing the end of his finger.*

Metaph. Mine is already consum'd. I do not use to be thus treated; my profession is to teach, and not to hear, yet I have hearken'd like a school-boy, and am not heard, altho' a master.

Alv. Get out of the room.

Metaph. I will not. If the mouth of a wise man be shut, he is, as it were, a fool; for who shall know his understanding? Therefore a certain philosopher said well, Speak, that thou may'st be known; great talkers, without knowledge, are as the winds that whistle; but they who have learning, should speak aloud. If this be not permitted, we may expect to see the whole order of nature o'erthrown; hens devour foxes, and lambs destroy wolves, nurses suck children, and children give suck; generals mend stockings, and chambermaids take towns; we may expect, I say—

Alv. That, and that, and that, and—

[*Strikes him, and kicks him; and then follows him off with a bell at his ear.*

Metaph. *O tempora! O mores!*

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Street.*

Enter Lopez.

Lop. SOMETIMES fortune seconds a bold design, and when folly has brought us into a trap, impudence brings us out on't. I have been caught by this hot-headed lover here, and have told like a puppy what I shall be beaten for like a dog. Come! courage, my dear *Lopez*; fire will fetch out fire: thou hast told one body thy master's secret, e'en tell it to half a dozen more, and try how that will thrive; go tell it to the two old Dons, the lovers fathers. The thing's done, and can't be retriev'd; perhaps they'll lay their two ancient heads together, club a pennyworth of wisdom a-piece, and with great penetration at last find out, that 'tis best to submit, where 'tis not in their power to do otherwise. This being resolv'd, there's no time to be lost.

[*Knocks at Alvarez's door.*

Alv. Who knocks?

[*Within.*

Lop. *Lopez.*

Alv. What dost want?

[*Looking out.*

Lop. To bid you good-morrow, Sir.

Alv. Well, good-morrow to thee again.

[*Retires.*

Lop. What a——I think he does not care for my company.

[*Knocks again.*

Alv. Who knocks?

Lop. *Lopez.*

Alv. What would'st have?

[*Looking out.*

Lop. My old master, Sir, gives his service to you, and desires to know how you do.

Alv. How I do? Why well: how shou'd I do? Service to him again.

[*Retires.*

Lop. Sir.

Alv. [*Returning.*] What the deuce wouldst thou have with me, with thy good-morrows, and thy services?

Lop. This man does not understand good breeding, I find. [*Aside.*] Why, Sir, my master has some very earnest business with you.

Alv. Business! About what? What business can he have with me?

Lop. I don't know, truly; but 'tis some very important matter: he has just now (as I hear) discover'd some great secret, which he must needs talk with you about.

Alv. Ha! a secret, say'st thou?

Lop. Yes; and bid me bring him word, if you were at home, he'd be with you presently. Sir, your humble servant.

[*Exit Lopez.*

Alvarez solus.

A secret: and must speak with me about it! Heav'ns, how I tremble! What can this message mean? I have very little acquaintance with him, what business can he have with me? An important secret 'twas, he said, and that he had just discover'd it. Alas, I have in the world but one, if it be that——I'm lost; an eternal blot must fix upon me. How unfortunate am I, that I have not follow'd the honest counsels of my heart, which have often urg'd me to set my conscience at ease, by rendering to him the estate that is his due, and which by a foul imposture I keep from him. But 'tis now too late; my villainy is out, and I shall not only be forc'd with shame to restore him what is his, but shall be perhaps condemned to make him reparation with my own. O terrible view!

Enter Don Felix.

Don Fel. My son to go and marry her, without her father's knowledge? This can never end well. I don't know what to do, he'll conclude I was privy to it, and his power and interest are so great at court, he may with ease contrive my ruin: I tremble at his sending to speak with me——Mercy on me, there he is.

[*Aside.*

Alv. Ah! Shield me, kind heaven! There's Don Felix come: how I am struck with the sight of him!
O the torment of a guilty mind!

[*Aside.*

Don *Fel.* What shall I say to soften him?

[*Aside.*

Alv. How shall I look him in the face?

[*Aside.*

Don *Fel.* 'Tis impossible he can forgive it.

[*Aside.*

Alv. To be sure he'll expose me to the whole world.

[*Aside.*

Don *Fel.* I see his countenance change.

[*Aside.*

Alv. With what contempt he looks upon me!

[*Aside.*

Don *Fel.* I see, Don *Alvarez*, by the disorder of your face, you are but too well inform'd of what brings me here.

Alv. 'Tis true.

Don *Fel.* The news may well surprize you, 'tis what I have been far from apprehending.

Alv. Wrong, very wrong, indeed.

Don *Fel.* This action is certainly to the last point to be condemn'd, and I think nobody should pretend to excuse the guilty.

Alv. They are not to be excus'd, tho' heaven may have mercy.

Don *Fel.* That's what I hope you will consider.

Alv. We should act as Christians.

Don *Fel.* Most certainly.

Alv. Let mercy then prevail.

Don *Fel.* It is indeed of heavenly birth.

Alv. Generous Don *Felix*!

Don *Fel.* Too indulgent *Alvarez*!

Alv. I thank you on my knee.

Don *Fel.* 'Tis I ought to have been there first.

[*They kneel.*

Alv. Is it then possible we are friends?

Don *Fel.* Embrace me to confirm it.

[*They embrace.*

Alv. Thou best of men!

Don *Fel.* Unlook'd-for bounty!

Alv. Did you know the torment [*Rising.*] this unhappy action has given me——

Don. *Fel.* 'Tis impossible it could do otherwise; nor has my trouble been less.

Alv. But let my misfortune be kept secret.

Don *Fel.* Most willingly; my advantage is sufficient by it, without the vanity of making it publick to the world.

Alv. Incomparable goodness! That I should thus have wronged a man so worthy! [*Aside.*] My honour then, is safe?

Don *Fel.* For ever, even for ever let it be a secret, I am content.

Alv. Noble gentleman! [*Aside.*] As to what advantages ought to accrue to you by it, it shall be all to your entire satisfaction.

Don *Fel.* Wonderful bounty! [*Aside.*] As to that, Don *Alvarez*, I leave it entirely to you, and shall be content with whatever you think reasonable.

Alv. I thank you, from my soul I must, you know I must.——This must be an angel, not a man.

[*Aside.*

Don *Fel.* The thanks lie on my side, *Alvarez*, for this unexpected generosity, but may all faults be forgot, and heav'n ever prosper you.

Alv. The same prayer I, with a double fervour, offer up for you.

Don Fel. Let us then once more embrace, and be forgiveness seal'd for ever.

Alv. Agreed; thou best of men, agreed.

[*They embrace.*]

Don Fel. This thing then being thus happily terminated, let me own to you, *Don Alvarez*, I was in extreme apprehensions of your utmost resentment on this occasion; for I could not doubt but you had form'd more happy views in the disposal of so fair a daughter as *Leonora*, than my poor son's inferior fortune e'er can answer; but since they are join'd, and that—

Alv. Ha!

Don Fel. Nay, 'tis very likely to discourse of it may not be very pleasing to you, tho' your christianity and natural goodness have prevail'd on you so generously to forgive it. But to do justice to *Leonora*, and skreen her from your too harsh opinion in this unlucky action, 'twas that cunning wicked creature that attends her, who by unusual arts wrought her to this breach of duty, for her own inclinations were dispos'd to all the modesty and resignation a father could ask from a daughter; my son I can't excuse, but since your bounty does so, I hope you'll quite forget the fault of the less guilty *Leonora*.

Alv. What a mistake have I lain under here! And from a groundless apprehension of one misfortune, find myself in the certainty of another.

[*Aside.*]

Don Fel. He looks disturb'd; what can this mean?

[*Aside.*]

Alv. My daughter marry'd to his son!—Confusion. But I find myself in such unruly agitation, something wrong may happen if I continue with him; I'll therefore leave him.

[*Aside.*]

Don Fel. You seem thoughtful, Sir, I hope there's no—

Alv. A sudden disorder I am seiz'd with; you'll pardon me, I must retire.

[*Exit Alvarez.*]

Don Felix solus.

I don't like this: He went oddly off—I doubt he finds this bounty difficult to go through with. His natural resentment is making an attack upon his acquir'd generosity: pray heaven it ben't too strong for't. The misfortune is a great one, and can't but touch him nearly. It was not natural to be so calm; I wish it don't yet drive him to my ruin. But here comes this young hot-brain'd coxcomb, who with his midnight amours has been the cause of all this mischief to me.

Enter Lorenzo.

So, Sir, you are come to receive my thanks for your noble exploit? You think you have done bravely now, ungracious offspring, to bring perpetual troubles on me. Must there never pass a day, but I must drink some bitter potion or other of your preparation for me?

Lor. I am amaz'd, Sir; pray what have I done to deserve your anger?

Don Fel. Nothing; no manner of thing in the world; nor never do. I am an old testy fellow, and am always scolding, and finding fault for nothing; complaining that I have got a coxcomb of a son, that makes me weary of my life, fancying he perverts the order of nature, turning day into night, and night into day; getting whims in my brain, that he consumes his life in idleness, unless he rouses now and then to do some noble stroke of mischief; and having an impertinent dream at this time, that he has been making the fortune of the family, by an underhand marriage with the daughter of a man who will crush us all to powder for it. Ah—ungracious wretch; to bring an old man into all this trouble! The pain thou gav'st thy mother to bring thee into the world, and the plague thou hast given me to keep thee here, make the getting thee (tho' 'twas in our honeymoon) a bitter remembrance to us both.

[*Exit Don Felix.*]

Lorenzo solus.

So—all's out—Here's a noble storm arising, and I'm at sea in a cock-boat. But which way could this business reach him? By this traitor *Lopez*—it must be so; it could be no other way; for only he, and the priest that marry'd us, knew of it. The villain will never confess tho'. I must try a little address with him, and conceal my anger. O, here he comes.

Enter Lopez.

Lor. Lopez.

Lop. Do you call, Sir?

Lor. I find all's discover'd to my father, the secret's out; he knows my marriage.

Lop. He knows your marriage. How the pest should that happen? Sir, 'tis impossible; that's all.

Lor. I tell thee 'tis true; he knows every particular of it.

Lop. He does!—Why then, Sir, all I can say is, that Satan and he are better acquainted than the

devil and a good Christian ought to be.

Lor. Which way he has discover'd it I can't tell, nor am I much concern'd to know, since beyond all my expectations, I find him perfectly easy at it, and ready to excuse my fault with better reasons than I can find to do it myself.

Lop. Say you so?—I am very glad to hear that, then all's safe.

[*Aside.*

Lor. 'Tis unexpected good fortune; but it could never proceed purely from his own temper, there must have been pains taken with him to bring him to this calm; I'm sure I owe much to the bounty of some friend or other; I wish I knew where my obligation lay, that I might acknowledge it as I ought.

Lop. Are you thereabout's, I'faith? Then sharp's the word; I'gad I'll own the thing, and receive his bounty for't. [*Aside.*] Why, Sir—not that I pretend to make a merit o'the matter, for alas, I am but your poor hireling, and therefore bound in duty to render you all the service I can—But—'tis I have don't.

Lor. What hast thou done?

Lop. What no man else could have done; the job, Sir, told him the secret, and then talk'd him into a liking on't.

Lor. 'Tis impossible; thou dost not tell me true.

Lop. Sir, I scorn to reap any thing from another man's labours, but if this poor piece of service carries any merit with it, you now know where to reward it.

Lor. Thou art not serious!

Lop. I am; or may hunger be my mess-mate.

Lor. And may famine be mine, if I don't reward thee for't, as thou deserv'st—Dead.

[*Making a pass at him.*

Lop. Have a care there [*Leaping on one side.*] What do you mean, Sir? I bar all surprise.

Lor. Traitor, is this the fruit of the trust I plac'd in thee, villain?

[*Making another thrust at him.*

Lop. Take heed, Sir; you'll do one a mischief before you're aware.

Lop. What recompence can'st thou make me, wretch, for this piece of treachery? Thy sordid blood can't expiate the thousandth—But I'll have it however.

[*Thrusts again.*

Lop. Look you there again: pray, Sir, be quiet; is the devil in you? 'Tis bad jesting with edg'd tools. I'gad that last push was within an inch o' me. I don't know what you make all this bustle about, but I'm sure I've done all for the best, and I believe it will prove for the best too at last, if you'll have but a little patience. But if gentlemen will be in their airs in a moment—Why, what the deuce—I'm sure I have been as eloquent as *Cicero*, in your behalf; and I don't doubt to good purpose too, if you'll give things time to work. But nothing but foul language, and naked swords about the house, sa, sa; run you through you dog; why, nobody can do business at this rate.

Lor. And suppose your project fails, and I'm ruin'd by it, Sir.

Lop. Why, 'twill be time enough to kill me then, Sir? won't it? What should you do it for now? Besides, I an't ready, I'm not prepar'd, I might be undone by't.

Lor. But what will *Leonora* say to her marriage being known, wretch?

Lop. Why may be she'll draw—her sword too. [*Shewing his tongue.*] But all shall be well with you both, if you will but let me alone.

Lor. Peace; here's her father.

Lop. That's well: we shall see how things go presently.

Enter Don Alvarez.

Alv. The more I recover from the disorder this discourse has put me in, the more strange the whole adventure appears to me. *Leonora* maintains there is not a word of truth in what I have heard; that she knows nothing of marriage: and indeed she tells me this, with such a naked air of sincerity, that for my part I believe her. What then must be their project? Some villainous intention, to be sure; tho' which way, I yet am ignorant. But here's the bridegroom; I'll accost him—I am told, Sir, you take upon you to scandalize my daughter, and tell idle tales of what can never happen.

Lop. Now methinks, Sir, if you treated your son-in-law with a little more civility, things might go just as well in the main.

Alv. What means this insolent fellow by my son-in-law! I suppose 'tis you, villain, are the author of this impudent story.

Lop. You seem angry, Sir—perhaps without cause.

Alv. Cause, traitor! Is a cause wanting where a daughter's defam'd, and a noble family scandaliz'd?

Lop. There he is, let him answer you.

Alv. I shou'd be glad, he'd answer me, why, if he had any desires to my daughter, he did not make his approaches like a man of honour.

Lop. Yes; and so have had the doors bolted against him like a house-breaker.

[*Aside.*

Lor. Sir to justify my proceeding, I have little to say; but to excuse it, I have much; if any allowance may be made to a passion, which in your youth you have yourself been sway'd by: I love your daughter to that excess—

Alv. You would undo her for a night's lodging.

Lor. Undo her, Sir?

Alv. Yes, that's the word; you knew it was against her interest to marry you, therefore you endeavour'd to win her to't in private; you knew her friends would make a better bargain for her, therefore you kept your designs from their knowledge, and yet you love her to that excess—

Lor. I'd readily lay down my life to serve her.

Alv. Could you readily lay down fifty thousand pistoles to serve her, your excessive love would come with better credentials; an offer of life is very proper for the attack of a counterscarp, but a thousand ducats will sooner carry a lady's heart; you are a young man, but will learn this when you are older.

Lop. But since things have succeeded better this once, Sir, and that my master will prove a most incomparable good husband (for that he'll do, I'll answer for him) and that 'tis too late to recall what's already done, Sir—

Alv. What's done, villain?

Lop. Sir, I mean, that since my master and my lady are marry'd, and—

Alv. Thou ly'st; they are not marry'd.

Lop. Sir!—I say, that since they are marry'd, and that they love each other so passing dearly, indeed I fancy that—

Alv. Why, this impudence is beyond all bearing; Sir, do you put your rascal upon this?

Lor. Sir, I am in a wood; I don't know what it is you mean.

Alv. And I am in a plain, Sir, and think I may be understood; do you pretend you are marry'd to my daughter?

Lor. Sir, 'tis my happiness on one side, as it is my misfortune on another.

Alv. And do you think this idle project can succeed? do you believe your affirming you are marry'd to her, will induce both her and me to consent it shall be so?

Lop. Sir, I see you make my master almost out of his wits to hear you talk so: but I, who am but a stande-by now, as I was at the wedding, have mine about me, and desire to know, whether you think this project can succeed? Do you believe your affirming they are not marry'd, will induce both him and I to give up the lady? One short question to bring this matter to an issue, Why do you think they are not marry'd?

Alv. Because she utterly renounces it.

Lop. And so she will her religion, if you attack it with that dreadful face. D'ye hear, Sir? the poor lady is in love heartily, and I wish all poor ladies that are so, would dispose of themselves so well as she has done; but you scare her out of her senses: bring her here into the room, speak gently to her, tell her you know the thing is done, that you have it from a man of honour, Me. That may be you wish it had been otherwise, but are a Christian, and profess mercy, and therefore have resolved to pardon her: say this, and I shall appear a man of reputation, and have satisfaction made me.

Alv. Or an impudent rogue, and have all your bones broke.

Lop. Content.

Alv. Agreed, *Leonora!* who's there? call *Leonora.*

Lop. All will go rarely, Sir; we shall have shot the gulf in a moment.

[*Aside to Lorenzo.*

Enter Leonora.

Alv. Come hither, *Leonora.*

Lop. So, now we shall see.

Alv. I call'd you to answer for yourself; here's a strong claim upon you; if there be any thing in the pretended title, conceal it no farther, it must be known at last, it may as well be so now. Nothing is so uneasy as uncertainty, I would therefore be gladly freed from it: if you have done what I am told you have, 'tis a great fault indeed; but as I fear 'twill carry much of its punishment along with it, I shall rather reduce my resentment into mourning your misfortune, than suffer it to add to your affliction; therefore speak the truth.

Lop. Well, this is fair play; now I speak, Sir: you see, fair lady, the goodness of a tender father,

nothing need therefore hinder you from owning a most loving husband. We had like to have been altogether by the ears about this business, and pails of blood were ready to run about the house: but, thank heaven, the sun shines out again, and one word from your sweet mouth makes fair weather for ever. My master has been forc'd to own your marriage, he begs you'll do so too.

Leo. What does this impudent rascal mean?

Lop. Ha!—Madam!

Leo. Sir, I should be very glad to know [*To Lorenzo.*] what can have been the occasion of this wild report; sure you cannot be yourself a party in it.

Lop. He, he—

Lor. Forgive me, dear *Leonora*, I know you had strong reasons for the secret being longer kept; but 'tis not my fault our marriage is disclos'd.

Leo. Our marriage, Sir!—

Lor. 'Tis known, my dear, tho' much against my will; but since it is so, 'twou'd be in vain for us to deny it longer.

Leo. Then, Sir, I am your wife? I fell in love with you, and married you without my father's knowledge?

Lor. I dare not be so vain to think 'twas love; I humbly am content to owe the blessing to your generosity; you saw the pains I suffer'd for your sake, and in compassion eas'd 'em.

Leo. I did, Sir! Sure this exceeds all human impudence.

Lop. Truly, I think it does. She'd make an incomparable actress.

[*Aside.*

Lor. I begin to be surpris'd, Madam, at you carrying this thing so far; you see there's no occasion for it; and for the discovery, I have already told you, 'twas not my fault.

Lop. My master's! no, 'twas I did it: why, what a bustle's here! I knew things would go well, and so they do, if folks would let 'em. But if ladies will be in their merriments, when gentlemen are upon serious business, why what a deuce can one say to 'em?

Leo. I see this fellow is to be an evidence in your plot; where you hope to drive, it is hard to guess; for if any thing can exceed its impudence, it is its folly. A noble stratagem indeed to win a lady by! I could be diverted with it, but that I see a face of villainy requires a rougher treatment; I could almost, methinks, forget my sex, and be my own avenger.

Lor. Madam, I am surpris'd beyond all—

Lop. Pray, Sir, let me come to her; you are so surpris'd, you'll make nothing on't: she wants a little snubbing. Look you, madam, I have seen many a pleasant humour amongst ladies, but you out-cut them all. Here's contradiction, with a vengeance: you han't been married eight-and-forty hours, and you are slap—at your husband's beard already: why, do you consider who he is?—Who this gentleman is? And what he can do—by law? Why, he can lock you up—knock you down—tie you neck and heels—

Lor. Forbear, you insolent villain, you.

[*Offering to strike him.*

Leo. That—for what's past, however.

[*Giving him a box o' th' ear.*

Lop. I think—she gave me a box o' the ear; ha!

[*Exit Leonora.*

Sir, will you suffer your old servants to be us'd thus by new comers? It's a shame, a mere shame: Sir, will you take a poor dog's advice for once? She denies she's married to you: take her at her word; you have seen some of her humours,—let her go.

Alv. Well, gentlemen, thus far you see I have heard all with patience; have you content? Or how much farther do you design to go with this business?

Lop. Why truly, Sir, I think we are near at a stand.

Alv. 'Tis time, you villain you.

Lop. Why, and I am a villain now, if every word I've spoke be not as true as—as the *Gazette*: and your daughter's no better than a—a—a whimsical young woman, for making disputes among gentlemen. And if every body had their deserts, she'd have a good—I won't speak out to inflame reckonings; but let her go, master.

Alv. Sir, I don't think it well to spend any more words with your impudent and villainous servant here.

Lop. Thank you, Sir: but I'd let her go.

Alv. Nor have I more to say to you than this, that you must not think so daring an affront to my family can go long unresented. Farewel.

[*Exit Alv.*

Lor. Well, Sir, what have you to say for yourself now?

Lop. Why, Sir, I have only to say, that I am a very unfortunate—middle-ag'd man; and that I believe all the stars upon heaven and earth have been concern'd in my destiny. Children now unborn will hereafter sing my downfal in mournful lines, and notes of doleful tune: I am at present troubled in mind, despair around me, signify'd in appearing gibbets, with a great bundle of dog-whips by way of preparation.

I therefore will go seek some mountain high,
If high enough some mountain may be found,
With distant valley dreadfully profound,
And from the horrid cliff—look calmly all around.

}
}
}

Farewel.

[*Aside.*

Lor. No, sirrah, I'll see your wretched end myself. Die here, villain.

[*Drawing his sword.*

Lop. I can't, Sir, if any body looks upon me.

Lor. Away, you trifling wretch; but think not to escape, for thou shalt have thy recompence.

[*Exit* Lorenzo.

Lopez solus.

Why, what a mischievous jade is this, to make such an uproar in a family the first day of her marriage! Why my master won't so much as get a honey-moon out of her; I'gad let her go. If she be thus in her soft and tender youth, she'll be rare company at threescore: well, he may do as he pleases, but were she my dear, I'd let her go—Such a foot at her tail, I'd make the truth bounce out at her mouth, like a pellet out of a pot-gun.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Camillo and Isabella.

Isab. 'Tis an unlucky accident indeed.

Cam. Ah *Isabella!* Fate has now determin'd my undoing. This thing can ne'er end here, *Leonora* and *Lorenzo* must soon come to some explanation; the dispute is too monstrous to pass over, without further enquiry, which must discover all, and what will be the consequence, I tremble at: for whether *Don Alvarez* knows of the imposture, or whether he is deceiv'd, with the rest of the world, when once it breaks out, and the consequence is the loss of that great wealth he now enjoys by it, what must become of me? All paternal affections then must cease, and regarding me as an unhappy instrument in the trouble which will then o'erload him, he will return me to my humble birth, and then I'm lost for ever. For what, alas! will the deceiv'd *Lorenzo* say? A wife with neither fortune, birth, nor beauty, instead of one most plenteously endow'd with all. O heavens! what a sea of misery I have before me!

Isab. Indeed you reason right, but these reflections are ill-tim'd; why did you not employ them sooner?

Cam. Because I lov'd.

Isab. And don't you do so now?

Cam. I do, and therefore 'tis I make these cruel just reflections.

Isab. So that love, I find, can do any thing.

Cam. Indeed it can: its powers are wondrous great, its pains no tongue can tell, its bliss no heart conceive, crowns cannot recompense its torments, heaven scarce supplies its joys. My stake is of this value: oh counsel me how I shall save it.

Isab. Alas! that counsel's much beyond my wisdom's force, I see no way to help you.

Cam. And yet 'tis sure there's one.

Isab. What?

Cam. Death.

Isab. There possibly may be another; I have thought this moment—perhaps there's nothing in it; yet a small passage comes to my remembrance, that I regarded little when it happen'd—I'll go and search for one may be of service. But hold; I see *Don Carlos*: he'll but disturb us now, let us avoid him.

[*Exeunt Camillo and Isabella.*

Enter Don Carlos and Sancho.

Car. Repuls'd again! this is not to be borne. What tho' this villain's story be a falshood, was I to blame to hearken to it? This usage cannot be supported: how was it she treated thee?

San. Never was ambassador worse receiv'd. Madam, my master asks ten thousand pardons, and humbly begs one moment's interview:—Begone, you rascal you. Madam, what answer shall I give my Master?—Tell him he's a villain. Indeed, fair lady, I think this is hasty treatment—Here, my footmen, toss me this fellow out at the window; and away she went to her devotions.

Car. Did you see *Jacinta*?

San. Yes; she saluted me with half a score rogues and rascals too. I think our destinies are much alike, Sir; and o'my conscience, a couple of scurvy jades we are hamper'd with.

Car. Ungrateful woman, to receive with such contempt so quick a return of a heart so justly alarm'd.

San. Ha, ha, ha.

Car. What, no allowance to be made to the first transports of a lover's fury, when rous'd by so dreadful an appearance? as just as my suspicions were, have I long suffer'd them to arraign her?

San. No.

Car. Have I waited for oaths or imprecations to clear her?

San. No.

Car. Nay, even now is not the whole world still in suspense about her? whilst I alone conclude her innocent.

San. 'Tis very true.

Car. She might, methinks, thro' this profound respect, observe a flame another would have cherish'd: she might support me against groundless fears, and save me from a rival's tyranny; she might release me from these cruel racks, and would, no doubt, if she cou'd love as I do.

San. Ha, ha, ha.

Car. But since she don't, what do I whining here? Curse on the base humilities of love.

San. Right.

Car. Let children kiss the rod that fleas them, let dogs lie down and lick the shoe that spurns them.

San. Ay.

Car. I am a man by nature meant for power; the scepter's given us to wield, and we betray our trust whenever we meanly lay it at a woman's feet.

San. True, we are men, boo—Come, Master, let us both be in a passion; here's my scepter, [*Shewing a cudgel.*] Subject *Jacinta*, look about you. Sir, was you ever in *Muscovy*? the women there love the men dearly; why? because—[*Shaking his stick.*] there's your love-powder for you. Ah, Sir, were we but wise and stout, what work should we make with them! But this humble love-making, spoils them all. A rare way indeed to bring matters about with them; we are persuading them all day they are angels and Goddesses, in order to use them at night like human creatures; we are like to succeed truly.

Car. For my part I never yet could bear a slight from any thing, nor will I now. There's but one way however to resent it from a woman: and that's to drive her bravely from your heart, and place a worthier in her vacant throne.

San. Now, with submission to my betters, I have another way, Sir, I'll drive my tyrant from my heart, and place myself in her throne. Yes; I will be lord of my own tenement, and keep my household in order. Wou'd you wou'd do so too, Master; for look you, I have been servitor in a college at *Salamanca*, and read philosophy with the doctors; where I found that a woman, in all times, has been observed to be an animal hard to understand, and much inclined to mischief. Now as an animal is always an animal, and a captain always a captain, so a woman is always a woman: whence it is, that a certain *Greek* says, her head is like a bank of sand; or, as another, a solid rock; or, according to a third, a dark lanthorn. Pray, Sir, observe, for this is close reasoning; and so as the head is the head of the body; and that the body without a head, is like a head without a tail; and that where there is neither head nor tail, 'tis a very strange body: so I say a woman is by comparison, do you see, (for nothing explains things like comparisons) I say by comparison, as *Aristotle* has often said before me, one may compare her to the raging sea; for as the sea, when the wind rises, knits its brows like an angry bull, and that waves mount upon rocks, and rocks mount upon waves: that porpusses leap like trouts, and whales skip about like gudgeons; that ships roll like beer-barrels, and mariners pray like saints; just so, I say a woman—A woman, I say, just so, when her reason is ship-wreck'd upon her passion, and the hulk of her understanding lies thumping against the rock of her fury; then it is, I say, that by certain immotions, which—um cause, as one may suppose, a sort of convulsive—yes—hurricanious—um—like—in short, a woman is like the Devil.

Car. Admirably reason'd indeed, *Sancho*.

San. Pretty well, I thank Heaven; but here come the crocodiles to weep us into mercy.

Enter Leonora and Jacinta.

Master, let us shew ourselves men, and leave their briny tears to wash their dirty faces.

Car. It is not in the power of charms to move me.

San. Nor me, I hope; and yet I fear those eyes will look out sharp to snatch up such a prize.

[*Pointing to Jacinta.*]

Jacin. He's coming to us, Madam, to beg pardon; but sure you'll never grant it him?

Leo. If I do may heaven never grant me mine.

Jacin. That's brave.

Car. You look, Madam, upon me, as if you thought I came to trouble you with my usual importunities; I'll ease you of that pain, by telling you my business now is calmly to assure you, but I assure it you with Heaven and hell for seconds; for may the joys of one fly from me, whilst the pains of t'other overtake me, if all your charms display'd e'er shake my resolution; I'll never see you more.

San. Bon.

Leo. You are a man of that nice honour, Sir, I know you'll keep your word: I expected this assurance from you, and came this way only to thank you for't.

Jacin. Very well.

Car. You did, imperious dame, you did: how base is woman's pride! How wretched are the ingredients it is form'd of! If you saw cause for just disdain, why did you not at first repulse me? Why lead a slave in chains, that could not grace your triumphs? If I am thus to be contemn'd, think on the favours you have done the wretch, and hide your face for ever.

San. Well argued.

Leo. I own you have hit the only fault the world can charge me with: the favours I have done to you, I am indeed asham'd of; but since women have their frailties, you'll allow me mine.

Car. 'Tis well, extremely well, Madam. I'm happy however, you at last speak frankly. I thank you for it: from my soul I thank you: but don't expect me groveling at your feet again; don't, for if I do

Leo. You will be treated as you deserve; trod upon.

Car. Give me patience;—but I don't want it; I am calm: Madam, farewell;—be happy if you can; by heavens I wish you so, but never spread your net for me again; for if you do—

Leo. You'll be running into it.

Car. Rather run headlong into fire and flames; rather be torn with pincers bit from bit; rather be broil'd like martyrs upon gridirons—But I am wrong; this sounds like passion, and heaven can tell I am not angry: Madam, I think we have no farther business together; your most humble servant.

Leo. Farewel t'ye, Sir.

Car. Come along.

[To Sancho.

[Goes to the scene and returns.

Yet once more before I go (lest you should doubt my resolution) may I starve, perish, rot, be blasted, dead, damn'd, or any other thing that men or gods can think of, if on any occasion whatever, civil or military, pleasure or business, love or hate, or any other accident of life, I, from this moment, change one word or look with you.

[Going off, Sancho claps him on the back.

Leo. Content: come away, *Jacinta*.

Carlos returns.

Car. Yet one word, Madam, if you please; I have a little thing here belongs to you, a foolish bawble I once was fond of. [*Twitching her picture from his breast.*] Will you accept a trifle from your servant?

Leo. Willingly, Sir; I have a bawble too I think you have some claim to; you'll wear it for my sake.

[Breaks a bracelet from her arm, and gives it him.

Car. Most thankfully; this too I shou'd restore you, it once was yours—[*Giving her a table-book.*] By your favour madam—there is a line or two in it, I think you did me once the honour to write with your own fair hand. Here it is.

[Reads.

*You love me, Carlos, and would know
The secret movements of my heart:
Whether I give you mine or no,
With yours, methinks, I'd never, never part.*

Thus you have encouraged me, and thus you have deceived me.

San. Very true.

Leo. I have some faithful lines too; I think I can produce 'em,

[Pulls out a table-book; reads, and then gives it him.

*How long soe'er, to sigh in vain,
My destiny may prove,
My fate (in spite of your disdain)
Will let me glory in your chain,
And give me leave eternally to love.*

There, Sir, take your poetry again.

[Throwing it at his feet.

'Tis not much the worse for my wearing: 'twill serve again upon a fresh occasion.

Jacin. Well done.

Car. I believe I can return the present, Madam, with—a pocket full of your prose—There—

[Throwing a handful of letters at her feet.

Leo. *Jacinta*, give me his letters. There, Sir, not to be behind-hand with you.

[Takes a handful of his letters out of a box, and throws them in his face.

Jacin. And there, and there, and there, Sir.

[*Jacinta* throws the rest at him.

San. 'Cods my life, we want ammunition: but for a shift—There, and there, you saucy slut you.

[*Sancho* pulls a pack of dirty cards out of his pocket, and throws 'em at her; then they close;

*he pulls off her headclothes, and she his wig,
and then part, she running to her mistress, he to
his master.*

Jacin. I think, Madam, we have clearly the better on't.

Leo. For a proof, I resolve to keep the field.

Jacin. Have a care he don't rally and beat you yet though: pray walk off.

Leo. Fear nothing.

San. How the armies stand and gaze at one another after the battle! What think you, Sir, of shewing yourself a great general, by making an honourable retreat?

Car. I scorn it: Oh *Leonora!* *Leonora!* A heart like mine should not be treated thus.

Leo. *Carlos!* *Carlos!* I have not deserv'd this usage.

Car. Barbarous *Leonora!* but 'tis useless to reproach you; she that is capable of what you have done, is form'd too cruel ever to repent of it. Go on then, tyrant; make your bliss compleat; torment me still, for still, alas! I love enough to be tormented.

Leo. Ah *Carlos!* little do you know the tender movements of that thing you name: the heart where love presides, admits no thoughts against the honour of its ruler.

Car. 'Tis not to call that honour into doubt, if conscious of our own unworthiness, we interpret every frown to our destruction.

Leo. When jealousy proceeds from such humble apprehensions, it shews itself with more respect than yours has done.

Car. And where a heart is guiltless, it easily forgives a greater crime.

Leo. Forgiveness is not now in our debate; if both have been in fault, 'tis fit that both should suffer for it; our separation will do justice on us.

Car. But since we are ourselves the judges of our crimes, what if we should inflict a gentler punishment?

Leo. 'Twould but encourage us to sin again.

Car. And if it shou'd?

Leo. 'Twould give a fresh occasion for the pleasing exercise of mercy.

Car. Right: and so we act the part of earth and heaven together, of men and gods, and taste of both their pleasures.

Leo. The banquet's too inviting to refuse it.

Car. Then thus let's fall on, and feed upon't for ever.

[Carries her off, embracing her, and kissing her hand.]

Leo. Ah woman! foolish, foolish woman!

San. Very foolish indeed.

Jacin. But don't expect I'll follow her example.

San. You wou'd, Mopsy, if I'd let you.

Jacin. I'd sooner tear my eyes out! ah——that she had a little of my spirit in her.

San. I believe I shall find thou hast a great deal of her flesh, my charmer; but 'twon't do; I am all rock, hard rock, very marble.

Jacin. A very pumice stone, you rascal you, if one would try thee; but to prevent thy humilities, and shew thee all submission would be vain; to convince thee thou hast nothing but misery and despair before thee; here——take back thy paltry thimble, and be in my debt for the shirts I have made thee with it.

San. Nay, if y'are at that sport, Mistress, I believe I shall lose nothing by the balance of thy presents. There, take thy tobacco-stopper, and stop thy——

Jacin. Here, take thy sattin pincushion, with thy curious half hundred of pins in't, thou mad'st such a vapouring about yesterday: tell them carefully, there's not one wanting.

San. There's thy ivory-hafted knife again, whet it well; 'tis so blunt 'twill cut nothing but love.

Jacin. And there's thy pretty pocket scissars thou hast honour'd me with, they'll cut off a leg or an arm; heaven bless them.

San. Here's the enchanted handkerchief you were pleased to indear with your precious blood, when the violence of your love at dinner, t'other day, made you cut your fingers——There.

[Blows his nose in it, and gives it her.]

Jacin. The rascal so provokes me, I won't even keep his paltry garters from him. D'ye see these? You pitiful beggarly scoundrel you:——There, take 'em, there.

[She takes her garters off, and flaps them about his face.]

San. I have but one thing more of thine. [*Shewing his cudgel.*] I own 'tis the top of all thy presents, and might be useful to me; but that thou may'st have nothing to upbraid me with, even take it again with the rest of them.

[*Lifting it up to strike her, she leaps about his neck.*]

Jacin. Ah cruel *Sancho!*—Now beat me, *Sancho*, do.

San. Rather, like *Indian* beggars, beat my precious self.

[*Throws away his stick, and embraces her.*]

Rather let infants blood about the streets,
Rather let all the wine about the cellar,
Rather let—Oh *Jacinta*—thou hast o'ercome.
How foolish are the great resolves of man!
Resolves, which we neither wou'd keep, nor can.
When those bright eyes in kindness please to shine,
Their goodness I must needs return with mine:
Bless my *Jacinta* in her *Sancho's* arms—

Jacin. And I my *Sancho* with *Jacinta's* charms.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Street.*

Enter Lopez.

As soon as it is night, says my master to me, tho' it cost me my life, I'll enter *Leonora's* lodgings; therefore make haste, *Lopez*, prepare every thing necessary, three pair of pocket pistols, two wide-mouth'd blunderbusses, some six ells of sword-blade and a couple of dark lanterns. When my Master said this to me; Sir, said I to my master, (that is, I would have said it, if I had not been in such a fright, I could say nothing, however I'll say it to him now, and shall probably have a quiet hearing;) look you, Sir, by dint of reason I intend to confound you: you are resolv'd, you say, to get into *Leonora's* lodgings, tho' the Devil stand in the door-way?—Yes, *Lopez*, that's my resolution—Very well, and what do you intend to do when you are there?—Why, what an injur'd man shou'd do; make her sensible of—Make her sensible of a pudding, don't you see she's a jade? She'll raise the house about your ears, arm the whole family, set the great dog at you.—Were there legions of Devils to repulse me, in such a cause I could disperse them all—Why then you have no occasion for help, Sir, you may leave me at home to lay the cloth.—No; thou art my ancient friend, my fellow-traveller, and to reward thy faithful services, this night thou shalt partake my danger and my glory.—Sir, I have got glory enough under you already, to content any reasonable servant for his life—Thy modesty makes me willing to double my bounty; this night may bring eternal honour to thee and thy family.—Eternal honour, Sir, is too much in conscience for a serving-man; besides ambition has been many a great soul's undoing—I doubt thou art afraid, my *Lopez*, thou shalt be arm'd with back, with breast and headpiece—They will encumber me in my retreat.—Retreat! my hero! Thou never shalt retreat.—Then by my troth I'll never go, Sir.—But here he comes.

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. Will it never be night? sure 'tis the longest day the sun e'er travell'd.

Lop. Would 'twere as long as those in *Greenland*, Sir, that you might spin out your life t'other half year. I don't like these nightly projects; a man can't see what he does: we shall have some scurvy mistake or other happen; a brace of bullets blunder thro' your head in the dark perhaps, and spoil all your intrigue.

Lor. Away, you trembling wretch, away.

Lop. Nay, Sir, what I say is purely for your safety: for as to myself—Uds-death, I no more value the losing a quart of blood, than I do drinking a quart of wine. Besides, my veins are too full, my physician advis'd me yesterday to let go twenty ounces for my health. So you see, Sir, there's nothing of that in the case.

Lor. Then let me hear no other objections: for 'till I see *Leonora* I must lie upon the rack. I cannot bear her resentment, and will pacify her this night, or not live to see to-morrow.

Lop. Well, Sir, since you are so determin'd, I shan't be impertinent with any farther advice; but I think you have laid your design to—[*He coughs.*] (I have got such a cold to-day) to get in privately, have you not?

Lor. Yes; and have taken care to be introduced as far as her chamber-door with all secrecy.

Lop. [*He coughs.*]—This unlucky cough, I had rather have had a fever at another time. Sir, I should be sorry to do you more harm than good upon this occasion: if this cough shou'd come upon me in the midst of the action, [*Coughs.*] and give the alarm to the family, I shou'd not forgive myself as long as I liv'd.

Lor. I have greater ventures than that to take my chance for, and can't dispense with your attendance, Sir.

Lop. This 'tis to be a good servant, and make one's self necessary.

Enter Toledo.

Tol. Sir,—I am glad I have found you. I am a man of honour, you know, and do always profess losing my life upon a handsome occasion: sir, I come to offer you my service. I am inform'd from unquestionable hands, that Don *Carlos* is enrag'd against you to a dangerous degree; and that old *Alvarez* has given positive directions to break the legs and arms of your servant *Lopez*.

Lop. Look you there, now, I thought what 'twou'd come to; what do they meddle with me for? What have I to do in my Master's amours? The old Don's got out of his senses, I think, have I married his daughter?

Lor. Fear nothing, we'll take care o'thee—Sir, I thank you for the favour of your intelligence, 'tis nothing however but what I have expected and am provided for.

Tol. Sir, I wou'd advise you to provide yourself with good friends, I desire the honour to keep your back hand myself.

Lop. 'Tis very kind indeed. Pray, Sir, have you never a servant with you cou'd hold a racket for me too?

Tol. I have two friends fit to head two armies; and yet—a word in your ear, they shan't cost you above a ducat a-piece.

Lop. Take 'em by all means, Sir, you were never offer'd a better pennyworth in your life.

Tol. Ah, Sir,—little *Diego*—you have heard of him; he'd have been worth a legion upon this occasion: you know, I suppose, how they have serv'd him—They have hang'd him, but he made a noble execution; they clapp'd the rack and the priest to him at once, but cou'd neither get a word of confession, nor a groan of repentance; he died mighty well truly.

Lor. Such a man is indeed much to be regretted: As for the rest of your escorte, captain, I thank you for 'em, but shall not use 'em.

Tol. I'm sorry for't, Sir, because I think you go in very great danger; I'm much afraid your rival won't give you fair play.

Lop. If he does, I'll be hang'd; he's a damn'd passionate fellow, and cares not what mischief he does.

Lor. I shall give him a very good opportunity: for I'll have no other guards about me but you, Sir. So come along.

Lop. Why, Sir, this is the sin of presumption; setting heaven at defiance, making a Jack-pudding of a blunderbuss.

Lor. No more, but follow. Hold! turn this way; I see *Camillo* there. I wou'd avoid him, 'till I see what part he takes in this odd affair of his sister's. For I wou'd not have the quarrel fix'd with him, if it be possible to avoid it.

[*Exit* Lorenzo.]

Lop. Sir—Captain *Toledo*, one word if you please, Sir; I'm mighty sorry to see my Master won't accept of your friendly offer; look ye, I'm not very rich; but as far as the expences of a dollar went, if you'd be so kind to take a little care of me, it shou'd be at your service.

Tol. Let me see:—A dollar you say? but suppose I'm wounded?

Lop. Why you shall be put to no extraordinary charge upon that: I have been 'prentice to a barber; and will be your surgeon myself.

Tol. 'Tis too cheap in conscience; but my land estate is ill paid this war-time—

Lop. That a little industry may be commendable; so say no more, that matter's fix'd.

[*Exeunt* *Lop.* and *Tol.*]

Enter Camillo.]

Cam. How miserable a perplexity have I brought myself into! Yet why do I complain? since with all the dreadful torture I endure, I can't repent of one wild step I've made. O Love! what tempests canst thou raise, what storms canst thou assuage! To all thy cruelties I am resign'd: Long years thro' seas of torment I'm content to roll, so thou wilt guide me to the happy port of my *Lorenzo's* arms, and bless me there with one calm day at last.

Enter Isabella.]

Cam. What news, dear *Isabella*? methinks there's something chearful in your looks may give a trembling lover hopes. If you have comfort for me, speak, for I indeed have need of it.

Isab. Were your wants yet still greater than they are, I bring a plentiful supply.

Cam. O Heav'ns! is it possible?

Isab. New mysteries are out, and if you can find charms to wean *Lorenzo* from your sister, no other obstacle is in the way to all your wish.

Cam. Kind messenger from Heaven, speak on.

Isab. Know then, that you are daughter to *Alvarez*.

Cam. How! daughter to *Alvarez*?

Isab. You are: The truth this moment's come to light; and till this moment he, altho' your father, was a stranger to it; nay, did not even know you were a woman. In short, the great estate, which has occasion'd these uncommon accidents, was left but on condition of a son; great hopes of one there was, when you destroy'd 'em, and to your parents came a most unwelcome guest: To repair the disappointment, you were exchang'd for that young *Camillo*, who few months after dy'd. Your father then was absent, but your mother quick in contrivance, bold in execution, during that infant's sickness, had resolv'd his death shou'd not deprive her family of those advantages his life had given it; so order'd things with such dexterity, that once again there past a change between you: of this (for reasons yet unknown to me) she made a secret to her husband, and took such wise precautions, that 'till this hour 'twas so to all the world, except the person from whom I now have heard it.

Cam. This news indeed affords a view of no unhappy termination; yet there are difficulties still may be of fatal hindrance.

Isab. None, except that one I just now nam'd to you; for to remove the last, know I have already unfolded all, both to *Alvarez* and *Don Felix*.

Cam. And how have they receiv'd it?

Isab. To your wishes both. As for *Lorenzo*, he is yet a stranger to all has past, and the two old fathers desire he may some moments longer continue so. They have agreed to be a little merry

with the heat he is in, and engage you in a family-quarrel with him.

Cam. I doubt, *Isabella*, I shall act that part but faintly.

Isab. No matter, you'll make amends for it in the scene of reconciliation.

Cam. Pray heaven it be my lot to act it with him.

Isab. Here comes Don *Felix* to wish you joy.

Enter Don Felix.

Don Fel. Come near, my daughter, and with extended arms of great affection let me receive thee. [*Kisses her.*] Thou art a dainty wench, good faith thou art, and 'tis a mettled action thou hast done; if *Lorenzo* don't like thee the better for't, Cods my life, he's a pitiful fellow, and I shan't believe the bonny old man had the getting of him.

Cam. I'm so encourag'd by your forgiveness, Sir, methinks I have some flattering hopes of his.

Don Fel. Of his! I'gad, and he had best, I believe he'll meet with his match if he don't. What dost think of trying his courage a little, by way of a joke or so?

Isab. I was just telling her your design, Sir.

Don Fel. Why I'm in a mighty witty way upon this whimsical occasion; but I see him coming. You must not appear yet; go your way in to the rest of the people there, and I'll inform him what a squabble he has work'd himself into here.

[*Exeunt Camillo and Isabella.*

Enter Lorenzo and Lopez.

Lop. Pray, Sir, don't be so obstinate now, don't affront Heaven at this rate. I had a vision last night about this business on purpose to forwarn you; I dreamt of goose-eggs, a blunt knife, and the snuff of a candle; I'm sure there's mischief towards.

Lor. You cowardly rascal, hold your tongue.

Don Fel. *Lorenzo*, come hither, my boy, I was just going to send for thee. The honour of our ancient family lies in thy hands; there is a combat preparing, thou must fight, my son.

Lop. Look you there, now, did not I tell you? O dreams are wond'rous things, I never knew that snuff of a candle fail yet.

Lor. Sir, I do not doubt but *Carlos* seeks my life, I hope he'll do it fairly.

Lop. Fairly, do you hear, fairly! Give me leave to tell you, Sir, folks are not fit to be trusted with lives, that don't know how to look better after them. Sir, you gave it him, I hope you'll make him take a little more care on't.

Don Fel. My care shall be to make him do as a man of honour ought to do.

Lop. What, will you let him fight, then? let your own flesh and blood fight?

Don Fel. In a good cause, as this is.

Lop. *O monstrum horrendum!* Now I have that humanity about me, that if a man but talks to me of fighting, I shiver at the name on't.

Lor. What you do, on this occasion Sir, is worthy of you: And had I been wanting to you, in my due regards before, this noble action wou'd have stamp'd that impression, which a grateful son ought to have for so generous a father.

Lop. Very generous, truly! gives him leave to be run thro' the guts, for his posterity to brag on a hundred years hence.

[*Aside.*

Lor. I think, Sir, as things now stand, it won't be right for me to wait for *Carlos's* call; I'll, if you please, prevent him.

Lop. Ay, pray, Sir, do prevent him by all means, 'tis better made up, as you say, a thousand times.

Don Fel. Hold your tongue, you impertinent Jackanapes, I will have him fight, and fight like a fury too; If he don't, he'll be worsted, I can tell him that. For know, son, your antagonist is not the person you name, it is an enemy of twice his force.

Lop. O dear, O dear, O dear! and will nobody keep 'em asunder?

Lor. Nobody shall keep us asunder, if once I know the man I have to deal with.

Don Fel. Thy man then is——*Camillo.*

Lor. *Camillo!*

Don Fel. 'Tis he, he'll suffer no body to decide this quarrel but himself.

Lop. Then there are no seconds, Sir.

Don Fel. None.

Lop. He's a brave man.

Don Fel. No, he says nobody's blood shall be spilt upon this occasion, but theirs who have a title to it.

Lop. I believe he'll scarce have a law-suit upon the claim.

Don Fel. In short, he accuses thee of a shameful falshood, in pretending his sister *Leonora* was thy wife; and has upon it prevailed with his father, as thou has done with thine, to let the debate be ended by the sword 'twixt him and thee.

Lop. And pray, Sir, with submission, one short question if you please; what may the gentle *Leonora* say of this business?

Don Fel. She approves of the combat, and marries *Carlos*.

Lop. Why, God a-mercy.

Lor. Is it possible? Sure she's a devil, not a woman.

Lop. I—cod, Sir, the Devil and a woman both, I think.

Don Fel. Well, thou sha't have satisfaction of some of 'em. Here they all come.

*Enter Alvarez, Leonora, Carlos, Sancho, and
Jacinta.*

Alv. Well, *Don Felix*, have you prepared your son? for mine, he's ready to engage.

Lor. And so is his. My wrongs prepare me for a thousand combats. My hand has hitherto been held by the regard I've had to every thing of kin to *Leonora*; but since the monstrous part she acts has driven her from my heart, I call for reparation from her family.

Alv. You'll have it, Sir; *Camillo* will attend you instantly.

Lop. O lack! O lack! will no body do a little something to prevent bloodshed? Why, Madam, have you no pity, no bowels? [*To Leonora.*] stand and see one of your husbands stoter'd before your face? 'Tis an arrant shame.

Leo. If widowhood be my fate, I must bear it as I can.

Lop. Why, did you ever hear the like?

Lor. Talk to her no more. Her monstrous impudence is no otherwise to be replied to, than by a dagger in her brother's heart.

Leo. Yonder he's coming to receive it. But have a care, brave Sir, he does not place it in another's.

Lor. It is not in his power. He has a rotten cause upon his sword, I'm sorry he's engag'd in't; but since he is, he must take his fate. For you, my bravo, expect me in your turn.

[*To Carlos.*]

Car. You'll find *Camillo*, Sir, will set your hand out.

Lor. A beardless boy. You might have match'd me better, Sir: but prudence is a virtue.

Don Fel. Nay, son, I wou'd not have thee despise thy adversary neither; thou'lt find *Camillo* will put thee hardly to't.

Lor. I wish we were come to the trial. Why does he not appear?

Jacin. Now do I hate to hear people brag thus. Sir, with my lady's leave, I'll hold a ducat he disarms you.

[*They laugh.*]

Lor. Why, what!—I think I'm sported with. Take heed, I warn you all; I am not to be trifled with.

Enter Camillo and Isabella.

Leo. You shan't, Sir, here's one will be in earnest with you.

Lor. He's welcome: tho' I had rather have drawn my sword against another. I'm sorry, *Camillo*, we should meet on such bad terms as these; yet more sorry your sister should be the wicked cause on't: but since nothing will serve her but the blood either of a husband or brother, she shall be glutted with't. Draw.

Lop. Ah Lard, ah Lard, ah Lard!

Lor. And yet before I take this instrument of death into my fatal hand, hear me, *Camillo*; hear *Alvarez*; all! I imprecate the utmost powers of heaven to shower upon my head the deadliest of its wrath; I ask that all hell's torments may unite to round my soul with one eternal anguish, if wicked *Leonora* ben't my wife.

Omnes. O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!

Leo. Why then may all those curses pass him by, and wrap me in their everlasting pains, if ever once I had a fleeting thought of making him my husband.

Lop. O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!

Leo. Nay more; to strike him dumb at once, and shew what men with honest looks can practise, know he's married to another.

Alv. and Fel. How!

Leo. The truth of this is known to some here.

Jacin. Nay, 'tis certainly so.

Isab. 'Tis to a friend of mine.

Car. I know the person.

Lor. 'Tis false, and thou art a villain for thy testimony.

Cam. Then let me speak; what they aver is true, and I myself was in disguise, a witness of its doing.

Lor. Death and confusion! he a villain too! have at thy heart.

[*He draws.*]

Lop. Ah!—I can't bear the sight on't.

Cam. Put up that furious thing, there's no business for't.

Lor. There's business for a dagger, stripping; 'tis that should be thy recompence.

Cam. Why then to shew thee naked to the world, and close thy mouth for ever—I am myself thy wife.—

Lor. What does the dog mean?

Cam. To fall upon the earth and sue for mercy.

[*Kneels and lets her perriwig fall off.*]

Lor. A woman!

Lop. Ay—cod, and a pretty one too; you wags you.

Lor. I'm all amazement. Rise, *Camillo*, (if I am still to call you by that name) and let me hear the wonders you have for me.

Isab. That part her modesty will ask from me: I'm to inform you then, that this disguise hides other mysteries besides a woman; a large and fair estate was cover'd by it, which with the lady now will be resigned to you. 'Tis true, in justice it was yours before; but 'tis the God of Love has done you right. To him you owe this strange discovery, thro' him you are to know the true *Camillo's* dead, and that this fair adventurer is daughter to *Alvarez*.

Lor. Incredible! but go on; let me hear more.

Don Fel. She'll tell thee the rest herself, the next dark night she meets thee in the garden.

Lor. Ha!—Was it *Camillo* then, that I—

Isab. It was *Camillo* who there made you happy: And who has virtue, beauty, wit and love—enough to make you so, while life shall last you.

Lor. The proof she gives me of her love, deserves a large acknowledgment indeed. Forgive me therefore, *Leonora*, if what I owe this goodness and these charms, I with my utmost care, my life, my soul, endeavour to repay.

Cam. Is it then possible you can forgive me?

Lor. Indeed I can; few crimes have such a claim to mercy; but join with me then, dear *Camillo*, (for still I know you by no other name) join with me to obtain your father's pardon: yours, *Leonora*, too, I must implore; and yours, my friend, for now we may be such. [*To Carlos.*] Of all I ask forgiveness. And since there is so fair a cause of all my wild mistakes, I hope I by her interest shall obtain it.

Alv. You have a claim to mine, *Lorenzo*, I wish I had so strong a one to yours; but if by future services, (tho' I lay down my life amongst 'em) I may blot out of your remembrance a fault (I cannot name) I then shall leave the world in peace.

Lor. In peace then, Sir, enjoy it; for from this very hour, whate'er is past with me, is gone for ever. Your daughter is too fair a mediatrix to be refus'd his pardon, to whom she owes the charms she pleads with for it.

*From this good day, then, let all discord cease;
Let those to come be harmony and peace;
Henceforth let all our diff'rent interests join,
Let fathers, lovers, friends, let all combine,
To make each other's days as blest, as she will mine.*

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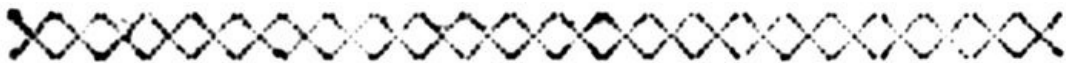
[*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUE,

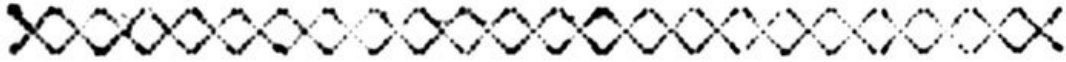
Written by Mr. MOTTEUX.

I'M thinking, now good husbands are so few,
To get one for my friend what I must do.
Camillo ventur'd hard; yet at the worst,
She stole love's honey-moon, and try'd her lover first.
Many poor damsels, if they dar'd to tell,
Have done as much, but have not 'scap'd so well.
'Tis well the scene's in Spain; thus, in the dark,
I should be loth to trust a London spark.
Some accident might for a private reason,
Silence a female, all this acting-season.
Hard fate of women: any one wou'd vex,
To think what odds, you men have, of our sex.
Restraint and custom share our inclination,
You men can try, and run o'er half the nation.
We dare not, even to avoid reproach,
When you're at White's, peep out of hackney-coach;
Nor with a friend at night, our fame regarding,
With glass drawn up, drive 'bout Covent-Garden.
If poor town-ladies steal in here, you rail,
Tho' like chaste nuns their modest looks they veil;
With this decorum, they can hardly gain
To be thought virtuous, e'en in Drury-Lane.
Tho' this you'll not allow, yet sure you may
A plot to snap you, in an honest way.
In love affairs, one scarce would spare a brother:
All cheat; and married folks may keep a pother,
But look as if they cheated one another.
You may pretend, our sex dissembles most;
But of your truth none have much cause to boast:
You promise bravely; but for all your storming,
We find you're not so valiant at performing.
Then sure Camillo's conduct you'll approve:
Wou'd you not do as much for one you love?
Wedlock's but a blind bargain at the best,
You venture more sometimes, to be not half so blest.
All, soon or late, that dangerous venture make,
And some of you may make a worse mistake.

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**THE
COUNTRY HOUSE.
A
FARCE.**



Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

Mr. Barnard.
Mr. Griffard, Brother to Mr. Barnard.
Erastus, in love with Mariamne.
Dorant, Son to Mr. Barnard.
Monsieur le Marquis.
Baron de Messy.
Janno, Cousin to Mr. Barnard.
Colin, Servant to Mr. Barnard.
Charly, a little Boy.
Servant to Erastus.
Three gentlemen, friends to Dorant.
A cook, other servants, &c.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Barnard.
Mariamne, her daughter.
Mawkin, sister to Janno.
Lisetta, servant to Mariamne.

The SCENE is laid in *Normandy* in *France*.

**THE
COUNTRY HOUSE.**

ACT I. SCENE I.

*Enter Erastus and his man, with Lisetta,
Mariamne's maid.*

Lis. ONCE more I tell ye, Sir, if you have any consideration in the world for her, you must be gone this minute.

Er. My dear *Lisetta*, let me but speak to her, let me but see her only.

Lis. You may do what you will; but not here, whilst you are in our house. I do believe she's as impatient to see you, as you can be to see her; but—

Er. But why won't you give us that satisfaction then?

Lis. Because I know the consequence; for when you once get together, the Devil himself is not able to part you; you will stay so long 'till you are surpriz'd, and what will become of us then?

Serv. Why, then we shall be thrown out at the window, I suppose.

Lis. No, but I shall be turn'd out of doors.

Er. How unfortunate am I! these doors are open to all the world, and only shut to me.

Lis. Because you come for a wife, and at our house we do not care for people that come for wives.

Serv. What would you have us come for, child?

Lis. Any thing but wives; because they cannot be put off without portions.

Serv. Portions! No, no, never talk of portions; my Master nor I neither don't want portions; and if he'd follow my advice, a regiment of fathers shou'd not guard her.

Lis. What say you?

Serv. Why, if you'll contrive that my Master may run away with your Mistress, I don't much care, faith, if I run away with you.

Lis. Don't you so, rogue's face? but I hope to be better provided for.

Er. Hold your tongues. But where is *Mariamne's* brother? He is my bosom friend, and would be willing to serve me.

Lis. I told you before, that he has been abroad a hunting, and we han't seen him these three days; he seldom lies at home, to avoid his father's ill humour; so that it is not your Mistress only that our old covetous cuff teizes—there's nobody in the family but feels the effects of his ill humour—by his good will he would not suffer a creature to come within his doors, or eat at his table—and if there be but a rabbit extraordinary for dinner, he thinks himself ruin'd for ever.

Er. Then I find you pass your time comfortably in this family.

Lis. Not so bad as you imagine neither, perhaps; for, thank Heaven, we have a Mistress that's as bountiful as he is stingy, one that will let him say what he will, and yet does what she will. But hark, here's somebody coming; it is certainly he.

Er. Can't you hide us somewhere?

Lis. Here, here, get you in here as fast as you can.

Serv. Thrust me in too.

[Puts 'em into the closet.]

SCENE II.

Enter Mariamne.

Lis. O, is it you?

Mar. So, *Lisetta*, where have you been? I've been looking for you all over the house: who are those people in the garden with my mother-in-law? I believe my father won't be very well pleas'd to see 'em there.

Lis. And here's somebody else not afar off, that I believe your father won't be very well pleas'd with neither. Come, Sir, Sir.

[Calls.]

[Erastus and his servant come out.]

Mar. O Heavens!

[Cries out.]

Lis. Come, lovers, I can allow you but a short bout on't this time; you must do your work with a jirk—one whisper, two sighs and, a kiss; make haste, I say, and I'll stand centry for you in the mean time.

[Exit Lisetta.]

Mar. Do you know what you expose me to, *Erastus*? What do you mean?

Er. To die, Madam, since you receive me with so little pleasure.

Mar. Consider what wou'd become of me, if my father shou'd see you here.

Er. What wou'd you have me do?

Mar. Expect with patience some happy turn of affairs; my mother-in-law is kind and indulgent to a miracle, and her favour, if well managed, may turn to our advantage; and cou'd I prevail upon myself to declare my passion to her, I don't doubt but she'd join in our interest.

Er. Well, since we've nothing to fear from her, and your brother, you know is my intimate friend; you may therefore conceal me somewhere about the house for a few days. I'll creep into any hole.

Serv. Ay, but who must have the care of bringing us victuals?

[*Aside.*

Er. Thrust us into the cellar, or up into the garret: I don't care where it is, so that it be but under the same roof with you.

Serv. But I don't say so, for that jade *Lisetta* will have the feeding of us, and I know what kind of diet she keeps—I believe we shan't be like the fox in the fable, our bellies won't be so full but we shall be able to creep out at the same hole we got in at.

Er. Must I then be gone? must I return to Paris?

Enter Lisetta.

Lis. Yes, that you must, and immediately too, for here's my master coming in upon ye.

Er. What shall I do?

Lis. Begone this minute.

Mar. Stay in the village 'till you hear from me, none of our family know that you are in it.

Er. Shall I see you sometimes?

Mar. I han't time to answer you now.

Lis. Make haste, I say; are you bewitch'd?

Er. Will you write to me?

Mar. I will if can.

Lis. Begone, I say, is the Devil in you?

[*Thrusting Erastus and his servant out.*

Come this way, your father's just stepping in upon us.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter Mr. Barnard beating Colin.

Mr. *Barn.* Rogue! rascal! did not I command you? Did not I give you my orders, sirrah?

Col. Why, you gave me orders to let no body in; and Madam, her gives me orders to let every body in—why the Devil himself can't please you boath, I think.

Mr. *Barn.* But, sirrah, you must obey my orders, not hers.

Col. Why the gentelfolks asked for her, they did not ask for you—what do you make such a noise about?

Mr. *Barn.* For that reason, sirrah, you shou'd not have let 'em in.

Col. Hold, Sir, I'd rather see you angry than her, that's true; for when you're angry you have only the devil in ye, but when Madam's in a passion she has the devil and his dam both in her belly.

Mr. *Barn.* You must mind what I say to you, sirrah, and obey my orders.

Col. Ay, ay, Measter—but let's not quarrel with one another—you're always in such a plaguy humour.

Mr. *Barn.* What are these people that are just come?

Col. Nay, that know not I—but as fine volk they are as ever eye beheld, heaven bless 'em.

Mr. *Barn.* Did you hear their names?

Col. Noa, noa, but in a coach they keam all besmeared with gould, with six breave horses, the like on 'em ne'er did I set eyes on—'twou'd do a man's heart good to look on sike fine beast, Measter.

Mr. *Barn.* How many persons are there?

Col. Vour—two as fine men as ever women bore, and two as dainty deames as a man wou'd desire to lay his lips to.

Mr. *Barn.* And all this crew sets up at my house.

Col. Noa, noa, Measter, the coachman is gone into the village to set up his coach at some inn, for I told him our coach-house was vull of vaggots, but he'll bring back the six horses, for I told him we had a rear good stable.

Mr. Barn. Did you so, rascal? Did you so?

[*Beats him.*]

Col. Doant, doant, Sir, it wou'd do you good to see sike cattle, i'faith they look as if they had ne'er kept Lent.

Mr. Barn. Then they shall learn religion at my house—Sirrah, do you take care they sup without oats to-night—What will become of me? Since I bought this damn'd country house, I spend more in a summer than wou'd maintain me seven years.

Col. Why, if you do spend money, han't you good things for it? Come they not to see you the whole country raund? Mind how you're belov'd, Measter.

Mr. Barn. Pox take such love—How now, what do you want?

Enter Lisetta.

Lis. Sir, there's some company in the garden with my mistress, who desire to see you.

Mr. Barn. The devil take 'em, what business have they here? But who are they?

Lis. Why, Sir, there's the fat Abbot that always sits so long at dinner, and drinks his two bottles by way of whet.

Mr. Barn. I wish his church was in his belly, that his guts might be half full before he came—and who else?

Lis. Then there's the young Marquis that won all my Lady's money at cards.

Mr. Barn. Pox take him too.

Lis. Then there's the merry Lady that's always in a good humour.

Mr. Barn. Very well.

Lis. Then there's she that threw down all my Lady's china t'other day, and laugh'd at it for a jest.

Mr. Barn. Which I paid above fifty pounds for in earnest—very well, and pray how did Madam receive all this fine company?—With a hearty welcome, and a courtsy with her bum down to the ground, ha.

Lis. No indeed, Sir, she was very angry with 'em.

Mr. Barn. How, angry with 'em, say you?

Lis. Yes indeed, Sir, for she expected they wou'd have staid here a fortnight, but it seems things happen so unluckily that they can't stay here above ten days.

Mr. Barn. Ten days! How! what! four persons with a coach and six, and a kennel of hungry hounds in liveries, to live upon me ten days.

[*Exit Lisetta.*]

Enter a soldier.

So, what do you want?

Sol. Sir, I come from your nephew, Captain *Hungry*.

Mr. Barn. Well, what does he want?

Sol. He gives his service to you, Sir, and sends you word that he'll come and dine with you to-morrow.

Mr. Barn. Dine with me! no, no, friend, tell him I don't dine at all to-morrow, it is my fast-day, my wife died on't.

Sol. And he has sent you here a pheasant and a couple of partridges.

Mr. Barn. How's that, a pheasant and partridges, say you?—let's see—very fine birds, truly—let me consider—To-morrow is not my fast-day, I mistook, tell my nephew he shall be welcome—And d'ye hear? [*To Colin.*] do you take these fowls and hang them up in a cool place—and take this soldier in, and make him drink—make him drink, d'ye see—a cup,—ay, a cup of small beer—d'ye hear?

Col. Yes, Sir—Come along; our small beer is reare good.

Sol. But, Sir, he bade me tell you that he'll bring two or three of his brother officers along with him.

Mr. Barn. How's that! Officers with him—here, come back—take the fowls again; I don't dine to-morrow, and so tell him [*Gives him the basket.*] Go, go.

[*Thrusts him out.*]

Sol. Sir, Sir, that won't hinder them from coming, for they retir'd a little distance off the camp, and because your house is near 'em, Sir, they resolve to come.

Mr. Barn. Go, begone, Sirrah,

[*Thrusts him out.*]

There's a rogue now, that sends me three lean carrion birds, and brings half a dozen varlets to eat them.

Enter Mr. Griffard.

Griff. Brother, what is the meaning of these doings? If you don't order your affairs better, you'll have your fowls taken out of your very yard, and carried away before your face.

Mr. *Barn.* Can I help it, brother? But what's the matter now?

Griff. There's a parcel of fellows have been hunting about your grounds all this morning, broke down your hedges, and are now coming into your house—don't you hear them?

Mr. *Barn.* No, no, I don't hear them: who are they?

Griff. Three or four rake-helly officers, with your nephew at the head of 'em.

Mr. *Barn.* O the rogue! he might well send me fowls—but is it not a vexatious thing, that I must stand still and see myself plunder'd at this rate, and have a carrion of a wife who thinks I ought to thank all these rogues that come to devour me! but can't you advise me what's to be done in this case?

Griff. I wish I cou'd; for it goes to my heart to see you thus treated by a crew of vermin, who think they do you a great deal of honour in ruining of you.

Mr. *Barn.* Can there be no way found to redress this?

Griff. If I were you, I'd leave this house quite, and go to town.

Mr. *Barn.* What, and leave my wife behind me? ay that wou'd be mending the matter indeed!

Griff. Why don't you sell it then?

Mr. *Barn.* Because nobody will buy it; it has got as bad a name as if the plague were in't; it has been sold over and over, and every family that has liv'd in it has been ruin'd.

Griff. Then send away all your beds and furniture; except what is absolutely necessary for your own family, you'll save something by that, for then your guests can't stay with you all night, however.

Mr. *Barn.* I've try'd that already, and it signified nothing—For they all got drunk and lay in the barn, and next morning laugh'd it off for a frolick.

Griff. Then there is but one remedy left that I can think of.

Mr. *Barn.* What's that?

Griff. You must e'en do what's done when a town's on fire, blow up your house that the mischief may run no farther—But who is this gentleman?

Mr. *Barn.* I never saw him in my life before, but for all that, I'll hold fifty pound he comes to dine with me.

Enter the Marquis.

Marq. My dear Mr. *Barnard*, I'm your most humble servant.

Mr. *Barn.* I don't doubt it, Sir.

Marq. What is the meaning of this, Mr. *Barnard*? You look as coldly upon me as if I were a stranger.

Mr. *Barn.* Why truly, Sir, I'm very apt to do so by persons I never saw in my life before.

Marq. You must know, Mr. *Barnard*, I'm come on purpose to drink a bottle with you.

Mr. *Barn.* That may be, Sir; but it happens that at this time I am not at all dry.

Marq. I left the ladies at cards waiting for supper; for my part, I never play; so I came to see my dear Mr. *Barnard*; and I'll assure you I undertook this journey only to have the honour of your acquaintance.

Mr. *Barn.* You might have spared yourself that trouble, Sir.

Marq. Don't you know, Mr. *Barnard*, that this house of yours is a little paradise?

Mr. *Barn.* Then rot me if it be, Sir.

Marq. For my part, I think a pretty retreat in the country is one of the greatest comforts of life; I suppose you never want good company, Mr. *Barnard*?

Mr. *Barn.* No, Sir, I never want company; for you must know I love very much to be alone.

Marq. Good wine you must keep above all things, without good wine and good cheer I would not give a fig for the country.

Mr. *Barn.* Really, Sir, my wine is the worst you ever drank in your life, and you'll find my cheer but very indifferent.

Marq. No matter, no matter, Mr. *Barnard*; I've heard much of your hospitality, there's a plentiful table in your looks—and your wife is certainly one of the best women in the world.

Mr. *Barn.* Rot me if she be, Sir.

Enter Colin.

Col. Sir, Sir, yonder's the Baron *de Messy* has lost his hawk in our garden; he says it is perch'd upon one of the trees; may we let him have'n again, Sir?

Mr. Barn. Go tell him that—

Col. Nay, you may tell him yourself, for here he comes.

SCENE IV.

Enter the Baron de Messy.

Sir, I'm your most humble Servant, and ask you a thousand pardons that I should live so long in your neighbourhood, and come upon such an occasion as this to pay you my first respects.

Mr. Barn. It is very well, Sir; but I think people may be very good neighbours without visiting one another.

Baron. Pray how do you like our *country*?

Mr. Barn. Not at all, I'm quite tired on't.

Marq. Is it not the Baron? [*Aside.*] it is certainly he.

Baron. How; my dear Marquis! let me embrace you.

Marq. My dear Baron, let me kiss you.

[*They run and embrace.*]

Baron. We have not seen one another since we were school-fellows, before.

Marq. The happiest *Rencontré*!

Bro. These gentlemen seem to be very well acquainted.

Mr. Barn. Yes, but I know neither one nor t'other of them.

Marq. Baron, let me present to you one of the best-natur'd men in the world, Mr. *Barnard* here, the flower of hospitality—I congratulate you upon having so good a neighbour.

Mr. Barn. Sir!

Baron. It is an advantage I am proud of.

Mr. Barn. Sir!

Marq. Come, gentlemen, you must be very intimate; let me have the honour of bringing you better acquainted.

Mr. Barn. Sir!

Baron. Dear Marquis, I shall take it as a favour, if you'll do me that honour.

Mr. Barn. Sir!

Marq. With all my heart—Come, Baron, now you are here we can make up the most agreeable company in the world—Faith you shall stay and pass a few days with us.

Mr. Barn. Methinks now, this son of a whore does the honour of my house to a miracle.

Baron. I don't know what to say, but I shou'd be very glad you'd excuse me.

Marq. Faith, I can't.

Baron. Dear Marquis.

Marq. Egad I won't.

Baron. Well, since it must be so—But here comes the Lady of the family.

Enter Mrs. Barnard.

Marq. Madam, let me present you to the flower of *France*.

Baron. Madam, I shall think myself the happiest person in the world in your Ladyship's acquaintance; and the little estate I have in *this country* I esteem more than all the rest, because it lies so near your Ladyship.

Mrs. Barn. Sir, your most humble servant.

Marq. Madam, the Baron *de Messy* is the best humour'd man in the world. I've prevail'd with him to give us his company a few days.

Mrs. Barn. I'm sure you could not oblige Mr. *Barnard* or me more.

Mr. Barn. That's a damn'd lye, I'm sure.

[*Aside.*]

Baron. I'm sorry, Madam, I can't accept of the honour—for it falls out so unluckily, that I've some ladies at my house that I can't possibly leave.

Marq. No matter, no matter, Baron; you have ladies at your house, we have ladies at our house—let's join companies—come, let's send for them immediately; the more the merrier.

Mr. Barn. An admirable expedient, truly!

Baron. Well, since it must be so, I'll go for them myself.

Marq. Make haste, dear Baron, for we shall be impatient for your return.

Baron. Madam, your most humble servant——But I won't take my leave of you——I shall be back again immediately——Monsieur *Barnard*, I'm your most humble servant; since you will have it so, I'll return as soon as possible.

Mr. *Barn.* I have it so! 'sbud, Sir, you may stay as long as you please; I'm in no haste for ye.

[*Exeunt Baron and Marquis.*

Mr. *Barn.* Madam, you are the cause that I am not master of my own house.

Mrs. *Barn.* Will you never learn to be reasonable, husband?

The Marquis returns.

Marq. The Baron is the best humour'd man in the world, only a little too ceremonious, that's all——I love to be free and generous; since I came to *Paris* I've reform'd half the court.

Mrs. *Barn.* You are of the most agreeable humour in the world, *Marquis*.

Marq. Always merry——But what have you done with the ladies?

Mrs. *Barn.* I left them at cards.

Marq. Well, I'll wait upon 'em——but, Madam, let me desire you not to put yourself to any extraordinary expence upon our accounts——You must consider we have more than one day to live together.

Mrs. *Barn.* You are pleased to be merry, *Marquis*.

Marq. Treat us without ceremony; good wine and poultry you have of your own; wild-fowl and fish are brought to your door——You need not send abroad for any thing but a piece of butcher's meat, or so——Let us have no extraordinaries.

[*Exit.*

Mr. *Barn.* If I had the feeding of you, a thunder bolt should be your supper.

Mrs. *Barn.* Husband, will you never change your humour? If you go on at this rate, it will be impossible to live with ye.

Mr. *Barn.* Very true; for in a little time I shall have nothing to live upon.

Mrs. *Barn.* Do you know what a ridiculous figure you make?

Mr. *Barn.* You'll make a great deal worse, when you han't money enough to pay for the washing of your shifts.

Mrs. *Barn.* It seems you married me only to dishonour me; how horrible this is!

Mr. *Barn.* I tell ye, you'll ruin me. Do you know how much money you spend in a year?

Mrs. *Barn.* Not I truly, I don't understand arithmetic.

Mr. *Barn.* Arithmetic, O lud! O lud! Is it so hard to comprehend, that he who receives but sixpence and spends a shilling, must be ruin'd in the end?

Mrs. *Barn.* I never troubled my head with accompts, nor never will; but if you did but know what ridiculous things the world says of ye——

Mr. *Barn.* Rot the world——'Twill say worse of me when I'm in a jail.

Mrs. *Barn.* A very Christian-like saying, truly.

Mr. *Barn.* Don't tell me of Christian——Adsbud, I'll turn Jew, and nobody shall eat at my table that is not circumcised.

Enter Lisetta.

Lis. Madam, there's the Dutchess of *Twangdillo* just fell down near our door, her coach was overturn'd.

Mrs. *Barn.* I hope her Grace has received no hurt.

Lis. No, Madam, but her coach is broke.

Mr. *Barn.* Then there's a smith in town may mend it.

Lis. They say, 'twill require two or three days to fit it up again.

Mrs. *Barn.* I'm glad on't with all my heart, for then I shall enjoy the pleasure of her Grace's good company.——I'll wait upon her.

Mr. *Barn.* Very fine doings this!

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Mr. Barnard.

HEAVEN be now my comfort, for my house is hell: [*Starts.*] Who's there, what do you want? who are you?

Enter servant with a portmanteau.

Serv. Sir, here's your cousin *Janno* and cousin *Mawkin* come from *Paris*.

Mr. Barn. What a plague do they want?

Enter Janno leading in Mawkin.

Jan. Come, sister, come along—O here's cousin *Barnard*—Cousin *Barnard*, your servant—Here's my sister *Mawkin* and I are come to see you.

Mawk. Ay, cousin, here's brother *Janno* and I are come from *Paris* to see you: pray how does cousin *Mariamne* do?

Jan. My sister and I waunt well at *Paris*; so my father sent us here for two or three weeks to take a little country air.

Mr. Barn. You cou'd not come to a worse place; for this is the worst air in the whole county.

Mawk. Nay, I'm sure, my father says it is the best.

Mr. Barn. Your father's a fool; I tell ye, 'tis the worst.

Jan. Nay, cousin, I fancy you're mistaken now; for I begin to find my stomach come to me already; in a fortnight's time you shall see how I'll lay about me.

Mr. Barn. I don't at all doubt it.

Mawk. Father wou'd have sent sister *Flip.* and little brother *Humphrey*, but the calash would not hold us all, and so they don't come till to-morrow with mother.

Jan. Come, sister, let's put up our things in our chamber; and after you have washed my face, and put me on a clean neckcloth, we'll go in and see how our cousins do.

Mawk. Ay, come along, we'll go and see cousin *Mariamne*.

Jan. Cousin, we shan't give you much trouble, one bed will serve us; for sister *Mawkin* and I always lie together.

Mawk. But, cousin; mother prays you that you'd order a little cock-broth for brother *Janno* and I, to be got ready as soon as may be.

Jan. Ay, *a propos*, cousin *Barnard*, that's true; my mother desires, that we may have some cock-broth to drink two or three times a-day between meals, for my sister and I are sick folks.

Mawk. And some young chickens, too, the doctor said would bring us to our stomachs very soon.

Jan. You fib now, sister, it waunt young chickens, so it waunt, it was plump partridges sure, the doctor said so.

Mawk. Ay, so it was brother,—come, let's go in, and see our cousins.

Jan. Ay, come along, sister—cousin *Barnard*, don't forget the cock-broth.

[Exeunt Janno and Mawkin.]

Mr. Barn. What the Devil does all this mean—mother, and sister *Flip.*, and little brother *Humphrey*, and chickens, and partridges, and cock-broth, and fire from hell to dress 'em all.

SCENE II.

Enter Colin.

Col. O measter, O measter—you'll not chide to-day, as you are usen to do, no marry will you not; see now what it is to be wiser than one's measter.

Mr. Barn. What wou'd this fool have?

Col. Why thanks and money to boot, an folk were grateful.

Mr. Barn. What's the matter?

Col. Why the matter is, if you have good store of company in your house, you have good store of meat to put in their bellies.

Mr. Barn. How so? how so?

Col. Why a large and stately stag, with a pair of horns on his head, heavens bless you, your worship might be seen to wear 'em, comes towards our Geat a puffing and blawing like a cow in hard labour—Now says I to myself, says I, if my measter refuse to let this fine youth come in, why then he's a fool, d'ye see—So I opens him the geat, pulls off my hat with both my honds, and said you're welcome, kind Sir, to our house.

Mr. Barn. Well, well!

Col. Well, well, ay, and so it is well, as you shall straightway find—So in he trots, and makes directly towards our barn, and goes bounce, bounce, against the door, as boldly as if he had been measter on't—he turns'en about and thwacks'n down in the strae, as who would say, here will I lay me till to-morrow morning—But he had no fool to deal with—for to the kitchen goes I, and takes me down a musquet, and with a breace of balls, I hits'n such a slap in the feace, that he ne'er spoke a word more to me—Have I done well or no measter?

Mr. Barn. Yes, you have done very well for once.

Col. But this was not all, for a parcel of dogs came yelping after their companion, as I suppose; so I goes to the back yard-door, and as many as came by, shu, says I, and drove them into the gearden, so there they are as safe as in a pawnd—ha, ha,—but I can but think what a power of pasties we shall have at our house, ha, ha.

[*Exit* Colin.]

Mr. Barn. I see Providence takes some care of me: this cou'd never have happened in a better time.

SCENE III.

Enter Cook.

Cook. Sir, sir, in the name of wonder, what do you mean? is it by your orders that all those dogs were let into the garden?

Mr. Barn. How!

Cook. I believe there's forty or fifty dogs tearing up the lettice and cabbage by the root. I believe before they have done, they'll rout up the whole garden.

Mr. Barn. This is that rogue's doings.

Cook. This was not all, Sir, for three or four of 'em came into the kitchen, and tore half the meat off the spit that was for your worship's supper.

Mr. Barn. The very dogs plague me.

Cook. And then there's a crew of hungry footmen who devour'd what the dogs left, so that there's not a bit left for your worship's supper, not a scrap, not one morsel, Sir.

[*Exit* Cook.]

Mr. Barn. Sure I shall hit on some way to get rid of this crew.

SCENE IV.

Enter Colin.

Col. Sir, Sir, here's the devil to do without yonder; a parcel of fellows swear they'll have our venison, and s'blead I swear they shall have none on't, so stand to your arms, measter.

Mr. Barn. Ay, you've done finely, rogue, rascal, have you not?

[*Beating* him.]

Col. 'Sblead, I say they shan't have our venison. I'll die before I'll part with it.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Griffard.

Griff. Brother, there's some gentlemen within ask for you.

Mr. Barn. What gentlemen? who are they?

Griff. The gentlemen that have been hunting all this morning, they're now gone up to your wife's chamber.

Mr. Barn. The Devil go with 'em.

Griff. There is but one way to get rid of this plague, and that is, as I told you before, to set your house on fire.

Mr. Barn. That's doing myself an injury, not them.

Griff. There's dogs, horses, masters and servants, all intend to stay here 'till to-morrow morning, that they may be near the woods to hunt the earlier—besides (I overheard them) they're in a kind of plot against you.

Mr. Barn. What did they say?

Griff. You'll be angry if I tell ye.

Mr. Barn. Can I be more angry than I am?

Griff. They said then that it was the greatest pleasure in the world to ruin an old lawyer in the country, who had got an estate by ruining honest people in town.

Mr. Barn. There's rogues for ye!

Griff. I'm mistaken if they don't play you some trick or other.

Mr. *Barn*. Hold, let me consider.

Griff. What are you doing?

Griff. I'm *conceiving*, I shall *bring forth* presently—oh, I have it, it comes from hence, wit was its father, and invention its mother; if I had thought on't sooner, I shou'd have been happy.

Griff. What is it?

Mr. *Barn*. Come, come along, I say; you must help me to put it in execution.

SCENE V.

Enter Lisetta.

Lis. Sir, my mistress desires you to walk up, she is not able, by herself, to pay the civilities due to so much good company.

Mr. *Barn*. O the carrion! what does she play her jests upon me too?—but mum, he laughs best that laughs last.

Lis. What shall I tell her, Sir, will you come?

Mr. *Barn*. Yes, yes, tell her I'll come with a pox to her.

[*Exeunt Mr. Barnard and Griffard*.]

Lis. Nay, I don't wonder he shou'd be angry—they do try his patience, that's the truth on't.

SCENE VI.

Enter Mariamne.

What, Madam, have you left your mother and the company?

Mar. So much tittle tattle makes my head ake; I don't wonder my father shou'd not love the *country*, for besides the expence he's at, he never enjoys a minute's quiet.

Lis. But let's talk of our own affairs—have you writ to your lover?

Mar. No, for I have not had time since I saw him.

Lis. Now you have time then, about it immediately, for he's a sort of desperate spark, and a body does not know what he may do, if he shou'd not hear from you; besides you promised him, and you must behave yourself like a woman of honour, and keep your word.

Mar. I'll about it this minute.

Enter Charly.

Char. Cousin, cousin, cousin, where are you going? Come back, I have something to say to you.

Lis. What does this troublesome boy want?

Char. What's that to you what I want? perhaps I have something to say to her that will make her laugh—why sure! what need you care?

Mar. Don't snub my cousin *Charly*—well, what is't?

Char. Who do you think I met, as I was coming here, but that handsome gentleman I've seen at church ogle you like any devil?

Mar. Hush, softly, cousin.

Lis. Not a word of that for your life.

Char. O I know I shou'd not speak on't before folks; you know I made signs to you above, that I wanted to speak to you in private, didn't I, cousin?

Mar. Yes, yes, I saw you.

Char. You see I can keep a secret.—I am no girl, mun— I believe I cou'd tell you fifty and fifty to that, of my sister *Cicely*—O she's the devil of a girl—but she gives me money and sugar-plumbs—and those that are kind to me fare the better for it, you see cousin.

Mar. I always said my cousin *Charly* was a good-natur'd boy.

Lis. Well, and did he know you?

Char. Yes, I think he did know me—for he took me in his arms, and did so hug and kiss me—between you and I, cousin, I believe he is one of the best friends I have in the world.

Mar. Well, but what did he say to you?

Char. Why, he ask'd me where I was going; I told him I was coming to see you; you're a lying young rogue, says he, I'm sure you dare not go see your cousin—for you must know my sister was with me, and it seems he took her for a crack, and I being a forward boy, he fancied I was going to make love to her under a hedge, ha, ha.

Mar. So.

Char. So he offer'd to lay me a *Lewis d'Or* that I was not coming to you; so done, says I—Done, says he,—and so 'twas a bett, you know.

Mar. Certainly.

Char. So my sister's honour being concern'd, and having a mind to win his *Lewis d'Or*, d'ye see—I bid him follow me, that he might see whether I came in or no—but he said he'd wait for me at the little garden gate that opens into the fields, and if I would come thro' the house and meet him there, he should know by that whether I had been in or no.

Mar. Very well.

Char. So I went there, open'd the gate and let him in—

Mar. What then?

Char. Why then he paid me the *Lewis d'Or*, that's all.

Mar. Why, that was honestly done.

Char. And then he talk'd to me of you, and said you had the charmingest bubbies, and every time he nam'd 'em, ha! says he, as if he had been sipping hot tea.

Mar. But was this all?

Char. No, for he had a mind, you must know, to win his *Lewis d'Or* back again; so he laid me another, that I dare not come back, and tell you that he was there; so cousin, I hope you won't let me lose, for if you don't go to him and tell him that I've won, he won't pay me.

Mar. What, wou'd you have me go and speak to a man?

Char. Not for any harm, but to win your poor cousin a *Lewis d'Or*. I'm sure you will—for you're a modest young woman, and may go without danger—Well, cousin, I'll swear you look very handsome to-day, and have the prettiest bubbies there; do let me feel 'em, I'll swear you must.

Mar. What does the young rogue mean? I swear I'll have you whipt.

[*Exeunt Charly and Mariamne.*]

Enter Colin.

Col. Ha, ha, ha! our old gentleman's a wag efaith, he'll be even with 'em for all this, ha, ha, ha—

Lis. What's the matter? what does the fool laugh at?

Col. We an't in our house now, *Lisetta*, we're in an inn: ha, ha!

Lis. How in an inn?

Col. Yes, in an inn, my measter has gotten an old rusty sword, and hung it up at our geat, and writ underneath with a piece of charcoal with his own fair hand, *At the Sword Royal; entertainment for man and horse*: ha, ha—

Lis. What whim is this?

Col. Thou, and I, live at the *Sword Royal*, ha, ha—

Lis. I'll go tell my mistress of her father's extravagance.

[*Exit Lisetta.*]

SCENE VII.

Enter Mr. Barnard and Griffard.

Mr. Barn. Ha, ha! yes I think this will do. Sirrah, *Colin*, you may now let in all the world; the more the better.

Colin. Yes, Sir—Ods-flesh! we shall break all the inns in the country—For we have a brave handsome landlady, and a curious young lass to her daughter—O, here comes my young measter—We'll make him chamberlain—ha, ha—

Enter Dorant.

Mr. Barn. What's the matter, son? How comes it that you are all alone? You used to do me the favour to bring some of your friends along with ye.

Dor. Sir, there are some of 'em coming; I only rid before, to beg you to give them a favourable reception.

Mr. Barn. Ay why not? it is both for your honour and mine; you shall be master.

Dor. Sir, we have now an opportunity of making all the gentlemen in the country our friends.

Mr. Barn. I'm glad on't with all my heart; pray how so?

Dor. There's an old quarrel to be made up between two families, and all the company are to meet at our house.

Mr. Barn. Ay, with all my heart; but pray, what is the quarrel?

Dor. O, Sir, a very ancient quarrel; It happened between their great grandfathers about a duck.

Mr. Barn. A quarrel of consequence truly.

Dor. And 'twill be a great honour to us, if this shou'd be accommodated at our house.

Mr. Barn. Without doubt.

Dor. Dear Sir, you astonish me with this goodness; how shall I express this obligation? I was afraid, Sir, you would not like it.

Mr. Barn. Why so?

Dor. I thought, Sir, you did not care for the expence.

Mr. Barn. O Lord, I am the most alter'd man in the world from what I was, I'm quite another thing, mun; but how many are there of 'em?

Dor. Not above nine or ten of a side, Sir.

Mr. Barn. O, we shall dispose of them easily enough.

Dor. Some of 'em will be here present'y, the rest I don't expect 'till to-morrow morning.

Mr. Barn. I hope they're good companions, jolly fellows, that love to eat and drink well.

Dor. The merriest, best-natur'd creatures in the world, Sir.

Mr. Barn. I'm very glad on't, for 'tis such men I want. Come, brother, you and I will go and prepare for their reception.

[*Exeunt Mr. Barnard and his brother.*]

Dor. Bless me, what an alteration is here! How my father's temper is chang'd within these two or three days! Do you know the meaning of it?

Col. Why the meaning on't is, ha, ha——

Dor. Can you tell me the cause of this sudden change, I say?

Col. Why the cause on't is, ha, ha.——

Dor. What do you laugh at, sirrah? do you know?

Col. Ha——because the old gentleman's a drole, that's all.

Dor. Sirrah, if I take the cudgel——

Col. Nay, Sir, don't be angry for a little harmless mirth——But here are your friends.

SCENE VIII.

Enter three gentlemen.

Dor. Gentlemen you are welcome to *Pasty-Hall*; see that these gentlemen's horses are taken care of.

1 Gen. A very fine dwelling this.

Dor. Yes, the house is tolerable.

2 Gen. And a very fine lordship belongs to it.

Dor. The land is good.

3 Gen. This house ought to have been mine, for my grandfather sold it to his father, from whom your father purchased it.

Dor. Yes, the house has gone thro' a great many hands.

1 Gen. A sign there has always been good house-keeping in it.

Dor. And I hope there ever will.

[*Enter Mr. Barnard, and Griffard, drest like drawers.*]

Mr. Barn. Gentlemen, do you call? will you please to see a room, gentlemen? somebody take off the gentlemen's boots there?

Dor. Father! uncle! what is the meaning of this?

Mr. Barn. Here, shew a room——or will you please to walk into the kitchen first, gentlemen, and see what you like for dinner.

1 Gen. Make no preparations, Sir, your own dinner is sufficient.

Mr. Barn. Very well, I understand ye; let's see, how many are there of ye? [*Tells 'em.*] One, two, three, four: well, gentlemen, 'tis but half a crown a-piece for yourselves, and sixpence a-head for your servants; your dinner shall be ready in half an hour; here, shew the gentlemen into the *Apollo*.

2 Gen. What, Sir, does your father keep an inn?

Mr. Barn. The *Sword Royal*; at your service, Sir.

Dor. But father let me speak to you; would you disgrace me?

Mr. Barn. My wine is very good, gentlemen, but to be very plain with ye, it is dear.

Dor. O, I shall run distracted.

Mr. Barn. You seem not to like my house, gentlemen; you may try all the inns in the county, and not be better entertained; but I own my bills run high.

Dor. Gentlemen, let me beg the favour of ye.

1 Gen. Ay, my young 'Squire of the *Sword Royal*', you shall receive some favours from us.

Dor. Dear Monsieur *le Garantiere*.

1 Gen. Here, my horse there.

Dor. Monsieur *la Rose*.

2 Gen. Damn ye, ye prig.

Dor. Monsieur *Trofignac*.

3 Gen. Go to the devil.

[*Exeunt Gentlemen.*]

Dor. O, I'm disgrac'd for ever.

Mr. *Barn.* Now, son, this will teach you how to live.

Dor. Your son? I deny the kindred; I'm the son of a whore, and I'll burn your house about your ears, you old rogue you.

[*Exit.*]

Mr. *Barn.* Ha, ha——

Griff. The young gentleman's in a passion.

Mr. *Barn.* They're all gone for all that, and the *Sword Royal's* the best general in Christendom.

Enter Erastus's servant, talking with Lisetta.

Lis. What, that tall gentleman I saw in the garden with ye?

Serv. The same, he's my master's uncle, and ranger of the king's forests——He intends to leave my master all he has.

Mr. *Barn.* Don't I know this scoundrel? What, is his master here? What do you do here, rascal?

Serv. I was asking which must be my master's chamber.

Mr. *Barn.* Where is your master?

Serv. Above stairs with your wife and daughter; and I want to know where he's to lie that I may put up his things.

Mr. *Barn.* Do you so, rascal?

Serv. A very handsome inn this——Here, drawer, fetch me a pint of wine.

Mr. *Barn.* Take that, rascal, do you banter us?

[*Kicks him out.*]

Enter Mrs. Barnard.

Mrs. *Barn.* What is the meaning of this, husband? Are not you asham'd to turn your house into an inn——and is this a dress for my spouse, and a man of your character?

Mr. *Barn.* I'd rather wear this dress than be ruin'd.

Mrs. *Barn.* You're nearer being so than you imagine: for there are some persons within, who have it in their power to punish you for your ridiculous folly.

Enter Erastus, leading in Mariamne.

Mr. *Barn.* How, Sir, what means this? who sent you here?

Er. It was the luckiest star in your firmament that sent me here.

Mr. *Barn.* Then I doubt, at my birth, the planets were but in a scurvy disposition.

Er. Killing one of the king's stags, that run hither for refuge, is enough to overturn a fortune much better established than yours——However, Sir, if you will consent to give me your daughter, for her sake I will bear you harmless.

Mr. *Barn.* No, Sir, no man shall have my daughter, that won't take my house too.

Er. Sir, I will take your house; pay you the full value of it, and you shall remain as much master of it as ever.

Mr. *Barn.* No, Sir, that won't do neither; you must be master yourself, and from this minute begin to do the honours of it in your own person.

Er. Sir, I readily consent.

Mr. *Barn.* Upon that condition, and in order to get rid of my house, here, take my daughter——And now, Sir, if you think you've a hard bargain, I don't care if I toss you in my wife to make you amends.

*Well then, since all things thus are fairly sped,
My Son in anger, and my Daughter wed;
My House dispos'd of, the sole cause of strife,
I now may hope to lead a happy life,
If I can part with my Engaging Wife.*

}
}
}



A
JOURNEY to LONDON.
Being Part of a
COMEDY.

Written by
Sir JOHN VANBRUGH.



Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

Sir *Francis Headpiece*, a country gentleman.
Lord *Loverule*.
Sir *Charles*.
Uncle *Richard*, uncle to Sir *Francis*.
Squire *Humphry*, son to Sir *Francis*.
Colonel *Courtly*.
John Moody, servant to Sir *Francis*.
James, servant to uncle *Richard*.

WOMEN.

Lady *Headpiece*.
Miss *Betty*, her daughter.
Lady *Arabella*, wife to Lord *Loverule*.
Clarinda, a young unmarried lady.
Mrs. *Motherly*, one that lets lodgings.
Martilla, her niece.

A JOURNEY *to* LONDON.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE *Uncle Richard's House.*

Uncle Richard solus.

WHAT prudent cares does this deep foreseeing nation take, for the support of its worshipful families! In order to which, and that they may not fail to be always significant and useful in their country, it is a settled foundation-point that every child that is born shall be a beggar—except one; and that he—shall be a fool—My grandfather was bred a fool, as the country report: my father was a fool,—as my mother used to say; my brother was a fool, to my own knowledge, though a great justice of the peace; and he has left a son, that will make his son a fool, or I am mistaken. The lad is now fourteen years old, and but just out of his Psalter. As to his honour'd father, my much esteem'd nephew, here I have him. [*Shewing a letter.*] In this proprofound epistle (which I have just now received) there is the top and bottom of him. Forty years and two is the age of him; in which it is computed by his butler, his own person has drank two and thirty ton of ale. The rest of his time has been employed in persecuting all the poor four-legg'd creatures round, that wou'd but run away fast enough from him, to give him the high-mettled pleasure of running after them. In this noble employ he has broke his right arm, his left leg, and both his collar-bones—Once he broke his neck, but that did him no harm: A nimble hedge leaper, a brother of the stirrup that was by, whipt off his horse and mended it. His estate being left him with two jointures, and three weighty mortgages upon it, he to make all easy, and pay his brother's and sister's portions, married a profuse young housewife for love, with never a penny of money. Having done all this, like his brave ancestors, for the support of the family, he now finds children and interest money make such a bawling about his ears, that he has taken the friendly advice of his neighbour, the good Lord *Courtlove*, to run his estate two thousand pounds more in debt, that he may retrieve his affairs by being a parliament-man, and bringing his wife to *London*, to play off an hundred pounds at dice with ladies of quality, before breakfast.

But let me read this wiseacre's letter once over again.

Most Honoured Uncle,

I do not doubt but you have much rejoiced at my success, in my election; it has cost me some money, I own: but what of all that! I am a parliament-man, and that will set all to rights. I have lived in the country all my days, 'tis true; but what then! I have made speeches at the sessions, and in the vestry too, and can elsewhere perhaps, as well as some others that do; and I have a noble friend hard by, who has let me into some small knowledge of what's what at Westminster. And so that I may always be at hand to serve my country, I have consulted with my wife, about taking a house at *London*, and bringing her and my family up to town; which, her opinion is, will be the rightest thing in the world.

My wife's opinion about bringing her to *London*! I'll read no more of thee—Beast.

[*Strikes the letter down with his stick.*]

Enter James hastily.

James. Sir, Sir, do you hear the news? they are all a-coming.

Unc. Rich. Ay, sirrah, I hear it with a pox to it.

James. Sir, here's *John Moody* arriv'd already; he's stumping about the streets in his dirty boots, and asking every man he meets, if they can tell where he may have a good lodging for a parliament-man, 'till he can hire such a house as becomes him; he tells them his lady and all the family are coming too, and that they are so nobly attended, they care not a fig for any body. Sir, they have added two cart-horses to the four old geldings, because my lady will have it said, she came to town in her coach and six, and (ha, ha,) heavy *George* the plowman rides postillion.

Unc. Rich. Very well; the journey begins as it shou'd do—*James.*

James. Sir.

Unc. Rich. Dost know whether they bring all the children with them?

James. Only 'Squire *Humphry*, and Miss *Betty*, Sir; the other six are put to board at half a crown a week a head, with *Joan Growse*, at *Smoke-Dunghill* farm.

Unc. Rich. The Lord have mercy upon all good folks! what work will these people make! dost know when they'll be here?

James. *John* says, Sir, they'd have been here last night, but that the old wheezy-belly horse tir'd, and the two fore-wheels came crash down at once in *Waggonrut*-lane. Sir, they were cruelly loaden, as I understand; my lady herself, he says, laid on four mail trunks, besides the great deal-box, which fat *Tom* sat upon behind.

Unc. Rich. Soh!

James. Then within the coach there was Sir *Francis*, my Lady, and the great fat lap-dog, 'Squire *Humphry*, Miss *Betty*, my Lady's maid Mrs. *Handy*, and *Doll Tripe* the cook; but she puked with sitting backward, so they mounted her into the coach-box.

Unc. Rich. Very well.

James. Then, Sir, for fear of a famine, before they should get to the baiting-place, there was such

baskets of plumb-cake, Dutch-gingerbread, Cheshire-cheese, Naples-biscuits, Macaroons, Neats-tongues, and cold boil'd beef—and in case of sickness, such bottles of usquebaugh, black cherry-brandy, cinamon-water, sack, tent, and strong beer, as made the old coach crack again.

Unc. *Rich.* Well said!

James. And for defence of this good cheer, and my Lady's little pearl necklace, there was the family basket-hilt sword, the great Turkish cimiter, the old blunderbuss, a good bag of bullets, and a great horn of gunpowder.

Unc. *Rich.* Admirable!

James. Then for band-boxes, they were so bepiled up to Sir *Francis's* nose, that he could only peep out at a chance hole with one eye, as if he were viewing the country thro' a perspective glass. But, Sir, if you please, I'll go look after *John Moody* a little for fear of accidents: For he never was in *London* before, you know, but one week, and then he was kidnapp'd into a house of ill repute, where he exchang'd all his money and clothes for a—um. So I'll go look after him, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Unc. *Rich.* Nay, I don't doubt but this wise expedition will be attended with more adventures than one.—This noble head, and supporter of his family, will, as an honest country gentleman, get credit enough amongst the tradesmen, to run so far in debt in one session, as will make him just fit for a gaol, when he's drop'd at the next election. He will make his speeches in the house to shew the government of what importance he can be to them, by which they will see, he can be of no importance at all; and he will find in time, that he stands valued at (if he votes right) being sometimes—invited to dinner. Then his wife (who has ten times more of a jade about her than he yet knows of) will so improve in this rich soil, she will, in one month, learn every vice the finest lady in the town can teach her. She will be extremely courteous to the fops who make love to her in jest, and she will be extremely grateful to those who do it in earnest. She will visit all ladies that will let her into their houses, and she will run in debt to all the shopkeepers that will let her into their books. In short, before her husband has got five pound by a speech at *Westminster*, she will have lost five hundred at cards and dice in the parish of *St. James's*. Wife and family to *London* with a pox!

[*Going off.*

Enter James and John Moody.

James. Dear *John Moody*, I'm so glad to see you in London once more.

John Moody. And I you, my dear *James*: Give me a kiss—Why that's friendly.

James. I wish they had been so, *John*, that you met with when you were here before.

John Moody. Ah—Murrain upon all rogues and whores, I say: But I am grown so cunning now, the de'el himself can't handle me. I have made a notable bargain for these lodgings here, we are to pay but five pounds a week, and have all the house to ourselves.

James. Where are the people that belong to it to be then?

John Moody. O! there's only the gentlewoman, her two maids, and a cousin, a very pretty civil young woman truly, and the maids are the merriest griggs—

James. Have a care, *John*.

John Moody. O, fear nothing, we did so play together last night.

James. Hush, here comes my master.

Enter Uncle Richard.

Unc. *Rich.* What! *John* has taken these lodgings, has he?

James. Yes, Sir, he has taken 'em.

Unc. *Rich.* Oh John! how dost do, honest John? I am glad to see thee with all my heart.

John Moody. I humbly thank your worship. I'm staut still, and a faithful awd servant to th' family. Heaven prosper aw that belong to't.

Unc. *Rich.* What, they are all upon the road?

John Moody. As mony as the awd coach wou'd hauld, Sir: the Lord send 'em well to tawn.

Unc. *Rich.* And well out on't again, John, ha!

John Moody. Ah, Sir! you are a wise man, so am I: home's home, I say. I wish we get any good here. I's sure we got little upo' the road. Some mischief or other aw the day long. Slap goes one thing, crack goes another; my Lady cries out for driving fast: The awd cattle are for going slow; *Roger* whips, they stand still and kick; nothing but a sort of a contradiction aw the journey long. My Lady wou'd gladly have been here last night, Sir, tho' there was no lodging got; but her Ladyship said, she did naw care for that, she'd lie in the inn where the horses stood, as long as it was in London.

Unc. *Rich.* These ladies, these ladies, *John*—

John Moody. Ah, Sir, I have seen a little of 'em, tho' not so much as my betters. Your worship is naw married yet?

Unc. *Rich.* No, *John* no; I am an old batchelor still.

John Moody. Heav'n's bless you and preserve you, Sir.

Unc. *Rich.* I think you have lost your good woman, John!

John Moody. No, sir, that I have not; *Bridget* sticks to me still, Sir, she was for coming to *London* too, but, no, says I, there may be mischief enough done without you.

Unc. *Rich.* Why that was bravely spoken, *John*, and like a man.

John Moody. Sir, were my measter but haf the mon that I am, Gadswookers—tho' he'll speak stautly too sometimes, but then he canno hawd it; no, he canno hawd it.

Enter Maid.

Maid. Mr. *Moody*, Mr. *Moody*, here's the coach come.

John Moody. Already? no, sure.

Maid. Yes, yes, it's at the door, they are getting out; my mistress is run to receive them.

John Moody. And so will I as in duty bound.

[*Exeunt John and maid.*]

Unc. *Rich.* And I will stay here, not being in duty bound to do the honours of this house.

Enter Sir Francis, Lady, 'Squire Humphry, Mrs. Betty, Mrs. Handy, Doll Tripe, John Moody, and Mrs. Motherly.

Lady Head. Do you hear, *Moody*, let all the things be first laid down here, and then carried where they'll be used.

John Moody. They shall, an't please your ladyship.

Lady Head. What, my uncle *Richard* here to receive us! this is kind indeed: Sir, I am extremely glad to see you.

Unc. *Rich.* Niece, your servant. [*Salutes her.*] I am extremely sorry to see you, in the worst place I know in the world for a good woman to grow better in. Nephew, I am your servant too; but I don't know how to bid you welcome.

Sir *Fran.* I am sorry for that, Sir.

Unc. *Rich.* Nay, 'tis for your own sake: I'm not concern'd.

Sir *Fran.* I hope, uncle, I shall give you such weighty reasons for what I've done, as shall convince you I'm a prudent man.

Unc. *Rich.* That wilt thou never convince me of, whilst thou shalt live.

[*Aside.*]

Sir *Fran.* Here, *Humphry*, come up to your uncle—Sir, this is your godson.

Squire Humph. Honour'd uncle and godfather; I creave leave to ask your blessing.

[*Kneels.*]

Unc. *Rich.* Thou art a numbscull I see already.

[*Aside.*]

There thou hast it. [*Puts his hand on his head.*] And if it will do thee any good, may it be, to make thee, at least, as wise a man as thy father.

Lady Head. Miss *Betty*, don't you see your uncle?

Unc. *Rich.* And for thee, my dear, may'st thou be, at least, as good a woman as thy mother.

Miss *Betty.* I wish I may ever be so handsome, Sir.

Unc. *Rich.* Ha! Miss *Pert!* now that's a thought that seems to have been hatch'd in the girl on this side *Highgate.*

[*Aside.*]

Sir *Fran.* Her tongue is a little nimble, Sir.

Lady Head. That's only from her country education, Sir *Francis*, she has been kept there too long; I therefore brought her to *London*, Sir, to learn more reserve and modesty.

Unc. *Rich.* O! the best place in the world for it. Every woman she meets, will teach her something of it. There's the good gentlewoman of the house, looks like a knowing person, ev'n she perhaps will be so good to read her a lesson, now and then, upon that subject. An arrant bawd, or I have no skill in physiognomy.

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. *Moth.* Alas, Sir, Miss won't stand long in need of my poor instructions; if she does, they'll be always at her service.

Lady Head. Very obliging, indeed, Mrs. *Motherly.*

Sir *Fran.* Very kind and civil truly; I believe we are got into a mighty good house here.

Unc. *Rich.* For good business, very probable.

[*Aside.*

Well, niece, your servant for to-night; you have a great deal of affairs upon your hands here, so I won't hinder you.

Lady *Head*. I believe, Sir, I shan't have much less every day, while I stay in this town, of one sort or other.

Unc. *Rich*. Why, 'tis a town of much action indeed.

Miss *Betty*. And my mother did not come to it to be idle, Sir.

Unc. *Rich*. Nor you neither, I dare say, young mistress.

Miss *Betty*. I hope not, Sir.

Unc. *Rich*. Um! Miss Mettle.

[*Going, Sir Francis following him.*

Where are you going, nephew?

Sir *Fran*. Only to attend you to the door, Sir.

Unc. *Rich*. Phu! no ceremony with me; you'll find I shall use none with you, or your family.

[*Exit.*

Sir *Fran*. I must do as you command me, Sir.

Miss *Petty*. This uncle *Richard*, papa, seems but a crusty sort of an old fellow.

Sir *Fran*. He is a little odd, child, but you must be very civil to him, for he has a great deal of money, and nobody knows who he may give it to.

Lady *Head*. Phu, a fig for his money; you have so many projects of late about money, since you are a parliament man, we must make ourselves slaves to his testy humours, seven years, perhaps, in hopes to be his heirs; and then, he'll be just old enough to marry his maid. But pray let us take care of our things here: Are they all brought in yet?

Mrs. *Han*. Almost, my lady, there are only some of the band-boxes behind, and a few odd things.

Lady *Head*. Let 'em be fetcht in presently.

Mrs. *Han*. They are here; come bring the things in: Is there all yet?

Serv. All but the great basket of apples and the goose-pye.

Enter Cookmaid.

Cook. Ah my Lady! we're aw undone, the goose-pye's gwon.

All. Gone?

Sir *Fran*. The goose-pye gone? how?

Cook. Why, Sir, I had got it fast under my arm to bring it in, but being almost dark, up comes two of these thin starv'd *London* rogues, one gives me a great kick o' the—here; [*Laying her hand upon her backside.*] while t'other hungry varlet twitch'd the dear pye out of my hands, and away they run down street like two grayhounds. I cry'd out fire! but heavy *George* and fat *Tom* are after 'em with a vengeance; they'll sauce their jackets for 'em, I'll warrant 'em.

Enter George with a bloody face, and Tom.

So, have you catch'd 'em?

Geo. Catch'd 'em! the gallows catch 'em for me. I had naw run half the length of our beam, before somewhat fetch me such a wherry across the shins, that dawn came I flop o' my face all along in the channel, and thought I shou'd ne'er ha gotten up again; but *Tom* has skawar'd after them, and cried murder as he'd been stuck.

Tom. Yes, and straight upo' that, swap comes somewhat across my forehead, with such a force, that dawn came I like an ox.

Squire *Humph*. So, the poor pye's quite gone then.

Tom. Gone, young measter, yeaten, I believe by this time. These, I suppose, are what they call sharpers in this country.

Squire *Humph*. It was a rare good pye.

Cook. As e'er these hands put pepper to.

Lady *Head*. Pray, Mrs. *Motherly*, do they make a practice of these things often here?

Mrs. *Moth*. Madam, they'll twitch a rump of beef out of a boiling copper: and for a silver tankard, they make no more conscience of than if it were a *Tunbridge* sugar box.

Sir *Fran*. I wish the coach and horses, *George*, were safe got to the inn. Do you and *Roger* take special care that nobody runs away with them, as you go thither.

Geo. I believe, Sir, our cattle won't yeasily be run away with to-night; but wee'st take best care we con of them, poor sauls!

[*Exit.*

Sir *Fran*. Do so, pray now.

Squire *Humph*. Feather, I had rather they had run away with heavy *George* than the goose-pye; a slice of it before supper to-night would have been pure.

Lady *Head*. This boy is always thinking of his belly.

Sir *Fran*. But, my dear, you may allow him to be a little hungry after a journey.

Lady *Head*. Pray, good Sir *Francis*, he has been constantly eating in the coach, and out of the coach, above seven hours this day. I wish my poor girl could eat a quarter as much.

Miss *Betty*. Mama, I could eat a good deal more than I do, but then I should grow fat mayhap, like him, and spoil my shape.

Lady *Head*. Mrs. *Motherly* will you be so kind to tell them where they shall carry the things.

Mrs. *Moth*. Madam I'll do the best I can: I doubt our closets will scarce hold 'em all, but we have garrets and cellars, which, with the help of hiring a store-room, I hope may do. Sir, will you be so good to help my maids a little in carrying away the things.

[To Tom.

Tom. With all my heart, forsooth, if I con but see my way; but these whoresons have awmost knockt my eyen awt.

[They carry off the things.

Mrs. *Moth*. Will your ladyship please to refresh yourself with a dish of tea, after your fatigue? I think I have pretty good.

Lady *Head*. If you please, Mrs. *Motherly*.

Squire *Humph*. Would not a good tankard of strong beer, nutmeg and sugar, do better, feather, with a toast and some cheese?

Sir *Fran*. I think it would, son: Here, *John Moody*, get us a tankard of good heavy stuff presently.

John Moody. Sir, here's *Norfolk Nog* to be had next door.

Squire *Humph*. That's best of all, feather; but make haste with it, *John*.

[Exit Moody.

Lady *Head*. Well, I wonder, Sir *Francis*, you will encourage that lad to swill his guts thus with such beastly lubberly liquor; if it were *Burgundy* or *Champain*, something might be said for't; they'd perhaps give him some wit and spirit; but such heavy, muddy stuff as this, will make him quite stupid.

Sir *Fran*. Why you know, my dear, I have drank good ale, and strong beer these thirty years, and by your permission I don't know, that I want wit.

Miss *Betty*. But I think you might have more papa, if you'd have been govern'd by my mother.

Enter John Moody with a tankard.

Sir *Fran*. Daughter, he that is govern'd by his wife, has no wit at all.

Miss *Betty*. Then I hope I shall marry a fool, father, for I shall love to govern dearly.

Sir *Fran*. Here, *Humphry*, here's to thee.

[Drinks.

You are too pert, child it don't do well in a young woman.

Lady *Head*. Pray, Sir *Francis*, don't snub her; she has a fine growing spirit, and if you check her so, you'll make her as dull as her brother there.

Squire *Humph*. Indeed Mother, I think my sister is too forward.

[After drinking a long draught.

Miss *Betty*. You? you think I'm too forward? what have you to do to think, brother Heavy? you are too fat to think of any thing but your belly.

Lady *Head*. Well said, Miss; he's none of your master, tho' he's your elder brother.

Enter George.

Geo. Sir, I have no good opinion of this tawn, it's made up of mischief, I think.

Sir *Fran*. Why, what's the matter now?

Geo. I'se tell your worship; before we were gotten to the street-end, a great lugger-headed cart, with wheels as thick as a good brick wall, layd hawld of the coach, and has pood it aw to bits: an this be *London*, wo'd we were all weel i' th' country again.

Miss *Betty*. What have you to do, Sir, to wish us all in the country again, lubber? I hope we shan't go into the country again these seven years, Mama, let twenty coaches be pull'd to pieces.

Sir *Fran*. Hold your tongue, *Betty*. Was *Roger* in no fault of this?

Geo. No, Sir, nor I neither. Are you not asham'd, says *Roger* to the carter, to do such an unkind thing to strangers? No, says he, you bumkin. Sir, he did the thing on very purpose, and so the folks said that stood by; but they said your worship need na be concerned, for you might have a law-suit with him when you pleas'd, that wou'd not cost you above a hundred pounds, and mayhap you might get the better of him.

Sir *Fran*. I'll try what I can do with him, I'gad, I'll make such—

Squire *Humph*. Feather, have him before the parliament.

Sir *Fran*. And so I will: I'll make him know who I am. Where does he live?

Geo. I believe in *London*, Sir.

Sir *Fran*. What's the villain's name?

Geo. I think I heard somebody call him *Dick*.

Sir *Fran*. Where did he go?

Geo. Sir, he went home.

Sir *Fran*. Where's that?

Geo. By my troth I do naw know. I heard him say he had nothing more to do with us to-night, and so he'd go home and smoke a pipe.

Lady *Head*. Come, Sir *Francis*, don't put yourself in a heat; accidents will happen to people in travelling abroad to see the world. Eat your supper heartily, go to bed, sleep quietly, and to-morrow see if you can buy a handsome second-hand coach for the present use, bespeak a new one, and then all's easy.

[*Exeunt*.

Enter Colonel Courtly.

Col. Who's that, *Deborah*?

Deb. At your service, Sir.

Col. What, do you keep open house here? I found the street door as wide as it could gape.

Deb. Sir, we are all in a bustle, we have lodgers come to-night, the house full.

Col. Where's your mistress?

Deb. Prodigious busy with her company, but I'll tell Mrs. *Martilla* you are here, I believe she'll come to you.

[*Exit*.

Col. That will do as well. Poor *Martilla*! she's a very good girl, and I have lov'd her a great while. I think six months it is, since like a merciless highwayman, I made her deliver all she had about her; she begg'd hard, poor thing, I'd leave her one small bauble. Had I let her keep it, I believe she had still kept me. Cou'd women but refuse their ravenous lovers that one dear destructive moment, how long might they reign over them! But for a bane to both their joys and ours, when they have indulg'd us with such favours as make us adore them, they are not able to refuse us that one, which puts an end to our devotion.

Enter Martilla.

Col. *Martilla*, how dost thou do, my child?

Mart. As well as a losing gamester can.

Col. Why, what have you lost?

Mart. I have lost you.

Col. How came you to lose me?

Mart. By losing myself.

Col. We can be friends still.

Mart. Dull ones.

Col. Useful ones, perhaps. Shall I help thee to a good husband?

Mart. Not if I were rich enough to live without one.

Col. I'm sorry I'm not rich enough to make thee so; but we won't talk of melancholy things. Who are these folks your aunt has got in her house?

Mart. One Sir *Francis Headpiece* and his Lady, with a son and daughter.

Col. *Headpiece*! Cotso, I know 'em a little. I met with 'em at a race in the country two years since; a sort of blockhead, is not he?

Mart. So they say.

Col. His wife seem'd a mettlesome gentlewoman, if she had but a fair field to range in.

Mart. That she won't want now, for they stay in town the whole winter.

Col. Oh that will do to shew all her parts in.

Enter Mrs. Motherly.

How do you do, my old acquaintance?

Mrs. *Moth*. At your service, you know, always colonel.

Col. I hear you have got good company in the house.

Mrs. *Moth*. I hope it will prove so; he's a parliament man only, colonel, you know there's some danger in that.

Col. O, never fear, he'll pay his landlady, tho' he don't pay his butcher.

Mrs. *Moth*. His wife's a clever woman.

Col. So she is.

Mrs. *Moth*. How do you know?

Col. I have seen her in the country, and begin to think I'll visit her in town.

Mrs. *Moth*. You begin to look like a rogue.

Col. What, your wicked fancies are stirring already?

Mrs. *Moth*. Yours are, or I'm mistaken. But I'll have none of your pranks play'd upon her.

Col. Why, she's no girl, she can defend herself.

Mrs. *Moth*. But what if she won't?

Col. Why then she can blame neither you nor me.

Mrs. *Moth*. You'll never be quiet till you get my windows broke; but I must go and attend my lodgers, so good night.

Col. Do so, and give my service to my lady, and tell her, if she'll give me leave, I'll do myself the honour to-morrow to come and tender my services to her, as long as she stays in town. If it ben't too long.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. *Moth*. I'll tell her what a devil you are, and advise her to take care of you.

[*Exit.*

Col. Do, that will make her every time she sees me think what I'd be at. Dear *Martilla*, good night; I know you won't be my hindrance; I'll do you as good a turn some time or other. Well, I'm so glad, you don't love me too much.

Mart. When that's our fate, as too, too oft we prove, How bitterly we pay the past delights of love.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Lord Loverule's House.

Enter Lord Loverule, and Lady Arabella. He following her.

Lady *Ara*. **W**ELL, look you, my Lord, I can bear it no longer; nothing still but about my faults, my faults! an agreeable subject truly!

Lord *Love*. But, Madam, if you won't hear of your faults, how is it likely you shou'd ever mend 'em?

Lady *Ara*. Why I don't intend to mend 'em. I can't mend 'em, I have told you so an hundred times; you know I have try'd to do it, over and over, and it hurts me so, I can't bear it. Why, don't you know, my Lord, that whenever (just to please you only) I have gone about to wean myself from a fault (one of my faults I mean that I love dearly) han't it put me so out of humour, you cou'd scarce endure the house with me?

Lord *Love*. Look you, my dear, it is very true, that in weaning one's self from—

Lady *Ara*. Weaning! why ay, don't you see, that even in weaning poor children from the nurse, it's almost the death of 'em? and don't you see your true religious people when they go about to wean themselves, and have solemn days of fasting and praying, on purpose to help them, does it not so disorder them, there's no coming near 'em? are they not as cross as the devil? and then they don't do the business neither; for next day their faults are just where they were the day before.

Lord *Love*. But, Madam, can you think it a reasonable thing to be abroad till two o'clock in the morning, when you know I go to bed at eleven?

Lady *Ara*. And can you think it a wise thing (to talk your own way now) to go to bed at eleven, when you know I am likely to disturb you by coming there at three?

Lord *Love*. Well, the manner of womens living of late is insupportable, and some way or other—

Lady *Ara*. It's to be mended, I suppose—Pray, my Lord, one word of fair argument: You complain of my late hours; I of your early ones; so far we are even, you'll allow; but which gives us the best figure in the eye of the polite world? my two o'clock speaks life, activity, spirit, and vigour; your eleven has a dull, drowsy, stupid, good-for-nothing sound with it. It favours much of a mechanic, who must get to bed betimes, that he may rise early to open his shop. Faugh!

Lord *Love*. I thought to go to bed early and rise so, was ever esteem'd a right practice for all people.

Lady *Ara*. Beasts do it.

Lord *Love*. Fy, fy, Madam, fy; but 'tis not your ill hours alone disturb me; but the ill company who occasion those ill hours.

Lady *Ara*. And pray what ill company may those be?

Lord *Love*. Why, women that lose their money, and men that win it: especially when 'tis to be paid out of their husband's estate; or if that fail, and the creditor be a little pressing, the lady will, perhaps, be oblig'd to try if the gentleman instead of gold will accept of a trinket.

Lady *Ara*. My Lord, you grow scurrilous, and you'll make me hate you. I'll have you to know, I keep company with the politest people in the town, and the assemblies I frequent are full of such.

Lord *Love*. So are the churches now and then.

Lady *Ara*. My friends frequent them often, as well as the assemblies.

Lord *Love*. They wou'd do it oftener if a groom of the chamber there were allow'd to furnish cards and dice to the company.

Lady *Ara*. You'd make a woman mad.

Lord *Love*. You'd make a man a fool.

Lady *Ara*. If Heav'n has made you otherwise, that won't be in my power.

Lord *Love*. I'll try if I can prevent your making me a beggar at least.

Lady *Ara*. A beggar! Cræsus! I'm out of patience—I won't come home 'till four to-morrow morning.

Lord *Love*. I'll order the doors to be lock'd at twelve.

Lady *Ara*. Then I won't come home till to-morrow night.

Lord *Love*. Then you shall never come home again, Madam.

[*Exit.*]

Lady *Ara*. There he has knock'd me down: my father upon our marriage said, wives were come to that pass, he did not think it fit they shou'd be trusted with pin money, and so would not let this man settle one penny upon his poor wife, to serve her at a dead lift for separate maintenance.

Enter Clarinda.

Clar. Good-morrow, Madam; how do you do to-day? you seem to be in a little fluster.

Lady Ara. My Lord has been in one, and as I am the most complaisant poor creature in the world, I put myself into one too, purely to be suitable company to him.

Clar. You are prodigious good; but surely it must be mighty agreeable when a man and his wife can give themselves the same turn of conversation.

Lady Ara. O, the prettiest thing in the world.

Clar. But yet, tho' I believe there's no life so happy as a marry'd one, in the main; yet I fancy, where two people are so very much together, they must often be in want of something to talk upon.

Lady Ara. *Clarinda*, you are the most mistaken in the world; married people have things to talk of, child, that never enter into the imagination of others. Why now, here's my Lord and I, we han't been married above two short years you know, and we have already eight or ten things constantly in bank, that whenever we want company we can talk of any of them for two hours together, and the subject never the flatter. It will be as fresh next day, if we have occasion for it, as it was the first day it entertained us.

Clar. Why that must be wonderful pretty.

Lady Ara. O there's no life like it. This very day now for example, my Lord and I, after a pretty cheerful *tête à tête* dinner, sat down by the fire-side, in an idle, indolent, pick-tooth way for a while, as if we had not thought of one another's being in the room. At last, stretching himself, and yawning twice, my dear, says he, you came home very late last night. 'Twas but two in the morning, says I. I was in bed (*yawning*) by eleven, says he. So you are every night, says I. Well, says he, I'm amazed how you can sit up so late. How can you be amazed, says I, at a thing that happens so often? Upon which we enter'd into conversation. And tho' this is a point has entertain'd us above fifty times already, we always find so many pretty new things to say upon't, that I believe in my soul it will last as long as we live.

Clar. But in such sort of family dialogues, tho' extremely well for passing of time, don't there now and then enter some little sort of bitterness?

Lady Ara. O yes; which don't do amiss at all; a little something that's sharp, moderates the extreme sweetness of matrimonial society, which would else perhaps be cloying. Tho' to tell you the truth, *Clarinda*, I think we squeezed a little too much lemon into it this bout; for it grew so sour at last, that I think I almost told him he was a fool; and he talkt something oddly of turning me out of doors.

Clar. O, but have a care of that.

Lady Ara. Why, to be serious, *Clarinda*, what wou'd you have a woman do in my case? There is no one thing he can do in the world to please me—Except giving me money; and that he is grown weary of; and I at the same time, partly by nature, and partly perhaps by keeping the best company, do with my soul love almost every thing that he hates; I dote upon assemblies, adore masquerades, my heart bounds at a ball; I love a play to distraction, cards inchant me, and dice—put me out of my little wits—Dear, dear hazard, what music there is in the rattle of the dice, compared to a sleepy opera! Do you ever play at hazard, *Clarinda*?

Clar. Never; I don't think it fits well upon women; it's very masculine, and has too much of a rake; you see how it makes the men swear and curse. Sure it must incline the women to do the same too if they durst give way to it.

Lady Ara. So it does; but hitherto for a little decency, we keep it in; and when in spite of our teeth, an oath gets into our mouths, we swallow it.

Clar. That's enough to burst you; but in time perhaps you'll let 'em fly as they do.

Lady Ara. Why, 'tis probable we may, for the pleasure of all polite womens lives now, you know, is founded upon entire liberty to do what they will. But shall I tell you what happened t'other night? having lost all my money but ten melancholy guineas, and throwing out for them, what do you think slipt from me?

Clar. An oath?

Lady Ara. Gud soon!

Clar. O Lord! O Lord! did not it frighten you out of your wits?

Lady Ara. *Clarinda*, I thought a gun had gone off.—But I forget you are a prude, and design to live soberly.

Clar. Why 'tis true; both my nature and education, do in a good degree incline me that way.

Lady Ara. Well, surely to be sober is to be terribly dull. You will marry; won't you?

Clar. I can't tell but I may.

Lady Ara. And you'll live in town?

Clar. Half the year, I should like it very well.

Lady Ara. And you wou'd live in *London* half a year, to be sober in it?

Clar. Yes.

Lady *Ara*. Why can't you as well go and be sober in the country?

Clar. So I wou'd the other half year.

Lady *Ara*. And pray what pretty scheme of life wou'd you form now, for your summer and winter sober entertainments?

Clar. A scheme that I think might very well content us.

Lady *Ara*. Let's hear it.

Clar. I cou'd in summer pass my time very agreeably, in riding soberly, in walking soberly, in sitting under a tree soberly, in gardening soberly, in reading soberly, in hearing a little music soberly, in conversing with some agreeable friends soberly, in working soberly, in managing my family and children (if I had any) soberly, and possibly by these means I might induce my husband to be as sober as myself.

Lady *Ara*. Well, *Clarinda*, thou art a most contemptible creature. But let's have the sober town scheme too, for I am charm'd with the country one.

Clar. You shall, and I'll try to stick to my sobriety there too.

Lady *Ara*. If you do, you'll make me sick of you. But let's hear it however.

Clar. I wou'd entertain myself in observing the new fashion soberly, I wou'd please myself in new clothes soberly, I wou'd divert myself with agreeable friends at home and abroad soberly. I wou'd play at quadrille soberly, I wou'd go to court soberly, I wou'd go to some plays soberly, I wou'd go to operas soberly, and I think I cou'd go once, or, if I lik'd my company, twice to a masquerade, soberly.

Lady *Ara*. If it had not been for that last piece of sobriety, I was going to call for some surfeit-water.

Clar. Why, don't you think, that with the further aid of breakfasting, dining, supping and sleeping (not to say a word of devotion) the four and twenty hours might roll over in a tolerable manner?

Lady *Ara*. How I detest that word, Tolerable! And so will a country relation of ours that's newly come to town, or I'm mistaken.

Clar. Who is that?

Lady *Ara*. Even my dear Lady *Headpiece*.

Clar. Is she come?

Lady *Ara*. Yes, her sort of a tolerable husband has gotten to be chosen parliament-man at some simple town or other, upon which she has persuaded him to bring her and her folks up to *London*.

Clar. That's good; I think she was never here before.

Lady *Ara*. Not since she was nine years old; but she has had an outrageous mind to it ever since she was marry'd.

Clar. Then she'll make the most of it, I suppose, now she is come.

Lady *Ara*. Depend upon that.

Clar. We must go and visit her.

Lady *Ara*. By all means; and may be you'll have a mind to offer her your tolerable scheme for her *London* diversion this winter; if you do, mistress, I'll shew her mine too, and you'll see she'll so despise you and adore me, that if I do but chirrup to her, she'll hop after me like a tame sparrow, the town round. But there's your admirer I see coming in, I'll oblige him and leave you to receive part of his visit, while I step up to write a letter. Besides, to tell you the truth, I don't like him half so well as I used to do; he falls off of late from being the company he was, in our way. In short, I think he's growing to be a little like my lord.

[*Exit*.

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir *Charles*. Madam, your servant; they told me Lady *Arabella* was here.

Clar. She's only stept up to write a letter, she'll come down presently.

Sir *Charles*. Why, does she write letters? I thought she had never time for't: pray how may she have dispos'd of the rest of the day?

Clar. A good deal as usual; she has visits to make 'till six; she's then engag'd to the play, from that 'till court-time, she's to be at cards at Mrs. *Idle*'s; after the drawing-room, she takes a short supper with Lady *Hazard*, and from thence they go together to the assembly.

Sir *Charles*. And are you to do all this with her?

Clar. The visits and the play, no more.

Sir *Charles*. And how can you forbear all the rest?

Clar. 'Tis easy to forbear, what we are not very fond of.

Sir *Charles*. I han't found it so. I have past much of my life in this hurry of the ladies, yet was never so pleas'd as when I was at quiet without 'em.

Clar. What then induc'd you to be with 'em?

Sir *Charles*. Idleness and the fashion.

Clar. No mistresses in the case?

Sir *Charles*. To speak honestly, yes. When one is in a toyshop, there was no forbearing the baubles; so I was perpetually engaging with some coquet or other, whom I cou'd love perhaps just enough to put it into her power to plague me.

Clar. Which power I suppose she sometimes made use of.

Sir *Charles*. The amours of a coquet, Madam, general'y mean nothing farther; I look upon them and prudes to be nuisances much alike, tho' they seem very different; the first are always disturbing the men, and the latter always abusing the women.

Clar. And all I think is to establish the character of being virtuous.

Sir *Charles*. That is, being chaste they mean, for they know no other virtue; therefore indulge themselves in every thing else that's vicious; they (against nature) keep their chastity, only because they find more pleasure in doing mischief with it, than they shou'd have in parting with it. But, Madam, if both these characters are so odious, how highly to be valued is that woman, who can attain all they aim at, without the aid of the folly or vice of either!

Enter Lady Arabella.

Lady *Ara*. Your servant, Sir. I won't ask your pardon for leaving you alone a little with a lady that I know shares so much of your good opinion.

Sir *Charles*. I wish, Madam, she cou'd think my good opinion of value enough, to afford me a small part in hers.

Lady *Ara*. I believe, Sir, every woman who knows she has a place in a fine gentleman's good opinion, will be glad to give him one in hers, if she can. But however you two may stand in one another's, you must take another time, if you desire to talk farther about it, or we shan't have enough to make our visits in; and so your servant, Sir. Come, *Clarinda*.

Sir *Charles*. I'll stay and make my Lord a visit, if you will give me leave.

Lady *Ara*. You have my leave, Sir, tho' you were a Lady.

[Exit with Clar.

Enter Lord Loverule.

Lord *Love*. Sir *Charles*, your servant; what, have the ladies left you?

Sir *Charles*. Yes, and the ladies in general I hope will leave me too.

Lord *Love*. Why so?

Sir *Charles*. That I mayn't be put to the ill manners of leaving them first.

Lord *Love*. Do you then already find your gallantry inclining to an ebb?

Sir *Charles*. 'Tis not that I am yet old enough to justify myself in an idle retreat, but I have got I think a sort of surfeit on me, that lessens much the force of female charms.

Lord *Love*. Have you then been so glutted with their favours?

Sir *Charles*. Not with their favours, but with their service; it is unmerciful. I once thought myself a tolerable time-killer; I drank, I play'd, I intrigu'd, and yet I had hours enough for reasonable uses; but he that will list himself a lady's man of mettle now, she'll work him so at cards and dice, she won't afford him time enough to play with her at any thing else, though she herself should have a tolerable good mind to it.

Lord *Love*. And so the disorderly lives they lead, incline you to a reform of your own.

Sir *Charles*. 'Tis true; for bad examples (if they are but bad enough) give us as useful reflections as good ones do.

Lord *Love*. 'Tis pity any thing that's bad, shou'd come from women.

Sir *Charles*. 'Tis so, indeed, and there was a happy time, when both you and I thought there never could.

Lord *Love*. Our early first conceptions of them, I well remember, were that they never could be vicious, nor never could be old.

Sir *Charles*. We thought so then; the beauteous form we saw them cast in, seem'd design'd a habitation for no vice, nor no decay; all I had conceiv'd of angels, I conceiv'd of them; true, tender, gentle, modest, generous, constant, I thought was writ in every feature; and in my devotions, Heaven, how did I adore thee, that blessings like them should be the portion of such poor inferior creatures as I took myself and all men else (compared with them) to be!—but where's that adoration now?

Lord *Love*. 'Tis with such fond young fools as you and I were then.

Sir *Charles*. And with such it will ever be.

Lord *Love*. Ever. The pleasure is so great, in believing women to be what we wish them, that nothing but a long and sharp experience can ever make us think them otherwise. That experience, friend, both you and I have had, but yours has been at other mens expence; mine— at my own.

Sir *Charles*. Perhaps you'd wonder, shou'd you find me dispos'd to run the risque of that experience too.

Lord *Love*. I shou'd, indeed.

Sir *Charles*. And yet 'tis possible I may; I know at least, I still have so much of my early folly left, to think, there's yet one woman fit to make a wife of: How far such a one can answer the charms of a mistress, marry'd men are silent in, so pass—for that I'd take my chance; but cou'd she make a home easy to her partner, by letting him find there a chearful companion, an agreeable intimate, a useful assistant, a faithful friend, and (in its time perhaps) a tender mother, such change of life, from what I lead, seems not unwise to think of.

Lord *Love*. Nor unwise to purchase, if to be had for millions, but—

Sir *Charles*. But what?

Lord *Love*. If the reverse of this shou'd chance to be the bitter disappointment, what wou'd the life be then?

Sir *Charles*. A damn'd one.

Lord *Love*. And what relief?

Sir *Charles*. A short one; leave it, and return to that you left, if you can't find a better.

Lord *Love*. He says right—that's the remedy, and a just one—for if I sell my liberty for gold, and I am foully paid in brass, shall I be held to keep the bargain?

[*Aside*..

Sir *Charles*. What are you thinking of?

Lord *Love*. Of what you have said.

Sir *Charles*. And was it well said?

Lord *Love*. I begin to think it might.

Sir *Charles*. Think on, 'twill give you ease—the man who has courage enough to part with a wife need not much dread the having one; and he that has not, ought to tremble at being a husband—But perhaps I have said too much; you'll pardon however the freedom of an old friend, because you know I am so; so your servant.

[*Exit*..

Lord *Love*. *Charles*, farewell, I can take nothing as ill-meant that comes from you. Nor ought my wife to think I mean amiss to her; if I convince her I'll endure no longer that she would thus expose herself and me. No doubt 'twill grieve her sorely. Physick's a loathsome thing, 'till we find it gives us health, and then we are thankful to those who made us take it. Perhaps she may do so by me, if she does, 'tis well; if not, and she resolves to make the house ring with reprisals: I believe (tho' the misfortune's great) he'll make a better figure in the world, who keeps an ill wife out of doors, than he that keeps her within.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Lady Headpiece and Mrs. Motherly.

Lady *Head.* So, you are acquainted with Lady *Arabella*, I find.

Mrs. *Moth.* Oh, Madam, I have had the honour to know her Ladyship almost from a child, and a charming woman she has made.

Lady *Head.* I like her prodigiously; I had some acquaintance with her in the country two years ago; but she's quite another woman here.

Mrs. *Moth.* Ah, Madam, two years keeping company with the polite people of the town will do wonders in the improvement of a lady, so she has it but about her.

Lady *Head.* Now 'tis my misfortune, Mrs. *Motherly*, to come late to school.

Mrs. *Moth.* Oh! don't be discourag'd at that, Madam, the quickness of your ladyship's parts will easily recover your loss of a little time.

Lady *Head.* O! You flatter me! But I'll endeavour by industry and application to make it up; such parts as I have shall not lie idle. My Lady *Arabella* has been so good to offer me already her introduction, to those assemblies, where a woman may soonest learn to make herself valuable to every body.

Mrs. *Moth.* But her husband. [*Aside.*] Her Ladyship, Madam, can indeed, better than any body, introduce you, where every thing that accomplishes a fine lady, is practised to the last perfection; Madam, she herself is at the very tip-top of it—'tis pity, poor lady, she shou'd meet with any discouragements.

Lady *Head.* Discouragements! from whence pray?

Mrs. *Moth.* From home sometimes—my Lord a—

Lady *Head.* What does he do?

Mrs. *Moth.* But one should not talk of people of qualities family-concerns.

Lady *Head.* O, no matter, Mrs. *Motherly*, as long as it goes no farther. My Lord, you were saying —

Mrs. *Moth.* Why, my Lord, Madam, is a little humoursome, they say.

Lady *Head.* Humoursome?

Mrs. *Moth.* Yes, they say he's humoursome.

Lady *Head.* As how, pray?

Mrs. *Moth.* Why, if my poor lady perhaps does but stay out at night, may be four or five hours after he's in bed, he'll be cross.

Lady *Head.* What, for such a thing as that?

Mrs. *Moth.* Yes, he'll be cross; and then if she happens, it may be, to be unfortunate at play, and lose a great deal of money, more than she has to pay, then Madam—he'll snub.

Lady *Head.* Out upon him! snub such a woman as she is? I can tell you, Mrs. *Motherly*, I that am but a country lady, should Sir *Francis* take upon him to snub me, in *London*, he'd raise a spirit would make his hair stand on end.

Mrs. *Moth.* Really, Madam, that's the only way to deal with 'em.

Enter Miss Betty.

And here comes pretty Miss *Betty*, that I believe will never be made a fool of, when she's married.

Miss *Betty.* No by my troth won't I. What are you talking of my being married, mother?

Lady *Head.* No, Miss; Mrs. *Motherly* was only saying what a good wife you wou'd make, when you were so.

Miss *Betty.* The sooner it is try'd, mother, the sooner it will be known. Lord, here's the colonel, Madam!

Enter Colonel.

Lady *Head.* Colonel, your servant.

Miss *Betty.* Your servant, colonel.

Col. Ladies, your most obedient—I hope, Madam, the town air agrees with you?

Lady *Head.* Mighty well, Sir.

Miss *Betty.* Oh prodigious well, Sir. We have bought a new coach and an ocean of new clothes, and we are to go to the play to-night, and to-morrow we go to the opera, and next night we go to the assembly, and then the next night after, we—

Lady *Head.* Softly, Miss—Do you go to the play to-night, colonel?

Col. I did not design it, Madam; but now I find there is to be such good company, I'll do myself the honour (if you'll give me leave, ladies) to come and lead you to your coach.

Lady Head. It's extremely obliging.

Miss Betty. It is indeed mighty well-bred. Lord! colonel, what a difference there is between your way and our country companions; one of them would have said, what, you are aw gooing to the playhouse then? Yes, says we, won't you come and lead us out? No, by good feggins, says he, ye ma' e'en ta' care o' yoursell, y'are awd enough; and so he'd ha' gone to get drunk at the tavern against we came home to supper.

Mrs. Moth. Ha, ha, ha! well, sure Madam, your Ladyship is the happiest mother in the world to have such a charming companion to your daughter.

Col. The prettiest creature upon earth!

Miss Betty. D'ye hear that, mother? Well, he's a fine gentleman really, and I think a man of admirable sense.

Lady Head. Softly, Miss, he'll hear you.

Miss Betty. If he does, Madam, he'll think I say true, and he'll like me never the worse for that, I hope. Where's your niece *Martilla*, Mrs. *Motherly*? Mama, won't you carry *Martilla* to the play with us?

Lady Head. With all my heart, child.

Col. She's a very pretty civil sort of woman, Madam, and miss will be very happy in having such a companion in the house with her.

Miss Betty. So I shall indeed, Sir, and I love her dearly already, we are growing very great together.

Lady Head. But what's become of your brother, child? I han't seen him these two hours, where is he?

Miss Betty. Indeed, mother, I don't know where he is; I saw him asleep about half an hour ago by the kitchen fire.

Col. Must not he go to the play too?

Lady Head. Yes, I think he shou'd go, tho' he'll be weary on't, before it's half done.

Miss Betty. Weary? yes; and then he'll sit, and yawn, and stretch like a grayhound by the fire-side, 'till he does some nasty thing or other, that they'll turn him out of the house, so it's better to leave him at home.

Mrs. Moth. O, that were pity, Miss. Plays will enliven him—see, here he comes, and my niece with him.

Enter Squire Humphry and Martilla.

Col. Your servant, Sir; you come in good time, the ladies are all going to the play, and wanted you to help to gallant them.

Squire Humph. And so 'twill be nine o'clock, before one shall get any supper.

Miss Betty. Supper! why your dinner is not out of your mouth yet, at least 'tis all about the brims of it. See how greasy his chops is, mother.

Lady Head. Nay, if he han't a mind to go, he need not. You may stay here 'till your father comes home from the parliament-house, and then you may eat a broil'd bone together.

Miss Betty. Yes, and drink a tankard of strong beer together; and then he may tell you all he has been doing in the parliament-house, and you may tell him all you have been thinking of when you were asleep, in the kitchen: and then if you'll put it all down in writing, when we come from the play, I'll read it to the company.

Squire Humph. Sister, I don't like your joking, and you are not a well-behav'd young woman; and altho' my mother encourages you, my thoughts are, you are not too big to be whipt.

Miss Betty. How, sirrah?

Squire Humph. There's a civil young gentlewoman stands there, is worth a hundred of you. And I believe she'll be married before you.

Miss Betty. Cots my life, I have a good mind to pull your eyes out.

Lady Head. Hold, Miss, hold, don't be in such a passion, neither.

Miss Betty. Mama, it is not that I am angry at any thing he says to commend *Martilla*, for I wish she were to be marry'd to-morrow, that I might have a dance at her wedding; but what need he abuse me for? I wish the lout had mettle enough to be in love with her, she'd make pure sport with him. [*Aside.*] Does your Heaviness find any inclinations moving towards the lady you admire—Speak! are you in love with her?

Squire Humph. I am in love with nobody; and if any body be in love with me, mayhap they had as good be quiet.

Miss Betty. Hold your tongue, I'm quite sick of you. Come, *Martilla*, you are to go to the play with us.

Mart. Am I, Miss? I am ready to wait upon you.

Lady *Head.* I believe it's time we should be going; Colonel, is not it?

Col. Yes, Madam, I believe it is.

Lady *Head.* Come, then; who is there?

Enter Servant.

Is the coach at the door?

Serv. It has been there this hafe haur, so please your Ladyship.

Miss *Betty.* And are all the people in the street gazing at it, *Tom*?

Serv. That are they, Madam; and *Roger* has drank so much of his own beveridge, that he's even as it were gotten a little drunk.

Lady *Head.* Not so drunk, I hope, but that he can drive us?

Serv. Yes, yes, Madam, he drives best when he's a little upish. When *Roger's* head turns, raund go the wheels, i'faith.

Miss *Betty.* Never fear, Mama, as long as it's to the playhouse, there's no danger.

Lady *Head.* Well, daughter, since you are so courageous, it shan't be said I make any difficulty; and if the Colonel is so gallant, to have a mind to share our danger, we have room for him, if he pleases.

Col. Madam, you do me a great deal of honour, and I'm sure you give me a great deal of pleasure.

Miss *Betty.* Come, dear Mama, away we go.

[*Exeunt all but Squire, Martilla, and Mrs. Motherly.*

Squire *Humph.* I did not think you would have gone.

[*To Martilla.*

Mart. O, I love a play dearly.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. *Moth.* I wonder, Squire, that you wou'd not go to the play with 'em.

Squire *Humph.* What needed *Martilla* have gone? they were enough without her.

Mrs. *Moth.* O, she was glad to go to divert herself; and besides, my Lady desired her to go with them.

Squire *Humph.* And so I am left alone.

Mrs. *Moth.* Why, wou'd you have car'd for her company?

Squire *Humph.* Rather than none.

Mrs. *Moth.* On my conscience he's ready to cry; this is matter to think of: but here comes Sir *Francis.*

[*Aside.*

Enter Sir Francis.

How do you do, Sir? I'm afraid these late parliament hours won't agree with you.

Sir *Fran.* Indeed, I like them not, Mrs. *Motherly*; if they wou'd dine at twelve o'clock, as we do in the country, a man might be able to drink a reasonable bottle between that and supper-time.

Mrs. *Moth.* That wou'd be much better indeed, Sir *Francis.*

Sir *Fran.* But then when we consider that what we undergo, is in being busy for the good of our country,—O, the good of our country is above all things; what a noble and glorious thing it is, Mrs. *Motherly*, that *England* can boast of five hundred zealous gentlemen, all in one room, all of one mind, upon a fair occasion, to go altogether by the ears for the good of their country!—*Humphry*, perhaps you'll be a senator in time, as your father is now; and when you are, remember your country; spare nothing for the good of your country! and when you come home, at the end of the sessions, you will find yourself so adored, that your country will come and dine with you every day in the week. O, here's my uncle *Richard.*

Enter Uncle Richard.

Mrs. *Moth.* I think, Sir, I had better get you a mouthful of something to stay your stomach 'till supper.

[*Exit.*

Sir *Fran.* With all my heart, for I'm almost famish'd.

Squire *Humph.* And so shall I before my mother comes from the playhouse, so I'll go and get a butter'd toast.

[*Exit.*

Sir *Fran.* Uncle, I hope you are well.

Unc. *Rich*. Nephew, if I had been sick I wou'd not have come abroad; I suppose you are well, for I sent this morning, and was inform'd you went out early; was it to make your court to some of the great men?

Sir *Fran*. Yes, uncle, I was advised to lose no time, so I went to one great man, whom I had never seen before.

Unc. *Rich*. And who had you got to introduce you?

Sir *Fran*. Nobody; I remember'd I had heard a wise man say, My son, be bold; so I introduced myself.

Unc. *Rich*. As how, I pray?

Sir *Fran*. Why thus, uncle; please your Lordship, says I, I am Sir *Francis Headpiece of Headpiece-Hall*, and member of parliament for the ancient borough of *Gobble-Guiney*. Sir, your humble servant, says my Lord, tho' I have not the honour to know your person, I have heard you are a very honest gentleman, and I am very glad your borough has made choice of so worthy a representative; have you any service to command me? Those last words, uncle, gave me great encouragement: And tho' I know you have not any very great opinion of my parts, I believe you won't say I mist it now.

Unc. *Rich*. I hope I shall have no cause.

Sir *Fran*. My Lord, says I, I did not design to say any thing to your Lordship to-day about business; but since your Lordship is so kind and free, as to bid me speak if I have any service to command you, I will.

Unc. *Rich*. So.

Sir *Fran*. I have, says I, my Lord, a good estate, but it's a little out at elbows: and as I desire to serve my king as well as my country, I shall be very willing to accept of a place at court.

Unc. *Rich*. This was bold indeed.

Sir *Fran*. I'cod, I shot him flying, uncle; another man would have been a month before he durst have open'd his mouth about a place. But you shall hear. Sir *Francis*, says my Lord, what sort of a place may you have turn'd your thoughts upon? My Lord, says I, beggars must not be choosers; but some place about a thousand a year, I believe, might do pretty weel to begin with. Sir *Francis*, says he, I shall be glad to serve you in any thing I can; and in saying these words he gave me a squeeze by the hand, as much as to say, I'll do your business. And so he turn'd to a Lord that was there, who look'd as if he came for a place too.

Unc. *Rich*. And so your fortune's made.

Sir *Fran*. Don't you think so, uncle?

Unc. *Rich*. Yes, for just so mine was made——twenty years ago. Sir *Fran*. Why, I never knew you had a place, uncle.

Unc. *Rich*. Nor I neither upon my faith, nephew: but you have been down at the house since you made your court, have not you?

Sir *Fran*. O yes; I would not neglect the house for ever so much.

Unc. *Rich*. And what might they have done there to-day, I pray?

Sir *Fran*. Why truly, uncle, I cannot well tell what they did. But I'll tell you what I did: I happen'd to make a little sort of a mistake.

Unc. *Rich*. How was that?

Sir *Fran*. Why you must know, uncle, they were all got into a sort of a hodge-podge argument for the good of the nation, which I did not well understand; however I was convinced, and so resolved to vote aright according to my conscience; but they made such a puzzling business on't, when they put the question, as they call it, that, I believe, I cry'd Ay, when I should have cry'd No; for a sort of a *Jacobite* that sat next me, took me by the hand, and said, Sir, you are a man of honour, and a true *Englishman*, and I shou'd be glad to be better acquainted with you, and so he pull'd me along with the croud into the lobby with him, when I believe I should have staid where I was.

Unc. *Rich*. And so, if you had not quite made your fortune before, you have clenched it now. Ah, thou head of the *Headpieces*! [*Aside*.] How now, what's the matter here?

*Enter Lady Headpiece, &c. in disorder, some
dirty, some lame, some bloody.*

Sir *Fran*. Mercy on us! they are all kill'd.

Miss *Betty*. Not for a thousand pounds; but we have been all down in the dirt together.

Lady *Head*. We have had a sad piece of work on't, Sir *Francis*, overturn'd in the channel, as we were going to the playhouse.

Miss *Betty*. Over and over, papa; had it been coming from the playhouse, I shou'd not have car'd a farthing.

Sir *Fran*. But, child, you are hurt, your face is all bloody.

Miss *Betty*. O, Sir, my new gown is all dirty.

Lady *Head*. The new coach is all spoil'd.

Miss *Betty*. The glasses are all to bits.

Lady *Head*. *Roger* has put out his arm.

Miss *Betty*. Would he had put out his neck, for making us lose the play.

Squire *Humph*. Poor *Martilla* has scratch'd her little finger.

Lady *Head*. And here's the poor Colonel; nobody asks what he has done. I hope, Sir, you have got no harm?

Col. Only a little wounded with some pins I met with about your Ladyship.

Lady *Head*. I am sorry any thing about me should do you harm.

Col. If it does, Madam, you have that about you, if you please, will be my cure. I hope your Ladyship feels nothing amiss?

Lady *Head*. Nothing at all, tho' we did roll about together strangely.

Col. We did, indeed. I'm sure we roll'd so, that my poor hands were got once—I don't know where they were got. But her Ladyship I see will pass by slips.

[*Aside*.

Sir *Fran*. It wou'd have been pity the colonel shou'd have receiv'd any damage in his services to the Ladies; he is the most complaisant man to e'm, uncle; always ready when they have occasion for him.

Unc. *Rich*. Then I believe, nephew, they'll never let him want business.

Sir *Fran*. O, but they shou'd not ride the free horse to death neither. Come, colonel, you'll stay and drink a bottle, and eat a little supper with us, after your misfortune?

Col. Sir, since I have been prevented from attending the ladies to the play, I shall be very proud to obey their commands here at home.

Sir *Fran*. A prodigious civil gentleman, uncle; and yet as bold as *Alexander* upon occasion.

Unc. *Rich*. Upon a lady's occasion.

Sir *Fran*. Ha, ha, you're a wag, uncle; but I believe he'd storm any thing.

Unc. *Rich*. Then I believe your citadel may be in danger.

[*Aside*.

Sir *Fran*. Uncle, won't you break your rule for once, and sup from home?

Unc. *Rich*. The company will excuse me, nephew, they'll be freer without me; so good night to them and you.

Lady *Head*. Good night to you, Sir, since you won't stay: Come, colonel.

Unc. *Rich*. Methinks this facetious colonel is got upon a pretty, familiar, easy foot already with the family of the *Headpieces*—hum.

[*Aside. Exit*.

Sir *Fran*. Come, my Lady, let's all in, and pass the evening chearfully. And, d'ye hear, wife—a word in your ear—I have got a promise of a place in court, of a thousand a year, he, hem.

[*Exeunt*.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Lady Arabella, as just up, walking pensively to her Toilet, follow'd by Trusty.

Lady Ara. **W**ELL, sure never woman had such luck—these devilish dice!—Sit up all night; lose all one's money, and then—how like a hag I look. [*Sits at her toilet, turning her purse inside out.*] Not a guinea—worth less by a hundred pounds than I was by one o'clock this morning—and then—I was worth nothing—what is to be done, *Trusty*!

Trus. I wish I were wise enough to tell you, Madam; but if there comes in any good company to breakfast with your Ladyship, perhaps you may have a run of better fortune.

Lady Ara. But I han't a guinea to try my fortune—let me see—who was that impertinent man, that was so saucy last week about money, that I was forc'd to promise once more, he shou'd have what I ow'd him, this morning?

Trus. O, I remember, Madam; it was your old mercer *Short-yard*, that you turn'd off a year ago, because he would trust you no longer.

Lady Ara. That's true; and I think I bid the steward keep the thirty guineas out of some money he was paying me to stop his odious mouth.

Trus. Your Ladyship did so.

Lady Ara. Pr'ythee, *Trusty*, run and see whether the wretch has got the money yet; if not, tell the steward, I have occasion for it myself; run quickly.

[*Trusty runs to the door.*]

Trus. Ah, Madam, he's just paying it away now, in the hall.

Lady Ara. Stop him! quick, quick, dear *Trusty*.

Trus. Hem, hem, Mr. *Money-bag*, a word with you quickly.

Mon. [*Within.*] I'll come presently.

Trus. Presently won't do, you must come this moment.

Mon. I'm but just paying a little money.

Trus. Cods my life, paying money, is the man distracted? Come here, I tell you, to my Lady this moment, quick.

[*Money-bag comes to the door with a purse in's hand.*]

My Lady says you must not pay the money to-day, there's a mistake in the account, which she must examine; and she's afraid too there was a false guinea or two left in the purse, which might disgrace her. [*Twitches the purse from him.*] But she's too busy to look for 'em just now, so you must bid Mr. What-d'ye-call-'em come another time. There they are, Madam. [*Gives her the money.*] The poor things were so near gone, they made me tremble; I fancy your Ladyship will give me one of those false guineas for good luck. [*Takes a guinea.*] Thank you, Madam.

Lady Ara. Why, I did not bid you take it.

Trus. No, but your Ladyship look'd as if you were just going to bid me; so I took it to save your Ladyship the trouble of speaking.

Lady Ara. Well, for once—but hark—I think I hear the man making a noise yonder.

Trus. Nay, I don't expect he'll go out of the house quietly. I'll listen.

[*Goes to the door.*]

Lady Ara. Do.

Trus. He's in a bitter passion with poor *Money-bag*; I believe he'll beat him—Lord, how he swears!

Lady Ara. And a sober citizen too! that's a shame.

Trus. He says he will speak with you, Madam, tho' the devil held your door—Lord! he's coming hither full drive, but I'll lock him out.

Lady Ara. No matter, let him come; I'll reason with him.

Trus. But he's a saucy fellow for all that.

Enter Short-yard.

What wou'd you have, Sir?

Short. I wou'd have my due, Mistress.

Trus. That wou'd be—to be well cudgel'd, Master, for coming so familiarly, where you shou'd not come.

Lady Ara. Do you think you do well, Sir, to intrude into my dressing-room?

Short. Madam, I sold my goods to you in your dressing room, I don't know why I mayn't ask for my money there.

Lady Ara. You are very short, Sir.

Short. Your Ladyship won't complain of my patience being so?

Lady Ara. I complain of nothing that ought not to be complained of; but I hate ill manners.

Short. So do I, Madam,—but this is the seventeenth time I have been ordered to come with good-manners for my money, to no purpose.

Lady Ara. Your money, man! Is that the matter? Why it has lain in the steward's hands this week for you.

Short. Madam, you yourself appointed me to come this very morning for it.

Lady Ara. But why did you come so late then?

Short. So late! I came soon enough, I thought.

Lady Ara. That thinking wrong, makes us liable to a world of disappointments: If you had thought of coming one minute sooner, you had had your money.

Short. Gad bless me, Madam, I had the money as I thought, I'm sure it was telling out, and I was writing a receipt for't.

Trus. Why there you thought wrong again, Master.

Lady Ara. Yes, for you shou'd never think of writing a receipt till the money is in your pocket.

Short. Why, I did think 'twas in my pocket.

Trus. Look you, thinking again. Indeed, Mr. *Short-yard*, you make so many blunders, 'tis impossible but you must suffer by it, in your way of trade. I'm sorry for you, and you'll be undone.

Short. And well I may, when I sell my goods to people that won't pay me for 'em, till the interest of my money eats out all my profit: I sold them so cheap, because I thought I shou'd be paid the next day.

Trus. Why, there again! there's another of your thoughts; paid the next day, and you han't been paid this twelvemonth you see.

Short. Oons, I han't been paid at all, Mistress.

Lady Ara. Well, tradesmen are strange unreasonable creatures, refuse to sell people any more things, and then quarrel with 'em because they don't pay for those they have had already. Now what can you say to that, Mr. *Short-yard*?

Short. Say! Why—'Sdeath, Madam, I don't know what you talk of, I don't understand your argument.

Lady Ara. Why, what do you understand, man?

Short. Why, I understand that I have had above a hundred pounds due to me a year ago; that I came, by appointment, just now to receive it: that it proved at last to be but thirty instead of a hundred and ten; and that while the steward was telling even that out, and I was writing the receipt, comes Mrs. *Pop* here, and the money was gone. But I'll be banter'd no longer if there's law in *England*. Say no more, *Short-yard*.

[*Exit.*

Trus. What a passion the poor devil's in!

Lady Ara. Why truly one can't deny but he has some present cause to be a little in ill-humour, but when one has things of greater consequence on foot, one can't trouble one's self about making such creatures easy; so call for breakfast, *Trusty*, and set the hazard-table ready; if there comes no company I'll play a little by myself.

Enter Lord Loverule.

Lord Love. Pray what offence, Madam, have you given to a man I met with just as I came in?

Lady Ara. People who are apt to take offence, do it for small matters, you know.

Lord Love. I shall be glad to find this so; but he says you have owed him above a hundred pounds this twelvemonth; that he has been here forty times by appointment for it, to no purpose; and that coming here this morning upon positive assurance from yourself, he was trick'd out of the money, while he was writing a receipt for it, and sent away without a farthing.

Lady Ara. Lord, how these shopkeepers will lye!

Lord Love. What then is the business? for some ground the man must have to be in such a passion.

Lady Ara. I believe you'll rather wonder to see me so calm, when I tell you he had the insolence to intrude into my very dressing-room here, with a story without a head or tail; you know, *Trusty*, we cou'd not understand one word he said, but when he swore——Good Lord! how the wretch did swear!

Trus. I never heard the like for my part.

Lord Love. And all this for nothing?

Lady *Ara*. So it proved, my Lord, for he got nothing by it.

Lord *Love*. His swearing I suppose was for his money, Madam. Who can blame him?

Lady *Ara*. If he swore for money he should be put in the pillory.

Lord *Love*. Madam, I won't be banter'd, nor sued by this man for your extravagancies: do you owe him the money or not?

Lady *Ara*. He says I do, but such fellows will say any thing.

Lord *Love*. Provoking! [*Aside.*] Did not I desire an account from you of all your debts, but six months since, and give you money to clear them?

Lady *Ara*. My Lord, you can't imagine how accounts make my head ache.

Lord *Love*. That won't do. The steward gave you two hundred pounds besides, but last week; where's that?

Lady *Ara*. Gone!

Lord *Love*. Gone! where?

Lady *Ara*. Half the town over, I believe, by this time.

Lord *Love*. Madam, Madam, this can be endured no longer, and before a month passes expect to find me—

Lady *Ara*. Hist, my Lord, here's company.

Enter Captain Toupee.

Captain *Toupee*, your servant: What, nobody with you? do you come quite alone?

Capt. 'Slife, I thought to find company enough here. My Lord, your servant. What a deuce, you look as if you had been up all night. I'm sure I was in bed but three hours; I wou'd you'd give me some coffee.

Lady *Ara*. Some coffee there; tea too, and chocolate.

Capt. [*Singing a minuet and dancing.*] Well, what a strange fellow am I to be thus brisk, after losing all my money last night—but upon my soul you look sadly.

Lady *Ara*. No matter for that, if you'll let me win a little of your money this morning.

Capt. What with that face? Go, go wash it, go wash it, and put on some handsome things; you look'd a good likely woman last night; I would not much have cared if you had run five hundred pounds in my debt; but if I play with you this morning, I'gad I'd advise you to win; for I won't take your personal security at present for a guinea.

Lord *Love*. To what a nauseous freedom do women of quality of late admit these trifling fops! and there's a morning exercise will give 'em claim to greater freedoms still. [*Points to the hazard-table.*] Some course must be taken.

[*Exit.*

Capt. What, is my Lord gone? he look'd methought as if he did not delight much in my company. Well, peace and plenty attend him for your Ladyship's sake, and those—who have now and then the honour to win a hundred pounds of you.

[*Goes to the table singing, and throws.*

Lady *Ara*. [*Twitching the box from him.*] What, do you intend to win all the money upon the table—Seven's the main—Set me a million, *Toupee*.

Capt. I set you two, my queen—Six to seven.

Lady *Ara*. Six—the world's my own.

Both. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady *Ara*. O that my Lord had spirit enough about him to let me play for a thousand pound a night—but here comes country company—

*Enter Lady Headpiece, Miss Betty, Mrs.
Motherly, and Colonel Courtly.*

Your servant, Madam, good-morrow to you.

Lady *Head*. And to you, Madam. We are come to breakfast with you. Lord, are you got to those pretty things already?

[*Points to the dice.*

Lady *Ara*. You see we are not such idle folks in town as you country ladies take us to be; we are no sooner out of our beds, but we are at our work.

Miss *Betty*. Will dear Lady Arabella give us leave, mother, to do a stitch or two with her?

[*Takes the box and throws.*

Capt. The pretty lively thing!

Lady *Ara*. With all her heart; what says her mama?

Lady *Head*. She says she don't love to sit with her hands before her, when other people's are

employed.

Capt. And this is the prettiest little sociable work, men and women can all do together at it.

Lady Head. Colonel, you are one with us, are you not?

Lady Ara. O, I'll answer for him, he'll be out at nothing.

Capt. In a facetious way; he is the politest person; he will lose his money to the ladies so civilly, and will win theirs with so much good breeding; and he will be so modest to 'em before company, and so impudent to 'em in a dark corner. Ha! colonel!

Lady Head. So I found him, I'm sure, last night—Mercy on me, an ounce of virtue less than I had, and Sir *Francis* had been undone.

Capt. Colonel, I smoke you.

Col. And a fine character you give the ladies of me, to help me.

Capt. I give 'em just the character of you they like, modest and brave. Come, ladies, to business; look to your money, every woman her hand upon her purse.

Miss Betty. Here's mine, captain.

Capt. O the little soft velvet one—and it's as full—Come, Lady Blowse, rattle your dice and away with 'em.

Lady Ara. Six—at all—five to six—Five—Eight—at all again—Nine to eight—Nine

Enter Sir Francis, and stands gazing at 'em.

Seven's the main—at all for ever.

[*Throws out.*

Miss Betty. Now, mama, let's see what you can do.

[*Lady Headpiece takes the box.*

Lady Head. Well, I'll warrant you, daughter—

Miss Betty. If you do, I'll follow a good example.

Lady Head. Eight's the main—don't spare me, gentlemen, I fear you not—have at you all—seven to eight—seven.

Capt. Eight, Lady, eight—Five pounds if you please.

Lady Ara. Three, kinswoman.

Col. Two, Madam.

Miss Betty. And one for Miss, Mama—and now let's see what I can do. [*Aside.*] If I should win enough this morning to buy me another new gown—O bless me! there they go—seven—come, captain, set me boldly, I want to be at a handful.

Capt. There's two for you, miss.

Miss Betty. I'll at 'em, tho' I die for't.

Sir Fran. Ah, my poor child, take care.

[*Runs to stop the throw.*

Miss Betty. There.

Capt. Out—twenty pound], young lady.

Sir Fran. False dice, Sir.

Capt. False dice, Sir? I scorn your words—twenty pounds, Madam.

Miss Betty. Undone, undone!

Sir Fran. She shan't pay you a farthing, Sir; I won't have miss cheated.

Capt. Cheated, Sir?

Lady Head. What do you mean, Sir *Francis*, to disturb the company, and abuse the gentleman thus?

Sir Fran. I mean to be in a passion.

Lady Head. And why will you be in a passion, Sir *Francis*?

Sir Fran. Because I came here to breakfast with my Lady there, before I went down to the house, expecting to find my family set round a civil table with her, upon some plumb-cake, hot rolls, and a cup of strong beer; instead of which, I find these good women staying their stomachs with a box and dice, and that man there, with a strange perriwig, making a good hearty meal upon my wife and daughter.—

Cætera desunt.



**THE
PROVOK'D HUSBAND;
OR, A
JOURNEY to LONDON.
A
COMEDY.**

Written by

Sir JOHN VANBRUGH, and Mr. CIBBER.

---*Vivit Tanquam Vicina Mariti*. Juv. Sat. VI.



TO THE QUEEN.

May it please your Majesty,

THE *English* THEATRE throws itself with this Play, at Your MAJESTY's Feet, for Favour and Support.

As their Public Diversions are a strong Indication of the Genius of a People; the following Scenes are an Attempt to Establish such as are fit to entertain the Minds of a sensible Nation; and to wipe off that Aspersion of Barbarity, which the *Virtuosi* among our Neighbours have sometimes thrown upon our Taste.

The *Provok'd Husband*, is, at least, an Instance, that any *English* Comedy may, to an unusual number of Days, bring many Thousands of His Majesty's good Subjects together, to their Emolument and Delight, with Innocence. And however little Share of that Merit my unequal Pen may pretend to, yet I hope the just Admirers of Sir *John Vanbrugh* will allow I have, at worst, been a careful Guardian of his Orphan Muse, by leading it into Your Majesty's Royal Protection.

The Design of this Play being chiefly to expose, and reform the licentious Irregularities that, too often, break in upon the Peace and Happiness of the Married State; Where could so hazardous and unpopular an undertaking be secure, but in the Protection of a PRINCESS, whose exemplary Conjugal Virtues have given such illustrious Proof of what sublime Felicity that holy State is capable?

And though a Crown is no certain Title to Content; yet to the Honour of that Institution be it said, the Royal Harmony of Hearts that now enchants us from the Throne, is a Reproach to the frequent Disquiet of those many insensible Subjects about it, who (from his Majesty's paternal Care of his People) have more Leisure to be happy: And 'tis our QUEEN'S peculiar Glory, that we often see Her as eminently rais'd above her Circle, in private Happiness, as in Dignity.

Yet Heaven, MADAM, that has placed you on such Height, to be the more conspicuous Pattern of your Sex, had still left your Happiness imperfect, had it not given those inestimable Treasures of your Mind, and Person, to the only Prince on Earth that could have deserved them: A Crown received from Any, but the Happy Monarch's Hand, who invested you with This, which You now adorn, had only seem'd the Work of *Fortune*: But *Thus* bestow'd, the World acknowledges it the due Reward of PROVIDENCE, for One You once so gloriously Refused.

But as the Fame of such elevated Virtue has lifted the Plain Addresses of a whole Nation into Eloquence, the best repeated Eulogiums on that Theme are but Intrusions on your Majesty's greater Pleasure of secretly deserving them. I therefore beg leave, to subscribe myself,

May it please Your MAJESTY,
Your Majesty's most Devoted,

*Most Obedient, and
Most Humble Servant,*

COLLEY CIBBER.

TO THE READER.

HAVING taken upon me in the prologue to this play, to give the auditors some short account of that part of it which Sir *John Vanbrugh* left unfinished, and not thinking it adviseable in that place, to limit their judgment by so high a commendation as I thought it deserved; I have therefore, for the satisfaction of the curious, printed the whole of what he wrote, separately, under the single title he gave it of *A Journey to London*, without presuming to alter a line.

Yet when I own, that in my last conversation with him, (which chiefly turned upon what he had done towards a comedy) he excused his not shewing it me, 'till he had reviewed it, confessing the scenes were yet undigested, too long, and irregular, particularly in the lower characters, I have but one excuse for publishing what he never designed should come into the world, as it then was, viz. I had no other way of taking those many faults to myself, which may be justly found in my presuming to finish it.

However, a judicious reader will find in his original papers, that the characters are strongly drawn, new, spirited, and natural, taken from sensible observations on high and lower life, and from a just indignation at the follies in fashion. All I could gather from him of what he intended in the *catastrophe*, was, that the conduct of his imaginary fine lady had so provoked him, that he designed actually to have made her husband turn her out of his doors. But when his performance came, after his decease, to my hands, I thought such violent measures, however just they might be in real life, were too severe for comedy, and would want the proper surprise, which is due to the end of a play. Therefore with much ado (and 'twas as much as I could do with probability) I preserved the lady's chastity, that the sense of her errors might make a reconciliation not impracticable; and I hope the mitigation of her sentence has been since justified by its success.

My inclination to preserve as much as possible of Sir *John*, I soon saw had drawn the whole into an unusual length; the reader will therefore find here a scene or two of the lower humour that were left out, after the first day's presentation.

The favour the town has shewn to the higher characters in this play, is a proof, that their taste is not wholly vitiated, by the barbarous entertainments that have been so expensively set off to corrupt it: but, while the repetition of the best old plays is apt to give satiety, and good new ones are so scarce a commodity, we must not wonder, that the poor actors are sometimes forced to trade in trash for a livelihood.

I cannot yet take leave of the reader, without endeavouring to do justice to those principal actors, who have so evidently contributed to the support of this comedy: And I wish I could separate the praises due to them from the secret vanity of an author: For all I can say will still insinuate, that they could not have so highly excelled, unless the skill of the writer had given them proper occasion. However, as I had rather appear vain, than unthankful, I will venture to say of Mr. *Wilks*, that in the last act, I never saw any passion take so natural a possession of an actor, or any actor take so tender a possession of his auditors—Mr. *Mills* too, is confess'd by every body, to have surprised them, by so far excelling himself—But there is no doing right to Mrs. *Oldfield*, without putting people in mind of what others, of great merit, have wanted to come near her—'Tis not enough to say, she *Here Out-did* her usual *Excellence*. I might therefore justly leave her to the constant admiration of those spectators, who have the pleasure of living while she is an actress. But as this is not the only time she has been the life of what I have given the public, so perhaps my saying a little more of so memorable an actress, may give this play a chance to be read, when the people of this age shall be ancestors—May it therefore give emulation to our successors of the stage, to know, That to the ending of the year 1727, a cotemporary comedian relates, that Mrs. *Oldfield* was, then, in her highest excellence of action, happy in all the nearly-found requisites, that meet in one person to complete them for the stage—She was in stature just rising to that height, where the *graceful* can only begin to shew itself; of a lively aspect and a command in her mein, that like the principal figure in the finest paintings, first seizes, and longest delights the eye of the spectators. Her voice was sweet, strong, piercing, and melodious: her pronounciation voluble, distinct, and musical; and her emphasis always placed where the spirit of the sense, in her periods, only demanded it. If she delighted more in the Higher Comic, than in the Tragic strain, 'twas because the last is too often written in a lofty disregard of nature. But in characters of modern practised life, she found occasions to add the particular air and manner which distinguished the different humours she presented. Whereas in tragedy, the manner of speaking varies, as little as the blank verse it is written in—She had one peculiar happiness from nature, she looked and maintained the *agreeable*, at a time when other fine women only raise admirers by their understanding—The spectator was always as much informed by her eyes as her elocution; for the look is the only proof that an actor rightly conceives what he utters, there being scarce an instance, where the eyes do their part, that the elocution is known to be faulty. The qualities she had *acquired* were the *genteel* and *elegant*. The one in her air, and the other in her dress, never had her equal on the stage; and the ornaments she herself provided, (particularly in this play) seemed in all respects the *paraphernalia* of a woman of quality. And of that sort were the characters she chiefly excelled in; but her natural good sense and lively turn of conversation made her way so easy to ladies of the highest rank, that it is a less wonder, if on the stage she sometimes *was*, what might have become the finest woman in real life to have supported.

Theatre-Royal.

Jan. 27,
1727⁸

C. CIBBER.

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mr. Wilks.

THIS *play took birth from principles of truth,*

*To make amends for errors past, of youth.
A bard, that's now no more, in riper days,
Conscious review'd the licence of his plays:
And tho' applause his wanton muse had fir'd,
Himself condemn'd what sensual minds admir'd.
At length, he own'd, that plays should let you see
Not only, What you are, but ought to be;
Though vice was natural, 'twas never meant
The stage should shew it, but for punishment!
Warm with that thought, his Muse once more took flame,
Resolv'd to bring licentious life to shame.
Such was the piece his latest pen design'd,
But left no traces of his plan behind.
Luxuriant scenes unprun'd or half contriv'd;
Yet thro' the mass his native fire surviv'd:
Rough, as rich ore, in mines the treasure lay,
Yet still 'twas rich, and forms at length a play.
In which the bold compiler boasts no merit,
But that his pains have sav'd your scenes of spirit.
Not scenes that would a noisy joy impart,
But such as hush the mind and warm the heart.
From praise of hands no sure account he draws,
But fixt attention is sincere applause:
If then (for hard you'll own the task) his art
Can to those embryo-scenes new life impart,
The living proudly would exclude his lays,
And to the buried bard resign the praise.*

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

Lord *Townly*, of a regular life,
Mr. *Manly*, an admirer of Lady *Grace*,
Sir *Francis Wronghead*, a country gentleman,
Squire *Richard*, his son, a mere whelp,
Count *Basset*, a gamester,
John Moody, servant to Sir *Francis*, an honest clown,

Mr. *Wilks*.
Mr. *Mills* sen.
Mr. *Cibber*, sen.
Young *Wetherelt*.
Mr. *Bridgewater*.
Mr. *Miller*.

WOMEN.

Lady *Townly*, immoderate in her pursuit of pleasures,
Lady *Grace*, sister to Lady *Townly*, of exemplary virtue,
Lady *Wronghead*, wife to Sir *Francis*, inclin'd to be a fine lady,
Miss *Jenny*, her daughter, pert and forward,
Mrs *Motherly*, one that lets lodgings,
Myrtilla, her niece, seduced by the count,
Mrs. *Trusty*, Lady *Townly's* woman,

Mrs. *Oldfield*.
Mrs. *Porter*.
Mrs. *Thurmond*.
Mrs. *Cibber*.
Mrs. *Moore*.
Mrs. *Grace*.
Mrs. *Mills*.

Masqueraders, Constable, Servants, &c.

*The SCENE Lord Townly's House, and
sometimes Sir Francis's Lodgings.*

THE PROVOK'D HUSBAND; OR, A JOURNEY *to* LONDON.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Lord Townly's Apartment.*

Lord Townly, solus.

WHY did I marry!—Was it not evident, my plain, rational scheme of life was impracticable, with a woman of so different a way of thinking?—Is there one article of it, that she has not broke in upon?—Yes,—let me do her justice—her reputation—That—I have no reason to believe is in question—but then how long her profligate course of pleasures may make her able to keep it—is a shocking question! and her presumption while she keeps it—insupportable! for on the pride of that single virtue she seems to lay it down, as a fundamental point, that the free indulgence of every other vice, this fertile town affords, is the birth-right prerogative of a woman of quality—Amazing! that a creature so warm in the pursuit of her pleasures, should never cast one thought towards her happiness—Thus, while she admits no lover, she thinks it a greater merit still, in her chastity, not to care for her husband; and while she herself is solacing in one continual round of cards and good company, he, poor wretch! is left, at large, to take care of his own contentment—'Tis time, indeed, some care were taken, and speedily there shall be—Yet let me not be rash—Perhaps this disappointment of my heart may make me too impatient; and some tempers when reproached grow more untractable.—Here she comes—Let me be calm a while.

Enter Lady Townly.

Going out so soon after dinner, Madam?

Lady Town. Lard, my Lord! what can I possibly do at home?

Lord Town. What does my sister, *Lady Grace*, do at home?

Lady Town. Why, that is to me amazing! Have you ever any pleasure at home!

Lord Town. It might be in your power, Madam, I confess, to make it a little more comfortable to me.

Lady Town. Comfortable! and so, my good Lord, you would really have a woman of my rank and spirit stay at home to comfort her husband! Lord! what notions of life some men have!

Lord Town. Don't you think, Madam, some ladies' notions full as extravagant?

Lady Town. Yes, my Lord, when the tame doves live cooped within the penn of your precepts, I do think 'em prodigious indeed!

Lord Town. And when they fly wild about this town, Madam, pray what must the world think of 'em then?

Lady Town. Oh! this world is not so ill-bred as to quarrel with any woman for liking it.

Lord Town. Nor am I, Madam, a husband so well-bred, as to bear my wife's being so fond of it; in short, the life you lead, Madam—

Lady Town. Is, to me, the pleasantest life in the world.

Lord Town. I should not dispute your taste, Madam, if a woman had a right to please nobody but herself.

Lady Town. Why, whom would you have her please?

Lord Town. Sometimes her husband.

Lady Town. And don't you think a husband under the same obligation?

Lord Town. Certainly.

Lady Town. Why then we are agreed, my Lord—For if I never go abroad 'till I am weary of being at home—which you know is the case—is it not equally reasonable, not to come home till one's weary of being abroad!

Lord Town. If this be your rule of life, Madam, 'tis time to ask you one serious question?

Lady Town. Don't let it be long a coming then—for I am in haste.

Lord Town. Madam, when I am serious, I expect a serious answer.

Lady Town. Before I know the question?

Lord Town. Psha—have I power, Madam, to make you serious by intreaty?

Lady Town. You have.

Lord Town. And you promise to answer me sincerely?

Lady Town. Sincerely.

Lord Town. Now then recollect your thoughts, and tell me seriously, Why you married me?

Lady Town. You insist upon truth, you say?

Lord Town. I think I have a right to it.

Lady Town. Why then, my Lord, to give you, at once, a proof of my obedience and sincerity—I think—I married—to take off that restraint, that lay upon my pleasures, while I was a single

woman.

Lord *Town*. How, Madam! is any woman under less restraint after marriage, than before it?

Lady *Town*. O my Lord! my Lord! they are quite different creatures! Wives have infinite liberties in life, that would be terrible in an unmarried woman to take.

Lord *Town*. Name one.

Lady *Town*. Fifty, if you please!—to begin then, in the morning—A married woman may have men at her toilet, invite them to dinner, appoint them a party, in a stage box at the play; ingross the conversation there, call 'em by their christian names; talk louder than the players;—From thence jaunt into the city—take a frolicsome supper at an *India* house—perhaps in her *gaieté de cœur* toast a pretty fellow—Then clatter again to this end of the town, break with the morning, into an assembly, croud to the hazard-table, throw a familiar *levant* upon some sharp lurching man of quality, and if he demands his money, turn it off with a loud laugh, and cry—you'll owe it him to vex him! ha! ha!

Lord *Town*. Prodigious!

[*Aside.*

Lady *Town*. These now, my Lord, are some few of the many modish amusements, that distinguish the privilege of a wife, from that of a single woman.

Lord *Town*. Death! Madam, what law has made these liberties less scandalous in a wife, than in an unmarried woman?

Lady *Town*. Why, the strongest law in the world, custom—custom time out of mind, my Lord.

Lord *Town*. Custom, Madam, is the law of fools: but it shall never govern me.

Lady *Town*. Nay, then, my Lord, 'tis time for me to observe the laws of prudence.

Lord *Town*. I wish I could see an instance of it.

Lady *Town*. You shall have one this moment, my Lord; for I think, when a man begins to lose his temper at home; if a woman has any prudence, why—she'll go abroad 'till he comes to himself again.

[*Going.*

Lord *Town*. Hold, Madam—I am amazed, you are not more uneasy at the life we lead! You don't want sense; and yet seem void of all humanity: for, with a blush I say it, I think, I have not wanted love.

Lady *Town*. Oh! don't say that, my Lord, if you suppose I have my senses.

Lord *Town*. What is it I have done to you? what can you complain of?

Lady *Town*. Oh! nothing in the least: 'Tis true, you have heard me say; I have owed my Lord *Lurcher* an hundred pounds these three weeks—but what then?—a husband is not liable to his wife's debts of honour, you know,—and if a silly woman will be uneasy about money she can't be sued for, what's that to him? as long as he loves her, to be sure she can have nothing to complain of.

Lord *Town*. By heaven, if my whole fortune thrown into your lap, could make you delight in the cheerful duties of a wife, I should think myself a gainer by the purchase.

Lady *Town*. That is, my Lord, I might receive your whole estate, provided you were sure I would not spend a shilling of it.

Lord *Town*. No, Madam; were I master of your heart, your pleasures would be mine; but different as they are, I'll feed even your follies to deserve it—Perhaps you may have some other trifling debts of honour abroad that keep you out of humour at home—at least it shall not be my fault, if I have not more of your company—There, there's a bill of five hundred—and now, Madam—

Lady *Town*. And now, my Lord, down to the ground I thank you—Now am I convinc'd, were I weak enough to love this man, I should never get a single guinea from him.

[*Aside.*

Lord *Town*. If it be no offence, Madam—

Lady *Town*. Say what you please, my Lord; I am in that harmony of spirits, it is impossible to put me out of humour.

Lord *Town*. How long then in reason do you think that sum ought to last you?

Lady *Town*. Oh, my dear, dear Lord! now you have spoiled all again! How is it possible I should answer for an event, that so utterly depends upon fortune? But to shew you that I am more inclined to get money, than to throw it away—I have a strong prepossession, that with this five hundred, I shall win five thousand.

Lord *Town*. Madam, if you were to win ten thousand, it would be no satisfaction to me.

Lady *Town*. O! the churl! ten thousand! what! not so much as wish I might win ten thousand!—Ten thousand! O! the charming sum! what infinite pretty things might a woman of spirit do, with ten thousand guineas! O! my conscience, if she were a woman of true spirit—she—she might lose 'em all again.

Lord *Town*. And I had rather it should be so, Madam; provided I could be sure, that were the last

you would lose.

Lady *Town*. Well, my Lord, to let you see I design to play all the good housewife I can; I am now going to a party of *Quadrille*, only to piddle with a little of it at poor two guineas a fish, with the Dutchess of *Quiteright*.

[*Exit Lady Townly.*]

Lord *Town*. Insensible creature! neither reproaches, or indulgence, kindness or severity, can wake her to the least reflection! Continual licence has lull'd her into such a lethargy of care, that she speaks of her excesses with the same easy confidence, as if they were so many virtues. What a turn has her head taken?—But how to cure it—I am afraid the physic must be strong that reaches her—Lenitives, I see, are to no purpose—take my friend's opinion—*Manly* will speak freely—my sister with tenderness to both sides. They know my case—I'll talk with 'em.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. *Manly*, my Lord has sent to know, if your Lordship was at home.

Lord *Town*. They did not deny me?

Serv. No, my Lord.

Lord *Town*. Very well; step up to my sister, and say, I desire to speak with her.

Serv. Lady *Grace* is here, my Lord.

[*Exit Serv.*]

Enter Lady Grace.

Lord *Town*. So, Lady fair; what pretty weapon have you been killing your time with!

Lady *Grace*. A huge folio that has almost killed me—I think I have half read my eyes out.

Lord *Town*. O! you should not pore so much just after dinner, child.

Lady *Grace*. That's true, but any body's thoughts are better than always one's own, you know.

Lord *Town*. Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Leave word at the door I am at home to nobody but Mr. *Manly*.

Lady *Grace*. And why is he excepted, pray, my Lord?

Lord *Town*. I hope, Madam, you have no objection to his company?

Lady *Grace*. Your particular orders upon my being here, look, indeed, as if you thought I had not.

Lord *Town*. And your Ladyship's enquiry into the reason of those orders, shews, at least, it was not a matter indifferent to you!

Lady *Grace*. Lord! you make the oddest constructions, brother!

Lord *Town*. Look you my grave Lady *Grace*—in one serious word—I wish you had him.

Lady *Grace*. I can't help that.

Lord *Town*. Ha! you can't help it! ha! ha! The flat simplicity of that reply was admirable!

Lady *Grace*. Pooh! you teize one, brother!

Lord *Town*. Come, I beg pardon, child—this is not a point, I grant you, to trifle upon; therefore, I hope you'll give me leave to be serious.

Lady *Grace*. If you desire it, brother! though upon my word, as to Mr. *Manly's* having any serious thoughts of me—I know nothing of it.

Lord *Town*. Well—there's nothing wrong, in your making a doubt of it—But, in short, I find, by his conversation of late, that he has been looking round the world for a wife; and if you were to look round the world for a husband, he's the first man I would give to you.

Lady *Grace*. Then, whenever he makes me an offer, brother, I will certainly tell you of it.

Lord *Town*. O! that's the last thing he'll do; he'll never make you an offer, 'till he's pretty sure it won't be refus'd.

Lady *Grace*. Now you make me curious. Pray! did he ever make an offer of that kind to you?

Lord *Town*. Not directly; but that imports nothing; he is a man too well acquainted with the female world, to be brought into a high opinion of any one woman, without some well examined proof of her merit: Yet I have reason to believe, that your good sense, your turn of mind, and your way of life, have brought him to so favourable a one of you, that a few days will reduce him to talk plainly to me: Which as yet, (notwithstanding our friendship) I have neither declin'd nor encouraged him to.

Lady *Grace*. I am mighty glad we are so near in our way of thinking: For, to tell you the truth, he is much upon the same terms with me: You know he has a satirical turn; but never lashes any folly, without giving due encomiums to its opposite virtue: and upon such occasions, he is sometimes particular, in turning his compliments upon me, which I don't receive, with any reserve, lest he should imagine I take them to myself.

Lord *Town*. You are right, child, when a man of merit makes his addresses: good sense may give

him an answer, without scorn, or coquetry.

Lady *Grace*. Hush! he's here——

Enter Mr. Manly.

Man. My Lord! your most obedient.

Lord *Town*. Dear *Manly*! yours——I was thinking to send to you.

Man. Then, I am glad I am here, my Lord——Lady *Grace*, I kiss your hands!——What, only you two! How many visits may a man make, before he falls into such unfashionable company? A brother and sister soberly sitting at home, when the whole town is a gadding! I question if there is so particular a *tête à tête*, again, in the whole parish of St. *James's*.

Lady *Grace*. Fy! fy! Mr. *Manly*; how censorious you are!

Man. I had not made the reflexion, Madam, but that I saw you an exception to it—Where's my lady?

Lord *Town*. That I believe is impossible to guess.

Man. Then I won't try, my Lord——

Lord *Town*. But 'tis probable I may hear of her by that time I am four or five hours in bed.

Man. Now, if that were my case, I believe I should——But I beg pardon, my Lord.

Lord *Town*. Indeed, Sir, you shall not: You will oblige me, if you speak out; for it was upon this head, I wanted to see you.

Man. Why, then, my Lord, since you oblige me to proceed——if that were my case——I believe I should certainly sleep in another house.

Lady *Grace*. How do you mean?

Man. Only a compliment, Madam.

Lady *Grace*. A compliment!

Man. Yes, Madam, in rather turning myself out of doors than her.

Lady *Grace*. Don't you think that would be going too far?

Man. I don't know but it might, Madam; for in strict justice, I think she ought rather to go than I.

Lady *Grace*. This is new doctrine, Mr. *Manly*.

Man. As old, Madam, as *Love, Honour, and Obey!* When a woman will stop at nothing that's wrong, why should a man balance any thing that's right.

Lady *Grace*. Bless me, but this is fomenting things——

Man. Fomentations, Madam, are sometimes necessary to dispel rumours; tho' I don't directly advise my Lord to do this——This is only what, upon the same provocation, I would do myself.

Lady *Grace*. Ay! ay! You would do! Batchelors wives, indeed, are finely governed.

Man. If the married mens were as well——I am apt to think we should not see so many mutual plagues taking the air, in separate coaches!

Lady *Grace*. Well! but suppose it was your own case; would you part with a wife because she now and then stays out, in the best company?

Lord *Town*. Well said, Lady *Grace*! come, stand up for the privilege of your sex! This is like to be a warm debate! I shall edify.

Man. Madam, I think a wife, after midnight, has no occasion to be in better company than her husband; and that frequent unreasonable hours make the best company——the worst company she can fall into.

Lady *Grace*. But if people of condition are to keep company with one another; how is it possible to be done unless one conforms to their hours?

Man. I can't find that any woman's good breeding obliges her to conform to other people's vices.

Lord *Town*. I doubt, child, we are got a little on the wrong side of the question.

Lady *Grace*. Why so, my Lord? I can't think the case so bad, as Mr. *Manly* states it——People of quality are not ty'd down to the rules of those, who have their fortunes to make.

Man. No people, Madam, are above being ty'd down to some rules, that have fortunes to lose.

Lady *Grace*. Pooh! I'm sure, if you were to take my side of the argument, you would be able to say something more for it.

Lord *Town*. Well, what say you to that, *Manly*?

Man. Why, 'troth, my Lord, I have something to say.

Lady *Grace*. Ay! that I would be glad to hear, now!

Lord *Town*. Out with it!

Man. Then in one word, this, my Lord, I have often thought that the mis-conduct of my Lady has, in a great measure, been owing to your Lordship's treatment of her.

Lady *Grace*. Bless me!

Lord *Town*. My treatment!

Man. Ay, my Lord, you so idoliz'd her before marriage, that you even indulg'd her like a mistress, after it; In short, you continued the lover, when you should have taken up the husband.

Lady *Grace*. O frightful! this is worse than t'other! can a husband love a wife too well!

Man. As easy, Madam, as a wife may love her husband too little.

Lord *Town*. So! you two are never like to agree, I find.

Lady *Grace*. Don't be positive, brother;—I am afraid we are both of a mind already. [*Aside.*] And do you, at this rate, ever intend to be married, Mr. *Manly*?

Man. Never, Madam; 'till I can meet a woman that likes my doctrine.

Lady *Grace*. 'Tis pity but your mistress should hear it.

Man. Pity me, Madam, when I marry the woman that won't hear it.

Lady *Grace*. I think, at least, he can't say that's me.

[*Aside.*]

Man. And so, my Lord, by giving her more power than was needful, she has none where she wants it; having such entire possession of you, she is not mistress of herself! And, mercy on us! how many fine womens heads have been turn'd upon the same occasion!

Lord *Town*. O *Manly*! 'tis too true! there's the source of my disquiet! she knows and has abused her power: Nay, I am still so weak (with shame I speak it) 'tis not an hour ago, that in the midst of my impatience—I gave her another bill for five hundred to throw away.

Man. Well—my Lord! to let you see I am sometimes upon the side of good nature, I won't absolutely blame you; for the greater your indulgence, the more you have to reproach her with.

Lady *Grace*. Ay, Mr. *Manly*! here now, I begin to come in with you: Who knows, my Lord, you may have a good account of your kindness!

Man. That, I am afraid, we had not best depend upon: But since you have had so much patience, my Lord, even go on with it a day or two more; and upon her Ladyship's next sally, be a little rounder in your expostulation; if that don't work—drop her some cool hints of a determin'd reformation, and leave her—to breakfast upon 'em.

Lord *Town*. You are perfectly right! how valuable is a friend, in our anxiety!

Man. Therefore to divert that, my Lord, I beg for the present, we may call another cause.

Lady *Grace*. Ay, for goodness sake let's have done with this.

Lord *Town*. With all my heart.

Lady *Grace*. Have you no news abroad, Mr. *Manly*?

Man. *A propos*—I have some, Madam; and I believe, my Lord, as extraordinary in its kind—

Lord *Town*. Pray let's have it.

Man. Do you know that your country neighbour, and my wise kinsman, Sir *Francis Wronghead*, is coming to town with his whole family?

Lord *Town*. The fool! what can be his business here?

Man. Oh! of the last importance, I'll assure you—No less than the business of the nation.

Lord *Town*. Explain!

Man. He has carried his election—against Sir *John Worthland*.

Lord *Town*. The Deuce! what! for— for—

Man. The famous borough of *Guzzledown*!

Lord *Town*. A proper representative, indeed.

Lady *Grace*. Pray, Mr. *Manly*, don't I know him?

Man. You have din'd with him, Madam, when I was last down with my Lord, at *Bellmont*.

Lady *Grace*. Was not that he that got a little merry before dinner, and overset the tea-table, in making his compliments to my Lady?

Man. The same.

Lady *Grace*. Pray what are his circumstances? I know but very little of him.

Man. Then he is worth your knowing, I can tell you, Madam. His estate, if clear, I believe, might be a good two thousand pounds a year: Though as it was left him, saddled with two jointures, and two weighty mortgages upon it, there is no saying what it is—But that he might be sure never to mend it, he married a profuse young hussy, for love, without a penny of money! Thus having, like his brave ancestors, provided heirs for the family (for his dove breeds like a tame pigeon) he now finds children and interest-money make such a bawling about his ears, that at last he has taken the friendly advice of his kinsman, the good Lord *Danglecourt*, to run his estate two thousand pounds more in debt, to put the whole management of what's left into *Paul Pillage's* hands, that he may be at leisure himself to retrieve his affairs by being a parliament-man.

Lord *Town*. A most admirable scheme, indeed!

Man. And with this politic prospect, he's now upon his journey to *London*—

Lord *Town*. What can it end in?

Man. Pooh! a journey into the country again.

Lord *Town*. And do you think he'll stir, 'till his money's gone? or at least 'till the session is over?

Man. If my intelligence is right, my Lord, he won't sit long enough to give his vote for a turnpike.

Lord *Town*. How so?

Man. O! a bitter business! he had scarce a vote, in the whole town, beside the returning officer: Sir *John* will certainly have it heard at the bar of the house, and send him about his business again.

Lord *Town*. Then he has made a fine business of it indeed.

Man. Which, as far as my little interest will go, shall be done in as few days as possible.

Lady *Grace*. But why would you ruin the poor gentleman's fortune, Mr. *Manly*?

Man. No, Madam, I would only spoil his project, to save his fortune.

Lady *Grace*. How are you concern'd enough, to do either?

Man. Why, I have some obligations to the family, Madam: I enjoy at this time a pretty estate, which Sir *Francis* was heir at law to: But—by his being a booby, the last will of an obstinate old uncle gave it to me.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. [To *Man*.] Sir, here's one of your servants from your house, desires to speak with you.

Man. Will you give him leave to come in, my Lord?

Lord *Town*. Sir—the ceremony's of your own making.

Enter Manly's Servant.

Man. Well, *James*! what's the matter now?

James. Sir, here's *John Moody's* just come to town; he says Sir *Francis*, and all the family, will be here to-night, and is in a great hurry to speak with you.

Man. Where is he?

James. At our house, Sir: He has been gaping and stumping about the streets, in his dirty boots, and asking every one he meets if they can tell him where he may have a good lodging for a parliament man, 'till he can hire a handsome whole house for himself and family, for the winter.

Man. I am afraid, my Lord, I must wait upon Mr. *Moody*.

Lord *Town*. Pr'ythee! let's have him here: he will divert us.

Man. O my Lord! he's such a cub! Not but he's so near common sense, that he passes for a wit in the family.

Lady *Grace*. I beg of all things we may have him: I am in love with Nature, let her dress be never so homely.

Man. Then desire him to come hither, *James*.

[*Exit James.*]

Lady *Grace*. Pray what may be Mr. *Moody's* post?

Man. Oh! his *Maître d' Hôtel*, his butler, his bailiff, his hind, his huntsman; and sometimes—his companion.

Lord *Town*. It runs in my head, that the moment this Knight has set him down in the house, he will get up, to give them the earliest proof of what importance he is to the public, in his own country.

Man. Yes, and when they have heard him, he will find, that his utmost importance stands valued at—sometimes being invited to dinner.

Lady *Grace*. And her Ladyship will make as considerable a figure, in her sphere too.

Man. That you may depend upon; for (if I don't mistake) she has ten times more of the jade in her, than she yet knows of; and she will so improve in this rich soil, in a month, that she will visit all the ladies that will let her into their houses; and run in debt to all the shopkeepers that will let her into their books: In short, before her important spouse has made five pounds by his eloquence at *Westminster*, she will have lost five hundred at dice and *Quadrille*, in the parish of *St. James's*.

Lord *Town*. So that, by that time he is declared unduly elected, a swarm of duns will be ready for their money; and his worship—will be ready for a jail.

Man. Yes, yes, that I reckon will close the account of this hopeful journey to *London*—But see, here comes the fore-horse of the team!

Enter John Moody.

Oh! Honest *John*!

John Moody. Ad's waunds and heart, Measter *Manly*! I'm glad I ha' fun ye. Lawd! lawd! give me a buss! Why that's friendly naw! Flesh! I thought we should never ha' got hither! Well! and how d'ye do, Measter?—Good lack! I beg pardon for my bauldness—I did not see 'at his Honour was here.

Lord *Town*. Mr. *Moody*, your servant; I am glad to see you in *London*. I hope all the family is well.

John Moody. Thanks be praised your honour, they are in pretty good heart; thof' we have had a power of crosses upo' the road.

Lady *Grace*. I hope my Lady has had no hurt, Mr. *Moody*.

John Moody. Noa, an't please your Ladyship, she was never in better humour: There's money enough stirring now.

Man. What has been the matter, *John*?

John Moody. Why, we came up in such a hurry, you mun think, that our tackle was not so tight as it should be.

Man. Come, tell us all—Pray how do they travel?

John Moody. Why, i'the awld coach, Measter, and 'cause my lady loves to do things handsom, to be sure, she would have a couple of cart-horses clapt to th' four old geldings, that neighbours might see she went up to *London* in her coach and six! And so *Giles Joulter*, the ploughman, rides postillion!

Man. Very well! the journey sets out as it should do. [*Aside.*] What, do they bring all the children with them too?

John Moody. Noa, noa, only the younk squoire, and Miss *Jenny*. The other foive are all out at board, at half a crown a head, a week, with *Joan Growse* at *Smoke-Dunghill* farm.

Man. Good again! a right *English* academy for younger children!

John Moody. Anon, Sir.

[*Not understanding him.*]

Lady *Grace*. Poor souls! What will become of 'em?

John Moody. Nay, nay, for that matter, Madam, they are in very good hands: *Joan* loves 'em as thof' they were all her own: For she was wet-nurse to every mother's babe of 'um—Ay, ay, they'll ne'er want for a full belly there!

Lady *Grace*. What simplicity!

Man. The Lud 'a mercy on all good folks! what work will these people make!

[*Holding up his hands.*]

Lord *Town*. And when do you expect him here, *John*?

John Moody. Why we were in hopes to ha' come yesterday, an' it had no' been, that th' owld wheaze-belly horse tir'd: And then we were so cruelly loaden, that the two fore wheels came crash! down at once, in *Waggon-Rut Lane*, and there we lost four hours 'fore we could set things to rights again.

Man. So they bring all their baggage with the coach then?

John Moody. Ay, ay, and good store on't there is—Why my lady's geer alone were as much as fill'd four portmantel trunks, besides the great deal-box, that heavy *Ralph* and the monkey sit upon behind.

Lord *Town*, Lady *Grace*, and *Man*. Ha! ha, ha!

Lady *Grace*. Well, Mr. *Moody*, and pray how many are they within the coach?

John Moody. Why there's my Lady and his Worship; and the younk squoire, and Miss *Jenny*, and the fat lap-dog, and my lady's maid, Mrs. *Handy*, and *Doll Tripe* the cook, that's all—Only *Doll* puked a little with riding backward, so they hoisted her into the coach-box—and then her stomach was easy.

Lady *Grace*. Oh! I see 'em! I see 'em go by me. Ah! ha!

[*Laughing.*]

John Mood. Then you mun think, measter, there was some stowage for the belly, as well as th' back too; such cargoes of plumb-cake, and baskets of tongues, and biscuits and cheese, and cold boil'd beef—And then in case of sickness, bottles of cherry-brandy, plague-water, sack, tent and strong-beer so plenty as made th' owld coach crack again! Mercy upon them! and send 'em all well to town, I say.

Man. Ay! And well out on't again, *John*.

John Mood. Ods bud! measter, you're a wise mon; and for that matter, so am I—Whoam's whoam, I say: I'm sure we got but little good, e'er sin' we turn'd our backs on't. Nothing but mischief! Some Devil's trick or other plagued us, aw th' dey lung! Crack goes one thing: Bawnce! goes another. Woa, says *Roger*—Then souse! we are all set fast in a slough, Whaw! cries Miss! Scream go the maids! and bawl! just as thof' they were stuck! and so, mercy on us! this was the

trade from morning to night. But my Lady was in such a murrain haste to be here, that set out she would, thof' I told her it was *Childermas* day.

Man. These ladies, these ladies, *John*—

John Mood. Ah, measter, I ha' seen a little of 'em; and I find that the best—when she's mended, won't ha' much goodness to spare.

Lord *Town.* Well said, *John.* Ha! ha!

Man. I hope at least that you and your good woman agree still.

John Mood. Ay! ay! much of a muchness. *Bridget* sticks to me: Tho' as for her goodness—why, she was willing to come to *London* too—But hawld a bit! Noa, noa, says I, there may be mischief enough done without you.

Man. Why that was bravely spoken, *John,* and like a man.

John Mood. Ah, weast heart, were Measter but hawf the Mon that I am—Ods wookers! thof' he'll speak stawtly too sometimes—But then he conno' hawld it—no! he conno' hawld it.

Lord *Town.* Lady *Grace.*

Man. Ha! ha! ha!

John Mood. Ods flesh! But I mun hye me whoam! th' Coach will be coming every hour naw—but Measter charg'd me to find your Worship out; for he has hugey business with you; and will certainly wait upon you, by that time he can put on a clean neckcloth.

Man. O *John!* I'll wait upon him.

John Mood. Why you wonno' be so kind, wull ye?

Man. If you'll tell me where you lodge.

John Mood. Just i'th' street next to where your Worship dwells, the sign of the *Golden Ball*—It's Gold all over; where they sell ribbands and flappits, and other sort of geer for Gentlewomen.

Man. A Milliner's?

John Mood. Ay, ay, one Mrs. *Motherly.* Waunds! she has a couple of clever girls there stitching i'th' forerroom.

Man. Yes, yes, she's a woman of good business, no doubt on't—Who recommended that house to you, *John?*

John Mood. The greatest good fortune in the world, sure! For as I was gaping about streets, who should look out of the window there, but the fine Gentleman, that was always riding by our Coach side, at *York Races*—Count—*Basset;* ay, that's he.

Man. *Basset?* Oh, I remember; I know him by sight.

John Mood. Well! to be sure, as civil a Gentleman, to see to—

Man. As any sharper in town.

[*Aside.*

John Mood. At *York,* he us'd to breakfast with my Lady every morning.

Man. Yes, yes, and I suppose her Ladyship will return his compliment here in town.

[*Aside.*

John Mood. Well, Measter—

Lord *Town.* My Service to Sir *Francis* and my Lady, *John.*

Lady *Grace.* And mine, pray Mr. *Moody.*

John Mood. Ay, your honors, they'll be proud on't, I dare say.

Man. I'll bring my compliments myself: So, honest *John*—

John Mood. Dear Measter *Manly!* the goodness of goodness bless and preserve you.

[*Exit* John Moody.

Lord *Town.* What a natural creature 'tis!

Lady *Grace.* Well! I can't but think *John,* in a wet afternoon in the country, must be very good company.

Lord *Town.* O! the *Tramontane!* If this were known at half the *quadrille*-tables in town, they would lay down their cards to laugh at you.

Lady *Grace.* And the minute they took them up again they would do the same at the losers—But to let you see, that I think good company may sometimes want cards to keep them together: what think you if we three sat soberly down, to kill an hour at *Ombre?*

Man. I shall be too hard for you, Madam.

Lady *Grace.* No matter! I shall have as much advantage of my Lord, as you have of me.

Lord *Town.* Say you so, Madam? Have at you then! Here! get the *ombre*-table, and cards.

[*Exit* Lord Townly.

Lady *Grace*. Come, Mr. *Manly*—I know you don't forgive me now!

Man. I don't know whether I ought to forgive your thinking so, Madam. Where do you imagine I could pass my time so agreeably?

Lady *Grace*. I'm sorry my Lord is not here to take share of the compliment—But he'll wonder what's become of us!

Man. I'll follow in a moment, Madam—

[*Exit* Lady *Grace*.

It must be so—she sees I love her—yet with what unoffending decency she avoids an explanation! How amiable is every hour of her conduct? What a vile opinion have I had of the whole sex, for these ten years past, which this sensible creature has recovered in less than one? Such a companion, sure, might compensate all the irksome disappointments, that pride, folly and falshood ever gave me!

Could women regulate, like her, their lives,
What *Halcyon* days were in the gift of wives!
Vain rovers, then, might envy what they hate;
And only fools would mock the married state.

[*Exit*.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Mrs. Motherly's House.*

Enter Count Basset and Mrs. Motherly.

Count *Bas.* **I** TELL you there is not such a family in *England*, for you! do you think I would have gone out of your lodgings for any body, that was not sure to make you easy for the winter?

Moth. Nay, I see nothing against it, Sir, but the gentleman's being a parliament man: and when people may, as it were, think one impertinent, or be out of humour, you know, when a body comes to ask for one's own—

Count *Bas.* Psha! Pr'ythee never trouble thy head—His pay is as good as the bank!—Why, he has above two thousand a year!

Moth. Alas-a-day! that's nothing: Your people of ten thousand a year, have ten thousand things to do with it.

Count *Bas.* Nay, if you are afraid of being out of your money; what do you think of going a little with me, Mrs. *Motherly*?

Moth. As how?

Count *Bas.* Why I have a game in my head, in which, if you'll croup me, that is, help me to play it, you shall go five hundred to nothing.

Moth. Say you so?—Why then, I go, Sir—and now pray let's see your game.

Count *Bas.* Look you, in one word my cards lie thus—When I was down this summer at *York*, I happened to lodge in the same house with this Knight's lady, that's now coming to lodge with you.

Moth. Did you so, Sir?

Count *Bas.* And sometimes had the honour to breakfast, and pass an idle hour with her—

Moth. Very good; and here I suppose you would have the impudence to sup, and be busy with her.

Count *Bas.* Psha! pr'ythee hear me!

Moth. Is this your game? I would not give sixpence for it! What, you have a passion for her pin-money—no, no, country ladies are not so flush of it.

Count *Bas.* Nay, if you won't have patience—

Moth. One had need of a great deal, I am sure, to hear you talk at this rate! Is this your way of making my poor *Myrtilla* easy?

Count *Bas.* Death! I shall do it still, if the woman will but let me speak—

Moth. Had not you a letter from her this morning?

Count *Bas.* I have it here in my pocket—this is it.

[*Shews it, and puts it up again.*]

Moth. Ay, but I don't find you have made any answer to it.

Count *Bas.* How the devil can I, if you won't hear me!

Moth. What! hear you talk of another woman?

Count *Bas.* O lud! O lud! I tell you, I'll make her fortune—'Ounds! I'll marry her.

Moth. A likely matter! if you would not do it when she was a maid, your stomach is not so sharp set now, I presume.

Count *Bas.* Hey day! why your blood begins to turn, my dear! the devil! you did not think I proposed to marry her myself!

Moth. If you don't, who the devil do you think will marry her?

Count *Bas.* Why, a fool—

Moth. Humph! there may be sense in that—

Count *Bas.* Very good—One for t'other then; if I can help her to a husband, why should not you come into my scheme of helping me to a wife?

Moth. Your pardon, Sir! ay! ay! in an honourable affair, you know you may command me—but pray where is this blessed wife and husband to be had?

Count *Bas.* Now have a little patience—You must know then, this country Knight, and his lady, bring up, in the coach with them, their eldest son and a daughter, to teach them to—wash their faces, and turn their toes out.

Moth. Good!

Count *Bas.* The son is an unlick'd whelp, about sixteen, just taken from school; and begins to

hanker after every wench in the family: The daughter much of the same age, a pert, forward hussy, who having eight thousand pound left her by an old doating grandmother, seems to have a devilish mind to be doing in her way too.

Moth. And your design is to put her into business for life?

Count *Bas.* Look you, in short, Mrs. *Motherly*, we gentlemen whose occasional chariots roll, only, upon the four aces, are liable sometimes you know, to have a wheel out of order: Which, I confess, is so much my case at present, that my dapple greys are reduced to a pair of ambling chairmen: Now, if with your assistance, I can whip up this young jade into a hackney-coach, I may chance, in a day or two after, to carry her in my own chariot *en famille*, to an opera. Now what do you say to me?

Moth. Why, I shall not sleep—for thinking of it. But how will you prevent the family's smoaking your design?

Count *Bas.* By renewing my addresses to the mother.

Moth. And how will the daughter like that, think you?

Count *Bas.* Very well—whilst it covers her own affair.

Moth. That's true—it must do—but, as you say, one for t'other, Sir, I stick to that—if you don't do my niece's business with the son, I'll blow you with the daughter, depend upon't.

Count *Bas.* It's a bett—pay as we go, I tell you, and the five hundred shall be staked in a third hand.

Moth. That's honest—But here comes my niece! shall we let her into the secret?

Count *Bas.* Time enough! may be I may touch upon it.

Enter Myrtilia.

Moth. So, niece, are all the rooms done out, and the beds sheeted?

Myr. Yes, Madam, but Mr. *Moody* tells us the lady always burns wax, in her own chamber, and we have none in the house.

Moth. Odso! then I must beg your pardon, Count; this is a busy time, you know.

[*Exit Mrs. Motherly.*]

Count *Bas.* *Myrtilia!* how dost do, child?

Myr. As well as a losing gamester can.

Count *Bas.* Why, what have you lost?

Myr. What I shall never recover; and what's worse, you that have won it, don't seem to be much the better for't.

Count *Bas.* Why child, dost thou ever see any body overjoyed for winning a deep stake, six months after 'tis over?

Myr. Would I had never play'd for it!

Count *Bas.* Psha! Hang these melancholy thoughts; we may be friends still.

Myr. Dull ones.

Count *Bas.* Useful ones perhaps—suppose I should help thee to a good husband?

Myr. I suppose you think any one good enough that will take me off your hands.

Count *Bas.* What do you think of the young country 'Squire, the heir of the family, that's coming to lodge here?

Myr. How should I know what to think of him?

Count *Bas.* Nay, I only give you the hint, child; it may be worth your while, at least, to look about you—Hark! what bustle's that without.

Enter Mrs. Motherly in haste.

Moth. Sir! Sir! the gentleman's coach is at the door! they are all come!

Count *Bas.* What, already?

Moth. They are just getting out!—won't you step and lead in my Lady? Do you be in the way, Niece! I must run and receive them.

[*Exit Mrs. Motherly.*]

Count *Bas.* And think of what I told you.

[*Exit Count.*]

Myr. Ay! ay! you have left me enough to think of, as long as I live—a faithless fellow! I'm sure I have been true to him; and for that very reason, he wants to be rid of me: But while women are weak, men will be rogues! And for a bane to both their joys and ours; when our vanity indulges them, in such innocent favours as make them adore us; we can never be well, 'till we grant them the very one, that puts an end to their devotion—But here comes my aunt, and the company.

*Mrs. Motherly returns shewing in Lady
Wronghead, led by Count Basset.*

Moth. If your Ladyship pleases to walk into this parlour, Madam, only for the present, 'till your servants have got all your things in.

Lady Wrong. Well! dear Sir, this is so infinitely obliging!—I protest it gives me pain tho' to turn you out of your lodging thus!

Count Bas. No trouble in the least, Madam; we single fellows are soon mov'd; besides, Mrs. *Motherly's* my old acquaintance, and I could not be her hindrance.

Moth. The Count is so well bred, Madam, I dare say he would do a great deal more, to accommodate your Ladyship.

Lady Wrong. O dear Madam!—A good well bred sort of woman.

[*Apart to the Count.*

Count Bas. O Madam, she is very much among people of quality, she is seldom without them, in her house.

Lady Wrong. Are there a good many people of quality in this street, Mrs. *Motherly*?

Moth. Now your Ladyship is here, Madam, I don't believe there is a house without them.

Lady Wrong. I am mighty glad of that: for really I think people of quality should always live among one another.

Count Bas. 'Tis what one would choose indeed, Madam.

Lady Wrong. Bless me! but where are the children all this while?

Moth. Sir *Francis*, Madam, I believe is taking care of them.

Sir Fran. [*Within.*] *John Moody!* stay you by the coach, and see all our things out—Come, children.

Moth. Here they are, Madam.

*Enter Sir Francis, Squire Richard, and Miss
Jenny.*

Sir Fran. Well, Count! I mun say it, this was koynd, indeed!

Count Bas. Sir *Francis!* give me leave to bid you welcome to *London.*

Sir Fran. Psha! how dost do, mon—waunds, I'm glad to see thee! A good sort of a house this!

Count Bas. Is not that master *Richard*?

Sir Fran. Ey! ey! that's young hopeful—why dost not baw, *Dick*?

Squ. Rich. So I do, feyther.

Count Bas. Sir I'm glad to see you—I protest Mrs. *Jane* is grown so, I should not have known her.

Sir Fran. Come forward, *Jenny.*

Jenny. Sure, papa, do you think I don't know how to behave myself?

Count Bas. If I have permission to approach her, Sir *Francis.*

Jenny. Lord, Sir, I'm in such a frightful pickle—

[*Salute.*

Count Bas. Every dress that's proper must become you, Madam,—you have been a long journey.

Jenny. I hope you will see me in a better, to-morrow, Sir.

[*Lady Wrong. whispers Mrs. Moth. pointing to
Myrtilla.*

Moth. Only a niece of mine, Madam, that lives with me: she will be proud to give your Ladyship any assistance in her power.

Lady Wrong. A pretty sort of a woman.—*Jenny*, you two must be acquainted.

Jenny. O, Mama! I am never strange, in a strange place!

[*Salutes Myrtilla.*

Myr. You do me a great deal of honour, Madam—Madam, your Ladyship's welcome to *London.*

Jenny. Mama! I like her prodigiously! she call'd me my Ladyship.

Squ. Rich. Pray mother, mayn't I be acquainted with her too!

Lady Wrong. You, you clown! stay 'till you learn a little more breeding first.

Sir Fran. Od's heart! my Lady *Wronghead!* why do you balk the lad? how should he ever learn breeding, if he does not put himself forward?

Squ. Rich. Why ay, feather, does moather think 'at I'd be uncivil to her?

Myr. Master has so much good-humour, Madam, he would soon gain upon any body.

[*He kisses Myr.*

Squ. *Rich.* Lo' you there, Moather: and you would but be quiet, she and I should do well enough.

Lady *Wrong.* Why, how now, sirrah! Boys must not be so familiar.

Squ. *Rich.* Why, an' I know nobody, haw the murrain mun I pass my time here, in a strange place? Naw you and I and sister, forsooth, sometimes in an afternoon moy play at one and thirty bone-ace, purely.

Jenny. Speak for yourself, Sir! D'ye think I play at such clownish games?

Squ. *Rich.* Why and you woant yo' ma' let it aloane; then she, and I, mayhap, will have a bawt at All-fours, without you.

Sir *Fran.* Noa! Noa! *Dick*, that won't do neither; you mun learn to make one at Ombre, here, Child.

Myr. If Master pleases, I'll shew it him.

Squ. *Rich.* What! the *Humber!* Hoy day! why does our River run to this Tawn, Feather?

Sir *Fran.* Pooh! you silly Tony! Ombre is a geam at cards, that the better sort of people play three together at.

Squ. *Rich.* Nay the moare the merrier, I say; but Sister is always so cross grain'd—

Jenny. Lord! this Boy is enough to deaf people—and one has really been stuff up in a Coach so long, that—Pray Madam—could not I get a little powder for my hair?

Myr. If you please to come along with me, Madam.

[*Exeunt Myr. and Jenny.*]

Squ. *Rich.* What, has Sister ta'en her away naw! mess, I'll go and have a little game with 'em.

[*Ex. after them.*]

Lady *Wrong.* Well, Count, I hope you won't so far change your lodgings, but you will come, and be at home here sometimes?

Sir *Fran.* Ay, ay! pr'ythee come and take a bit of mutton with us, naw and tan, when thouh'st nowght to do.

Count *Bas.* Well, Sir *Francis*, you shall find I'll make but very little ceremony.

Sir *Fran.* Why ay naw, that's hearty!

Moth. Will your Ladyship please to refresh yourself, with a dish of tea, after your fatigue? I think I have pretty good.

Lady *Wrong.* If you please, Mrs. *Motherly*; but I believe we had best have it above stairs.

Moth. Very well, Madam: it shall be ready immediately.

[*Exit Mrs. Motherly.*]

Lady *Wrong.* Won't you walk up, Sir?

Sir *Fran.* *Moody!*

Count *Bas.* Shan't we stay for Sir *Francis*, Madam?

Lady *Wrong.* Lard! don't mind him! he will come if he likes it.

Sir *Fran.* Ay, ay! ne'er heed me—I ha' things to look after.

[*Exeunt Lady Wrong. and Count Bas.*]

Enter John Moody.

John Moody. Did you Worship want muh?

Sir *Fran.* Ay, is the coach clear'd? and all our things in?

John Moody. Aw but a few band-boxes, and the nook that's left o'th' goose poy—But a plague on him, th' Monkey has gin us the slip, I think—I suppose he's goon to see his relations; for here looks to be a power of 'um in this town—but heavy *Ralph* is skawer'd after him.

Sir *Fran.* Why, let him go to the Devil! no matter, and the hawnds had had him a month agoe—but I wish the coach and horses were got safe to th' Inn! This is a sharp tawn, we mun look about us here, *John*, therefore I would have you go alung with *Roger*, and see that nobody runs away with them before they get to their stable.

John Moody. Alas-a-day, Sir: I believe our awld cattle woant yeasily be run away with to-night—but howsomdever, we'st ta' the best care we can of um, poor sawls.

Sir *Francis.* Well, well! make hast then—

[*Moody goes out, and returns.*]

John Moody. Ods Flesh! here's Master *Monly* come to wait upo' your Worship!

Sir *Fran.* Wheree is he?

John Moody. Just coming in at threashould.

Sir *Fran.* Then goa about your Business.

[*Ex. Moody.*]

Enter Manly.

Cousin *Monly*. Sir, I am your very humble servant.

Man. I heard you were come, Sir *Francis*—and—

Sir *Fran*. Ods-heart! this was so kindly done of you naw.

Man. I wish you may think it so, Cousin! for I confess, I should have been better-pleas'd to have seen you in any other place.

Sir *Fran*. How soa, Sir?

Man. Nay, 'tis for your own sake: I'm not concern'd.

Sir *Fran*. Look you, Cousin! thof' I know you wish me well; yet I don't question I shall give you such weighty reasons for what I have done, that you will say, Sir, this is the wisest Journey that ever I made in my life.

Man. I think it ought to be, Cousin; for I believe, you will find it the most expensive one—your Election did not cost you a trifle, I suppose.

Sir *Fran*. Why ay! it's true! That—that did lick a little; but if a man's wise, (and I han't fawn'd yet that I'm a fool) there are ways, Cousin, to lick one's self whole again.

Man. Nay if you have that secret——

Sir *Fran*. Don't you be fearful, Cousin——you'll find that I know something.

Man. If it be any thing for your good, I should be glad to know it too.

Sir *Fran*. In short then, I have a friend in a corner, that has let me a little into what's what, at *Westminster*——that's one thing.

Man. Very well! but what good is that to do you?

Sir *Fran*. Why not me, as much as it does other folks?

Man. Other people, I doubt, have the advantage of different qualifications.

Sir *Fran*. Why ay! there's it naw! you'll say that I have lived all my days i'the country——what then——I'm o'the *Quorum*——I have been at Sessions, and I have made Speeches there! ay, and at Vestry too——and may hap they may find here,——that I have brought my tongue up to town with me! D'ye take me, naw?

Man. If I take your case right, Cousin; I am afraid the first occasion you will have for your eloquence here, will be, to shew that you have any right to make use of it at all.

Sir *Fran*. How d'ye mean?

Man. That Sir *John Worthland* has lodg'd a Petition against you.

Sir *Fran*. Petition! why ay! there let it lie——we'll find a way to deal with that, I warrant you!——why, you forget, Cousin, Sir *John's* o'the wrong side, Mon.

Man. I doubt Sir *Francis*, that will do you but little service; for in cases very notorious (which I take yours to be) there is such a thing as a short day, and dispatching them immediately.

Sir *Fran*. With all my heart! the sooner I send him home again the better.

Man. And this is the scheme you have laid down, to repair your fortune?

Sir *Fran*. In one word, Cousin, I think it my duty! the *Wrongheads* have been a considerable Family, ever since *England* was *England*; and since the World knows I have talents where withal, they shan't say it's my fault, if I don't make as good a figure as any that ever were at the head on't.

Man. Nay! this project, as you have laid it, will come up to any thing your Ancestors have done these five hundred years.

Sir *Fran*. And let me alone to work it! mayhap I hav'n't told you all, neither——

Man. You astonish me! what! and is it full as practicable as what you have told me!

Sir *Fran*. Ay! thof' I say it——every whit, Cousin? you'll find that I have more irons i'the fire than one! I doan't come of a fool's errand!

Man. Very well.

Sir *Fran*. In a word, my wife has got a friend at Court, as well as myself, and her daughter *Jenny* is naw pretty well grown up——

Man. [*Aside.*]—And what in the Devil's name would he do with the Dowdy?

Sir *Fran*. Naw, if I doan't lay in for a husband for her, mayhap i'this Tawn, she may be looking out for herself——

Man. Not unlikely.

Sir *Fran*. Therefore I have some thoughts of getting her to be Maid of Honour.

Man. [*Aside.*]—Oh! he has taken my breath away! but I must hear him out——Pray, Sir *Francis*, do you think her education has yet qualified her for a Court?

Sir *Fran*. Why, the Girl is a little too mettlesome, it's true! but she has tongue enough: She woan't be dasht! Then she shall learn to daunce forthwith, and that will soon teach her how to stond still,

you know.

Man. Very well; but when she is thus accomplish'd, you must still wait for a vacancy.

Sir Fran. Why I hope one has a good chance for that every day, Cousin! For if I take it right, that's a post, that folks are not more willing to get into, than they are to get out of—It's like an Orange-tree, upon that accawnt—it will bear blossoms, and fruit that's ready to drop, at the same time.

Man. Well, Sir, you best know how to make good your pretensions! But pray where is my Lady, and my young Cousins? I should be glad to see them too.

Sir Fran. She is but just taking a dish of tea with the Count, and my Landlady—I'll call her dawn.

Man. No, no, if she's engag'd, I shall call again.

Sir Fran. Ods-heart! but you mun see her naw, Cousin; what! the best Friend I have in the World! —Here! Sweet-heart! [*To a Servant without.*] pr'ythee desire my Lady, and the Gentleman to come down a bit; tell her here's Cousin *Manly* come to wait upon her.

Man. Pray, Sir, who may the Gentleman be?

Sir Fran. You mun know him to be sure; why it's Count *Basset*.

Man. Oh! is it he?—Your Family will be infinitely happy in his acquaintance.

Sir Fran. Troth! I think so too: He's the civilest Man that ever I knew in my life—why! here he would go out of his own lodging, at an hour's warning, purely to oblige my family. Wasn't that kind, naw?

Man. Extremely civil—the Family is in admirable hands already.

Sir Fran. Then my Lady likes him hugely—all the time of *York Races*, she would never be without him.

Man. That was happy, indeed! and a prudent Man, you know, should always take care that his Wife may have innocent company.

Sir Fran. Why ay! that's it! and I think there could not be such another.

Man. Why truly, for her purpose, I think not.

Sir Fran. Only naw and tan, he—he stonds a leetle too much upon ceremony; that's his fault.

Man. O never fear! he'll mend that every day—Mercy on us! what a head he has!

Sir Fran. So! here they come!

*Enter Lady Wronghead, Count Basset, and Mrs.
Motherly.*

Lady Wrong. Cousin *Manly*! this is infinitely obliging! I am extremely glad to see you.

Man. Your most obedient Servant, Madam; I am glad to see your Ladyship look so well, after your Journey.

Lady Wrong. Why really! coming to *London* is apt to put a little more life in one's looks.

Man. Yet the way of living here, is very apt to deaden the complexion—and give me leave to tell you, as a friend, Madam, you are come to the worst place in the world, for a good woman to grow better in.

Lady Wrong. Lord, Cousin! how should people ever make any figure in life, that are always moap'd up in the country?

Count Bas. Your Ladyship certainly takes the thing in a quite right light, Madam: Mr. *Manly*, your humble Servant—a hem.

Man. Familiar Puppy. [*Aside.*] Sir, your most obedient—I must be civil to the Rascal, to cover my suspicion of him.

[*Aside.*]

Count Bas. Was you at *White's* this morning, Sir?

Man. Yes, Sir, I just call'd in.

Count Bas. Pray—what—was there any thing done there?

Man. Much as usual, Sir; the same daily carcasses, and the same crows about them.

Count Bas. The *Demoivre*-Baronet had a bloody tumble yesterday.

Man. I hope, Sir, you had your share of him.

Count Bas. No, faith! I came in when it was all over—I think I just made a couple of Bets with him, took up a cool hundred, and so went to the *King's Arms*.

Lady Wrong. What a genteel, easy manner he has!

[*Aside.*]

Man. A very hopeful acquaintance I have made here.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Squire Richard, with a wet brown Paper

on his face.

Sir *Fran.* How naw, *Dick!* what's the matter with thy forehead, Lad?

Squ. *Rich.* I ha' gotten a knuck upon't.

Lady *Wrong.* And how did you come by it, you heedless creature?

Squ. *Rich.* Why, I was but running after sister, and t'other young woman, into a little room just naw: and so with that, they flapt the door full in my feace, and gave me such a whurr here—I thought they had beaten my brains out! so I gut a dab of wet brown paper here, to swage it a while.

Lady *Wrong.* They serv'd you right enough! will you never have done with your horse-play?

Sir *Fran.* Pooh! never heed it, Lad! it will be well by to-morrow—the Boy has a strong head!

Man. Yes, truly, his skull seems to be of a comfortable thickness.

[*Aside.*

Sir *Fran.* Come, *Dick,* here's Cousin *Manly*—Sir, this is your God-son.

Lady *Wrong.* Oh! here's my daughter too.

Enter Miss Jenny.

Squ. *Rich.* Honour'd Gudfeyther! I crave leave to ask your blessing.

Man. Thou hast it, Child—and if it will do thee any good, may it be to make thee, at least, as wise a man as thy father.

Lady *Wrong.* Miss *Jenny!* don't you see your cousin, Child?

Man. And for thee, my pretty Dear—[*Salutes her.*] may'st thou be, at least, as good a woman as thy mother.

Jenny. I wish I may ever be so handsome, Sir.

Man. Hah! Miss Pert! Now that's a thought, that seems to have been hatcht in the girl on this side *Highgate.*

[*Aside.*

Sir *Fran.* Her tongue is a little nimble, Sir.

Lady *Wrong.* That's only from her country education, Sir *Francis.* You know she has been kept too long there—so I brought her to *London,* Sir, to learn a little more reserve and modesty.

Man. O, the best place in the world for it—every woman she meets will teach her something of it—There's the good gentlewoman of the house, looks like a knowing person; even she perhaps will be so good as to shew her a little *London* behaviour.

Moth. Alas, Sir, Miss won't stand long in need of my instructions.

Man. That I dare say: What thou can'st teach her, she will soon be Mistress of.

[*Aside.*

Moth. If she does, Sir, they shall always be at her service.

Lady *Wrong.* Very obliging indeed, Mrs. *Motherly.*

Sir *Fran.* Very kind and civil, truly—I think we are got into a mighty good hawse here.

Man. O yes, and very friendly company.

Count *Bas.* Humh! I'gad I don't like his looks—he seems a little smoky—I believe I had as good brush off—If I stay, I don't know but he may ask me some odd questions.

Man. Well, Sir, I believe you and I do but hinder the family—

Count *Bas.* It's very true, Sir—I was just thinking of going—He don't care to leave me, I see: But it's no matter, we have time enough. [*Aside.*] And so Ladies, without ceremony, your humble Servant.

[*Exit Count Basset, and drops a Letter.*

Lady *Wrong.* Ha! what Paper's this? Some Billet-doux I'll lay my life, but this is no place to examine it.

[*Puts it in her Pocket.*

Sir *Fran.* Why in such haste, Cousin?

Man. O! my Lady must have a great many affairs upon her hands, after such a journey.

Lady *Wrong.* I believe, Sir, I shall not have much less every day, while I stay in this town, of one sort or other.

Man. Why truly, Ladies seldom want employment here, Madam.

Jenny. And Mamma did not come to it to be idle, Sir.

Man. Nor you neither, I dare say, my young Mistress.

Jenny. I hope not, Sir.

Man. Ha! Miss Mettle!—Where are you going Sir?

Sir *Fran.* Only to see you to the door, Sir.

Man. Oh! Sir Francis, I love to come and go, without ceremony.

Sir *Fran.* Nay, Sir, I must do as you will have me—your humble Servant.

[*Exit Manly.*

Jenny. This Cousin *Manly*, Papa, seems to be but of an odd sort of a crusty humour—I don't like him half so well as the Count.

Sir *Fran.* Pooh! that's another thing, Child—Cousin is a little proud indeed! but however you must always be civil to him, for he has a deal of money; and no body knows who he may give it to.

Lady *Wrong.* Pshah; a fig for his money, you have so many projects of late about money, since you are a Parliament Man: What! we must make ourselves slaves to his impertinent humours, eight, or ten years perhaps, in hopes to be his heirs, and then he will be just old enough to marry his maid.

Moth. Nay, for that matter, Madam, the town says he is going to be married already.

Sir *Fran.* Who? Cousin *Manly*?

Lady *Wrong.* To whom, pray?

Moth. Why, is it possible your Ladyship should know nothing of it!—to my Lord *Townly's* sister, Lady *Grace*.

Lady *Wrong.* Lady *Grace*?

Moth. Dear Madam, it has been in the New-Papers!

Lady *Wrong.* I don't like that neither.

Sir *Fran.* Naw, I do; for then it's likely it mayn't be true.

Lady *Wrong.* [*Aside.*] If it is not too far gone; at least it may be worth one's while to throw a rub in his way.

Squ. *Rich.* Pray, Feyther, haw lung will it be to supper?

Sir *Fran.* Odso! that's true! step to the Cook, Lad, and ask what she can get us?

Moth. If you please, Sir, I'll order one of my maids to shew her where she may have any thing you have a mind to.

Sir *Fran.* Thank you kindly, Mrs. *Motherly*.

Squ. *Rich.* Ods-flesh! what, is not it i'the hawse yet—I shall be famisht—but howld! I'll go and ask *Doll*, an there's none o'the goose poy left.

Sir *Fran.* Do so, and do'st hear, *Dick*—see if there's e'er a bottle o'th' strong beer that came i'th' coach with us—if there be, clap a toast in it, and bring it up.

Squ. *Rich.* With a little nutmeg and sugar, shawn't I, Feyther?

Sir *Fran.* Ay! ay! as thee and I always drink it for breakfast—Go thy ways!—and I'll fill a pipe i'th' mean while. [*Takes one from a Pocket-Case, and fills it.*]

[*Exit Squ. Rich.*

Lady *Wrong.* This Boy is always thinking of his belly!

Sir *Fran.* Why my Dear, you may allow him to be a little hungry after his journey.

Lady *Wrong.* Nay, ev'n breed him your own way—He has been cramming in or out of the coach all this day I am sure—I wish my poor Girl could eat a quarter as much.

Jenny. O for that I could eat a great deal more, Mamma; but then mayhap, I should grow coarse, like him, and spoil my shape.

Lady *Wrong.* Ay, so thou would'st, my Dear.

Enter Squire Richard with a full Tankard.

Squ. *Rich.* Here, Feyther, I ha' brougnt it—it's well I went as I did; for our *Doll* had just bak'd a toast, and was going to drink it herself.

Sir *Fran.* Why then, here's to thee, *Dick*!

[*Drinks.*

Squ. *Rich.* Thonk yow, Feyther.

Lady *Wrong.* Lord! Sir *Francis*! I wonder you can encourage the Boy to swill so much of that lubberly liquor—it's enough to make him quite stupid.

Squ. *Rich.* Why it never hurts me, Mother; and I sleep like a hawnd after it.

[*Drinks.*

Sir *Fran.* I am sure I ha' drunk it these thirty years, and by your leave, Madam, I don't know that I want wit: Ha! ha!

Jenny. But you might have had a great deal more, Papa, if you would have been govern'd by my Mother.

Sir *Fran.* Daughter! he that is governed by his Wife, has no wit at all.

Jenny. Then I hope I shall marry a fool, Sir; for I love to govern dearly.

Sir *Fran.* You are too pert, child; it don't do well in a young woman.

Lady *Wrong.* Pray, Sir *Francis*, don't snub her; she has a fine growing spirit, and if you check her so, you will make her as dull as her brother there.

Squ. *Rich.* [After a long draught.] Indeed, Mother, I think my sister is too forward!

Jenny. You! you think I'm too forward! sure! Brother Mud! your head's too heavy to think of any thing but your Belly.

Lady *Wrong.* Well said, Miss; he's none of your Master, tho' he is your elder Brother.

Squ. *Rich.* No, nor she shawn't be my Mistress, while she's younger sister!

Sir *Fran.* Well said *Dick!* Shew 'em that stawt liquor makes a stawt heart, Lad!

Squ. *Rich.* So I wull! and I'll drink ageen, for all her!

[Drinks.

Enter John Moody.

Sir *Fran.* So *John!* how are the horses!

John Moody. Troth, Sir, I ha' noa good opinion o' this tawn, it's made up o' mischief, I think!

Sir *Fran.* What's the matter naw?

John Moody. Why I'll tell your Worship—before we were gotten to th' street end, with the coach, here, a great lugger-headed cart, with wheels as thick as a brick wall, laid hawld on't, and has poo'd it aw to bits; crack! went the perch! Down goes the coach! and whang! says the glasses, all to shivers! Marcy upon us! and this be *London!* would we were aw weell in the country ageen!

Jenny. What have you to do, to wish us all in the country again, Mr. Lubber? I hope we shall not go into the country again these seven years, Mamma; let twenty coaches be pull'd to pieces.

Sir *Fran.* Hold your tongue, *Jenny!*—Was *Roger* in no fault, in all this?

John Moody. Noa, Sir, nor I, noather—are not yow asheam'd, says *Roger* to the carter, to do such an unkind thing by strangers? Noa, says he, you Bumkin. Sir, he did the thing on very purpose! and so the folks said that stood by—Very well, says *Roger*, yow shall see what our Meyster will say to ye! Your Meyster? says he; your Meyster may kiss my—and so he clapt his hand just there, and like your Worship. Flesh! I thought they had better breeding in this tawn.

Sir *Fran.* I'll teach this rascal some, I'll warrant him! Odsbud! if I take him in hand, I'll play the Devil with him.

Squ. *Rich.* Ay do, Feyther; have him before the Parliament.

Sir *Fran.* Odsbud! and so I will—I will make him know who I am! Where does he live?

John Moody. I believe, in *London*, Sir.

Sir *Fran.* What's the Rascal's name!

John Moody. I think I heard somebody call him *Dick.*

Squ. *Rich.* What, my name!

Sir *Fran.* Where did he go?

John Moody. Sir, he went home.

Sir *Fran.* Where's that?

John Moody. By my troth, Sir, I doan't know! I heard him say he would cross the same street again to-morrow; and if we had a mind to stand in his way, he wou'd pool us over and over again.

Sir *Fran.* Will he so! Odszooks! get me a Constable.

Lady *Wrong.* Pooh! get you a good supper. Come, Sir *Francis*, don't put yourself in a heat for what can't be helpt. Accidents will happen to people that travel abroad to see the world—For my part, I think it's a mercy it was not overturn'd before we were all out on't.

Sir *Fran.* Why ay, that's true again, my Dear.

Lady *Wrong.* Therefore see to-morrow if we can buy one at second-hand, for present use; so bespeak a new one, and then all's easy.

John Moody. Why troth, Sir, I doan't think this could have held you above a day longer.

Sir *Fran.* D'ye think so, *John?*

John Moody. Why you ha' had it, ever since your Worship were High Sheriff.

Sir *Fran.* Why then go and see what *Doll* has got us for supper—and come and get off my boots.

[Exit Sir Fran.

Lady *Wrong.* In the mean time, Miss, do you step to *Handy*, and bid her get me some fresh night-clothes.

[*Exit Lady Wrong.*

Jenny. Yes, Mamma, and some for myself too.

[*Exit Jenny.*

Squ. *Rich.* Ods-flesh! and what mun I do all alone?

I'll e'en seek out where t'other pretty Miss is, And she and I'll go play at cards for kisses.

[*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Lord Townly's House.*

Enter Lord Townly, a Servant attending.

Lord *Townly*. **W**HO's there!

Serv. My Lord.

Lord *Townly*. Bid them get dinner——Lady *Grace*, your Servant.

Enter Lady Grace.

Lady *Grace*. What, is the house up already? My Lady is not drest yet!

Lord *Townly*. No matter—it's three o'clock—she may break my rest, but she shall not alter my hours.

Lady *Grace*. Nay, you need not fear that now, for she dines abroad.

Lord *Townly*. That, I suppose, is only an excuse for her not being ready yet.

Lady *Grace*. No, upon my word, she is engaged to company.

Lord *Townly*. Where, pray?

Lady *Grace*. At my Lady *Revel's*; and you know they never dine 'till supper-time.

Lord *Townly*. No truly——she is one of those orderly Ladies, who never let the sun shine upon any of their vices!——But pr'ythee, Sister, what humour is she in to-day?

Lady *Grace*. O! in tip-top spirits, I can assure you——she won a good deal, last night.

Lord *Townly*. I know no difference between her winning or losing, while she continues her course of life.

Lady *Grace*. However she is better in good Humour, than bad.

Lord *Townly*. Much alike: When she is in good humour, other people only are the better for it: When in a very ill humour, then, indeed, I seldom fail to have my share of her.

Lady *Grace*. Well, we won't talk of that now——Does any body dine here?

Lord *Townly*. *Manly* promis'd me—by the way, Madam, what do you think of his last conversation?

Lady *Grace*.——I am a little at a stand about it.

Lord *Townly*. How so?

Lady *Grace*. Why——I don't know how he can ever have any thoughts of me, that could lay down such severe rules upon wives, in my hearing.

Lord *Townly*. Did you think his rules unreasonable?

Lady *Grace*. I can't say I did: But he might have had a little more complaisance before me, at least.

Lord *Townly*. Complaisance is only a proof of good breeding: But his plainness was a certain proof of his honesty; nay, of his good opinion of you: For he would never have open'd himself so freely, but in confidence that your good sense could not be disobliged at it.

Lady *Grace*. My good opinion of him, Brother, has hitherto been guided by yours: But I have receiv'd a letter this morning that shews him a very different Man from what I thought him.

Lord *Townly*. A letter from whom?

Lady *Grace*. That I don't know, but there it is.

[*Gives a Letter.*

Lord *Townly*. Pray let's see.

[*Reads.*

The Inclos'd, Madam, fell accidentally into my hands; if it no way concerns you, you will only have the trouble of reading this, from your sincere Friend and humble Servant, Unknown, &c.

Lady *Grace*. And this was the inclos'd.

[*Giving another.*

Lord *Townly*. [*Reads.*] *To Charles Manly, Esq.*

Your manner of living with me of late, convinces me, that I now grow as painful to you, as to myself: but however, though you can love me no longer, I hope you will not let me live worse than I did, before I left an honest Income, for the vain Hopes of being ever Yours.

Myrtilia Dupe.

P. S. *'Tis above four Months since I receiv'd a Shilling from you.*

Lady *Grace*. What think you now?

Lord *Town*. I am considering——

Lady *Grace*. You see it's directed to him——

Lord *Town*. That's true! but the Postscript seems to be a reproach, that I think he is not capable of deserving.

Lady *Grace*. But who could have concern enough, to send it to me?

Lord *Town*. I have observed that these sort of letters from unknown friends, generally come from secret enemies.

Lady *Grace*. What would you have me do in it?

Lord *Town*. What I think you ought to do——fairly shew it him, and say I advis'd you to it.

Lady *Grace*. Will not that have a very odd look, from me?

Lord *Town*. Not at all, if you use my name in it: if he is innocent, his impatience to appear so, will discover his regard to you: If he is guilty, it will be your best way of preventing his addresses.

Lady *Grace*. But what pretence have I to put him out of countenance?

Lord *Town*. I can't think there's any fear of that.

Lady *Grace*. Pray what is't you do think then?

Lord *Town*. Why certainly, that it's much more probable, this letter may be all an artifice, than that he is in the least concern'd in it——

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. *Manly*, my Lord.

Lord *Town*. Do you receive him; while I step a minute in to my Lady.

[*Exit* Lord *Townly*.

Enter *Manly*.

Man. Madam, your most obedient; they told me, my Lord was here.

Lady *Grace*. He will be here presently: He is but just gone in to my sister.

Man. So! then my Lady dines with us.

Lady *Grace*. No; she is engag'd.

Man. I hope you are not of her party, Madam?

Lady *Grace*. Not till after dinner.

Man. And pray how may she have dispos'd of the rest of the day?

Lady *Grace*. Much as usual! she has visits 'till about eight; after that 'till court time, she is to be at Quadrille, at Mrs. *Idle*'s: After the Drawing-room, she takes a short supper with my Lady *Moonlight*. And from thence, they go together to my Lord *Noble*'s Assembly.

Man. And are you to do all this with her, Madam?

Lady *Grace*. Only a few of the visits; I would indeed have drawn her to the Play; but I doubt we have so much upon our hands, that it will not be practicable.

Man. But how can you forbear all the rest of it?

Lady *Grace*. There's no great merit in forbearing, what one is not charm'd with.

Man. And yet I have found that very difficult in my time.

Lady *Grace*. How do you mean?

Man. Why, I have pass'd a great deal of my life, in the hurry of the Ladies, though I was generally better pleas'd when I was at quiet without 'em.

Lady *Grace*. What induc'd you, then, to be with them?

Man. Idleness, and the Fashion.

Lady *Grace*. No Mistresses in the case?

Man. To speak honestly—Yes—being often in the toyshop, there was no forbearing the bawbles.

Lady *Grace*. And of course, I suppose sometimes you were tempted to pay for them, twice as much as they were worth.

Man. Why really, where fancy only makes the choice, Madam, no wonder if we are generally bubbled, in those sort of bargains, which I confess has been often my case: For I had constantly some Coquette, or other, upon my hands, whom I could love perhaps just enough to put it in her power to plague me.

Lady *Grace*. And that's a pow'r, I doubt, commonly made use of.

Man. The amours of a Coquette, Madam, seldom have any other view. I look upon Them, and Prudes, to be nuisances, just alike; tho' they seem very different: The first are always plaguing the Men; and the other are always abusing the Women.

Lady *Grace*. And yet both of them do it for the same vain ends; to establish a false character of

being virtuous.

Man. Of being chaste, they mean; for they know no other virtue: and, upon the credit of that, they traffick in every thing else that's vicious: They (even against Nature) keep their chastity, only because they find they have more power to do mischief with it, than they could possibly put in practice without it.

Lady Grace. Hold! Mr. *Manly*: I am afraid this severe opinion of the sex, is owing to the ill choice you have made of your Mistresses.

Man. In a great measure, it may be so: But, Madam, if both these characters are so odious; how vastly valuable is that woman, who has attain'd all they aim at without the aid of the Folly, or Vice of either?

Lady Grace. I believe those sort of women to be as scarce, Sir, as the men, that believe there are any such; or that allowing such have virtue enough to deserve them.

Man. That *could* deserve them then—had been a more favourable reflexion!

Lady Grace. Nay, I speak only from my little experience: For (I'll be free with you, Mr. *Manly*) I don't know a man in the world, that, in appearance, might better pretend to a woman of the first merit, than yourself: And yet I have a reason in my hand, here, to think you have your failings.

Man. I have infinite, Madam; but I am sure, the want of an implicit respect for you, is not among the number—pray what is in your hand, Madam?

Lady Grace. Nay, Sir, I have no title to it; for the direction is to you.

[*Gives him a Letter.*]

Man. To me! I don't remember the hand—

[*Reads to himself.*]

Lady Grace. I can't perceive any change of guilt in him! and his surprise seems natural! [*Aside.*] —Give me leave to tell you one thing by the way, Mr. *Manly*; That I should never have shewn you this, but that my Brother enjoin'd me to it.

Man. I take that to proceed from my Lord's good opinion of me, Madam.

Lady Grace. I hope, at least, it will stand as an excuse for my taking this liberty.

Man. I never yet saw you do any thing, Madam, that wanted an excuse; and, I hope, you will not give me an instance to the contrary, by refusing the favour I am going to ask you.

Lady Grace. I don't believe I shall refuse any, that you think proper to ask.

Man. Only this, Madam, to indulge me so far, as to let me know how this letter came into your hands.

Lady Grace. Inclos'd to me, in this without a name.

Man. If there be no secret in the contents, Madam—

Lady Grace. Why—there is an impertinent insinuation in it: But as I know your good sense will think it so too, I will venture to trust you.

Man. You oblige me, Madam.

[*He takes the other Letter and reads.*]

Lady Grace. [*Aside.*] Now am I in the oddest situation! methinks our conversation grows terribly critical! This must produce something:—O lud! would it were over!

Man. Now, Madam, I begin to have some light into the poor project, that is at the bottom of all this.

Lady Grace. I have no notion of what could be proposed by it.

Man. A little patience, Madam—First, as to the insinuation you mention—

Lady Grace. O! what is he going to say now!

[*Aside.*]

Man. Tho' my intimacy with my Lord may have allow'd my visits to have been very frequent here of late; yet, in such a talking town as this, you must not wonder, if a great many of those visits are plac'd to your account: And this taken for granted, I suppose has been told to my Lady *Wronghead*, as a piece of news, since her arrival, not improbably without many more imaginary circumstances.

Lady Grace. My Lady *Wronghead*!

Man. Ay, Madam, for I am positive this is her hand!

Lady Grace. What view could she have in writing it?

Man. To interrupt any treaty of marriage, she may have heard I am engaged in: Because if I die without heirs, her Family expects that some part of my estate may return to them again. But, I hope, she is so far mistaken, that if this letter has given you the least uneasiness,—I shall think that the happiest moment of my life.

Lady Grace. That does not carry your usual complaisance, Mr. *Manly*.

Man. Yes, Madam, because I am sure I can convince you of my innocence.

Lady *Grace*. I am sure I have no right to inquire into it.

Man. Suppose you may not, Madam; yet you may very innocently have so much curiosity.

Lady *Grace*. With what an artful gentleness he steals into my opinion? [*Aside*.] Well, Sir, I won't pretend to have so little of the Woman, in me, as to want curiosity—But pray, do you suppose then, this *Myrtilla* is a real, or a fictitious name?

Man. Now I recollect, Madam, there is a young woman, in the house, where my Lady *Wronghead* lodges, that I heard somebody call *Myrtilla*: This letter may be written by her—but how it came directed to me, I confess is a mystery; that before I ever presume to see your Ladyship again, I think myself oblig'd, in Honour to find out.

[*Going*.

Lady *Grace*. Mr. *Manly*—you are not going?

Man. 'Tis but to the next street, Madam; I shall be back in ten minutes.

Lady *Grace*. Nay! but dinner's just coming up.

Man. Madam, I can neither eat, nor rest, till I see an end of this affair!

Lady *Grace*. But this is so odd! why should any silly curiosity of mine drive you away?

Man. Since you won't suffer it to be yours, Madam; then it shall be only to satisfy my own curiosity—

[*Exit Manly*.

Lady *Grace*. Well—and now, what am I to think of all this? Or suppose an indifferent person had heard every word we have said to one another, what would they have thought on't? Would it have been very absurd to conclude, he is seriously inclined to pass the rest of his life with me?—I hope not—for I am sure, the case is terribly clear on my side! and why may not I, without vanity, suppose my—unaccountable somewhat—has done as much execution upon him?—why—because he never told me so—nay, he has not so much as mentioned the word Love, or ever said one civil thing to my person—well—but he has said a thousand to my good opinion, and has certainly got it—had he spoke first to my person, he had paid a very ill compliment to my understanding—I should have thought him impertinent, and never have troubled my head about him; but as he has manag'd the matter, at least I am sure of one thing; that let his thoughts be what they will, I shall never trouble my head about any other man, as long as I live.

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Well, Mrs. *Trusty*, is my sister dress'd yet?

Trusty. Yes, Madam, but my Lord has been courting her so, I think, 'till they are both out of humour.

Lady *Grace*. How so?

Trusty. Why, it begun, Madam, with his Lordship's desiring her Ladyship to dine at home to-day—upon which my Lady said she could not be ready; upon that, my Lord order'd them to stay the dinner, and then my Lady order'd the coach; then my Lord took her short, and said, he had order'd the coachman to set up: Then my Lady made him a great curt'sy, and said, she would wait 'till his Lordship's horses had din'd, and was mighty pleasant: But for fear of the worst, Madam, she whisper'd me—to get her chair ready.

[*Exit Trusty*.

Lady *Grace*. O! here they come; and, by their looks, seem a little unfit for company.

[*Exit Lady Grace*.

Enter Lady Townly, Lord Townly following.

Lady *Town*. Well! look you, my Lord; I can bear it no longer! nothing still but about my faults, my faults! an agreeable subject truly!

Lord *Town*. Why, Madam, if you won't hear of them; how can I ever hope to see you mend them?

Lady *Town*. Why, I don't intend to mend them—I can't mend them—you know I have try'd to do it an hundred times, and—it hurts me so—I can't bear it!

Lord *Town*. And I, Madam, can't bear this daily licentious abuse of your time and character.

Lady *Town*. Abuse! Astonishing! when the Universe knows, I am never better company, than when I am doing what I have a mind to! But to see this world! that Men can never get over that silly spirit of contradiction—why but last *Thursday* now—there you wisely amended one of my faults as you call them—you insisted upon my not going to the Masquerade—and pray, what was the consequence! was not I as cross as the Devil, all the night after? was not I forc'd to get company at home! and was not it almost three o'clock in the morning, before I was able to come to myself again? and then the fault is not mended neither,—for next time, I shall only have twice the inclination to go: so that all this mending, and mending, you see, is but dearning an old ruffle, to make it worse than it was before.

Lord *Town*. Well, the manner of womens living, of late, is insupportable; and one way or other—

Lady *Town*. It's to be mended, I suppose! why so it may; but then, my dear Lord, you must give one time—and when things are at worst, you know, they may mend themselves! ha! ha!

Lord *Town*. Madam, I am not in a humour, now, to trifle.

Lady *Town*. Why then, my Lord, one word of fair argument—to talk with you, your own way now—You complain of my late hours, and I of your early ones—so far are we even, you'll allow—but pray which gives us the best figure in the eye of the polite world? my active, spirited three in the Morning, or your dull, drowsy eleven at Night? Now, I think, one has the air of a Woman of Quality, and t'other of a plodding Mechanic, that goes to bed betimes, that he may rise early, to open his shop!—Faugh!

Lord *Town*. Fy, fy, Madam! is this your way of reasoning? 'tis time to wake you then—'tis not your ill hours alone, that disturb me, but as often the ill company that occasion those ill Hours.

Lady *Town*. Sure I don't understand you now, my Lord; what ill company do I keep?

Lord *Town*. Why, at best, women that lose their money, and men that win it! Or, perhaps, men that are voluntary bubbles at one game, in hopes a Lady will give them fair play at another. Then that unavoidable mixture with known rakes, conceal'd thieves, and Sharpers in embroidery—or what, to me, is still more shocking, that herd of familiar chattering crop-ear'd Coxcombs, who are so often like Monkeys, there would be no knowing them asunder, but that their tails hang from their head, and the monkey's grows where it should do.

Lady *Town*. And a Husband must give eminent proof of his sense, that thinks their powder-puffs dangerous.

Lord *Town*. Their being fools, Madam, is not always the Husband's security: Or if it were, fortune, sometimes, gives them advantages might make a thinking woman tremble.

Lady *Town*. What do you mean!

Lord *Town*. That Women, sometimes, lose more than they are able to pay; and if a creditor be a little pressing, the Lady may be reduc'd to try if, instead of gold, the Gentleman will accept of a trinket.

Lady *Town*. My Lord you grow scurrilous; you'll make me hate you. I'll have you to know, I keep company with the politest people in town, and the Assemblies I frequent are full of such.

Lord *Town*. So are the Churches—now and then.

Lady *Town*. My friends frequent them too, at well as the Assemblies.

Lord *Town*. Yes, and would do it oftner, if a groom of the chambers there were allowed to furnish cards to the company.

Lady *Town*. I see what you drive at all this while; you would lay an imputation on my fame, to cover your own avarice! I might take any pleasures I find, that were not expensive.

Lord *Town*. Have a care, Madam; don't let me think you only value your chastity, to make me reproachable for not indulging you in every thing else, that's vicious—I, Madam, have a reputation too, to guard, that's dear to me, as yours—The follies of an ungovern'd wife may make the wisest man uneasy; but 'tis his own fault, if ever they make him contemptible.

Lady *Town*. My Lord—you would make a woman mad!

Lord *Town*. You'd make a man a fool.

Lady *Town*. If Heav'n has made you otherwise, that won't be in my power.

Lord *Town*. Whatever may be in your inclination, Madam; I'll prevent you making me a Beggar at least.

Lady *Town*. A Beggar! *Cræsus!* I'm out of Patience! I won't come home 'till four to-morrow morning.

Lord *Town*. That may be, Madam; but I'll order the doors to be lock'd at twelve.

Lady *Town*. Then I won't come home 'till to-morrow night.

Lord *Town*. Then, Madam;—You shall never come home again.

[*Exit Lord Town.*]

Lady *Town*. What does he mean! I never heard such a word from him in my life before! the Man always us'd to have manners in his worst humours! there's something, that I don't see, at the bottom of all this—but his head's always upon some impracticable scheme or other, so I won't trouble mine any longer about him. Mr. *Manly*, your Servant.

Enter Manly.

Man. I ask pardon for my intrusion, Madam; but I hope my business with my Lord will excuse it.

Lady *Town*. I believe you'll find him in the next room, Sir.

Man. Will you give me leave, Madam?

Lady *Town*. Sir—you have my leave, tho' you were a lady.

Man. [*Aside.*] What a well bred age do we live in?

[*Exit Manly.*]

Enter Lady Grace.

Lady *Town*. O! my dear Lady *Grace!* how could you leave me so unmercifully alone all this while?

Lady *Grace*. I thought my Lord had been with you.

Lady *Town*. Why yes—and therefore I wanted your relief; for he has been in such a fluster here—

Lady *Grace*. Bless me! for what?

Lady *Town*. Only our usual breakfast; we have each of us had our dish of Matrimonial Comfort, this morning! we have been charming company!

Lady *Grace*. I am mighty glad of it! sure it must be a vast happiness, when a Man and a Wife can give themselves the same turn of conversation!

Lady *Town*. O! the prettiest thing in the world!

Lady *Grace*. Now I should be afraid, that where two people are every day together so, they must often be in want of something to talk upon.

Lady *Town*. O my Dear, you are the most mistaken in the world! married people have things to talk of, child, that never enter into the imagination of others.—Why, here's my Lord and I now, we have not been married above two short years, you know, and we have already eight or ten things constantly in bank, that whenever we want company, we can take up any one of them for two hours together, and the subject never the flatter; nay, if we have occasion for it, it will be as fresh next day too, as it was the first hour it entertain'd us.

Lady *Grace*. Certainly that must be vastly pretty.

Lady *Town*. O! there's no life like it! why t'other day for example, when you din'd abroad; my Lord and I, after a pretty chearful *tête à tête* meal, sat us down by the fire-side, in an easy indolent, pick-tooth way, for about a quarter of an hour, as if we had not thought of any other's being in the room—at last, stretching himself, and yawning—My Dear, says he,—aw—you came home very late, last night—'Twas but just turn'd of Two, says I—I was in bed—aw—by eleven, says he; so you are every night, says I—Well, says he, I am amazed you can sit up so late—How can you be amaz'd, says I, at a thing that happens so often?—upon which we enter'd into a conversation—and tho' this is a point has entertain'd us above fifty times already, we always find so many pretty new things to say upon it, that I believe in my soul, it will last as long as we live.

Lady *Grace*. But pray! in such sort of family dialogues (tho' extremely well for passing the time) don't there, now and then, enter some little witty sort of bitterness?

Lady *Town*. O yes! which does not do amiss at all! A smart repartee, with a zest of recrimination at the head of it, makes the prettiest sherbet; Ay, ay! if we did not mix a little of the acid with it, a matrimonial Society would be so luscious, that nothing but an old liquorish prude would be able to bear it.

Lady *Grace*. Well,——certainly you have the most elegant taste—

Lady *Town*. Tho' to tell you the truth, my Dear, I rather think we squeez'd a little too much lemon into it, this bout; for it grew so sour at last, that—I think—I almost told him, he was a fool—and he again—talk'd something oddly of—turning me out of doors.

Lady *Grace*. O! have a care of that!

Lady *Town*. Nay, if he should, I may thank my own wise father for that—

Lady *Grace*. How so?

Lady *Town*. Why—when my good Lord first open'd his honourable trenches before me, my unaccountable Papa, in whose hands I then was, gave me up at discretion.

Lady *Grace*. How do you mean?

Lady *Town*. He said, the wives of this age were come to that pass, that he would not desire even his own Daughter should be trusted with pin-money; so that my whole train of separate inclinations are left entirely at the mercy of an husband's odd humours.

Lady *Grace*. Why, that, indeed, is enough to make a woman of spirit look about her!

Lady *Town*. Nay, but to be serious; my Dear; what would you really have a woman do in my case?

Lady *Grace*. Why—If I had a sober husband as you have, I would make myself the happiest wife in the world by being as sober as he.

Lady *Town*. O! you wicked thing! how can you teize one at this rate? when you know he is so very sober, that (except giving me money) there is not one thing in the world he can do to please me! And I at the same time, partly by nature, and partly, perhaps, by keeping the best company, do with my soul love almost every thing he hates! I dote upon assemblies! my heart bounds at a ball; and at an Opera—I expire! then I love play to distraction! Cards enchant me! and Dice—put me out of my little wits! Dear! dear Hazard! oh! what a flow of spirits it gives one! do you never play at hazard, child?

Lady *Grace*. Oh! never! I don't think it fits well upon women; there is something so masculine, so much the air of a rake in it! you see how it makes the men swear and curse! and when a woman is thrown into the same passion—why—

Lady *Town*. That's very true! one is a little put to it, sometimes, not to make use of the same words to express it.

Lady *Grace*. Well—and, upon ill luck, pray what words are you really forc'd to make use of?

Lady *Town*. Why upon a very hard case, indeed, when a sad wrong word is rising, just to one's tongue's end, I give a great gulp—and swallow it.

Lady *Grace*. Well—and is not that enough to make you forswear play, as long as you live?

Lady *Town*. O yes! I have forsworn it.

Lady *Grace*. Seriously?

Lady *Town*. Solemnly! a thousand times; but then one is constantly forsworn.

Lady *Grace*. And how can you answer that?

Lady *Town*. My dear, what we say, when we are losers, we look upon to be no more binding than a lover's oath, or a great man's promise. But I beg pardon, child; I should not lead you so far into the world; you are a prude, and design to live soberly.

Lady *Grace*. Why, I confess my nature, and my education do, in a good degree, incline me that way.

Lady *Town*. Well! how a woman of spirit, (for you don't want that, child) can dream of living soberly, is to me inconceivable! for you will marry I suppose.

Lady *Grace*. I can't tell but I may.

Lady *Town*. And won't you live in town?

Lady *Grace*. Half the year, I should like it very well.

Lady *Town*. My stars! and you would really live in London half the year to be sober in it!

Lady *Grace*. Why not?

Lady *Town*. Why can't you as well go, and be sober in the country?

Lady *Grace*. So I would—t'other half year.

Lady *Town*. And pray what comfortable scheme of life would you form now, for your summer and winter sober entertainments?

Lady *Grace*. A scheme, that I think might very well content us.

Lady *Town*. O! of all things let's hear it.

Lady *Grace*. Why, in summer, I cou'd pass my leisure hours in riding, in reading, walking by a canal, or sitting at the end of it under a great tree; in dressing, dining, chatting with an agreeable friend, perhaps hearing a little music, taking a dish of tea, or a game of cards soberly! managing my family, looking into its accounts, playing with my children (if I had any) or in a thousand other innocent amusements—soberly! and possibly, by these means, I might induce my husband to be as sober as myself—

Lady *Town*. Well, my dear, thou art an astonishing creature! for sure such primitive antediluvian notions of life, have not been in any head these thousand years—Under a great tree! O my soul! ---But I beg we may have the sober town scheme too—for I am charmed with the country one!

Lady *Grace*. You shall, and I'll try to stick to my sobriety there too.

Lady *Town*. Well, tho' I'm sure it will give me the vapours, I must hear it however.

Lady *Grace*. Why then, for fear of your fainting, madam, I will first so far come into the fashion, that I would never be dressed out of it—but still it should be soberly. For I can't think it any disgrace to a woman of my private fortune, not to wear her lace as fine as a wedding-suit of a first Dutchess. Tho' there is one extravagance I would venture to come up to.

Lady *Town*. Ay, now for it—

Lady *Grace*. I would every day be as clean as a bride.

Lady *Town*. Why the men say, that's a great step to be made one—Well now you are drest—pray let's see to what purpose.

Lady *Grace*. I would visit—that is, my real friends; but as little for form as possible.—I would go to court; sometimes to an assembly, nay, play at *quadrille*—soberly; I would see all the good plays; and, (because 'tis the fashion) now and then an opera—but I would not expire there, for fear I should never go again: and lastly, I can't say, but for curiosity, if I lik'd my company, I might be drawn in once to a masquerade! And this, I think, is as far at any woman can go—soberly.

Lady *Town*. Well! if it had not been for that last piece of sobriety, I was just going to call for some surfeit water.

Lady *Grace*. Why, don't you think, with the farther aid of breakfasting, dining, taking the air, supping, sleeping, not to say a word of devotion, the four and twenty hours might roll over in a tolerable manner?

Lady *Town*. Tolerable? deplorable! Why, child, all you propose, is but to endure life, now I want to enjoy it—

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Trus. Madam, your Ladyship's chair is ready.

Lady *Town*. Have the Footmen their white flambeaux yet? for last night I was poison'd.

Trus. Yes, madam: there were some come in this morning.

[*Exit* *Trusty*.

Lady *Town*. My dear, you will excuse me; but you know my time is so precious—

Lady *Grace*. That I beg I may not hinder your least enjoyment of it.

Lady *Town*. You will call on me at Lady *Revel's*?

Lady *Grace*. Certainly.

Lady *Town*. But I am so afraid it will break into your scheme, my dear!

Lady *Grace*. When it does, I will—soberly break from you.

Lady *Town*. Why then 'till we meet again, dear sister, I wish you all tolerable happiness.

[*Exit* *Lady* *Town*.

Lady *Grace*. There she goes—dash! into her stream of pleasures! poor woman! she is really a fine creature! and sometimes infinitely agreeable! nay, take her out of the madness of this town, rational in her notions, and easy to live with: but she is so borne down by this torrent of vanity in vogue, she thinks every hour of her life is lost that she does not lead at the head of it. What it will end in, I tremble to imagine—Ha! my brother, and *Manly* with him! I guess what they have been talking of—I shall hear it in my turn, I suppose, but it won't become me to be inquisitive.

[*Exit* *Lady* *Grace*.

Enter *Lord* *Townly* and *Manly*.

Lord *Town*. I did not think my Lady *Wronghead* had such a notable brain: tho' I can't say she was so very wise, in trusting this silly girl you call *Myrtilla*, with the secret.

Man. No, my Lord, you mistake me, had the girl been in the secret, perhaps I had never come at it myself.

Lord *Town*. Why I thought you said the girl writ this letter, to you, and that my Lady *Wronghead* sent it inclos'd to my sister?

Man. If you please to give me leave, my Lord—the fact is thus.—This inclos'd letter to Lady *Grace* was a real original one, written by this girl, to the Count we have been talking of: the Count drops it, and my Lady *Wronghead* finds it: then only changing the cover, she seals it up as a letter of business, just written by herself, to me: and pretending to be in a hurry, gets this innocent girl to write the direction, for her.

Lord *Town*. Oh! then the girl did not know she was superscribing a billet-doux of her own to you?

Man. No, my Lord; for when I first question'd her about the direction, she own'd it immediately: but when I shew'd her that the letter to the Count was within it, and told her how it came into my hands, the poor creature was amazed and thought herself betray'd both by the Count and my Lady—in short, upon this discovery the girl and I grew so gracious, that she has let me into some transactions, in my Lady *Wronghead's* family, which, with my having a careful eye over them, may prevent the ruin of it.

Lord *Town*. You are very generous to be so solicitous for a Lady that has given you so much uneasiness.

Man. But I will be most unmercifully reveng'd of her: for I will do her the greatest friendship in the world—against her will.

Lord *Town*. What an uncommon philosophy art thou master of? to make even thy malice a virtue?

Man. Yet, my Lord, I assure you, there is no one action of my life gives me more pleasure than your approbation of it.

Lord *Town*. Dear *Charles!* my heart's impatient, 'till thou art nearer to me: and as a proof that I have long wished thee so: while your daily conduct has chosen rather to deserve than ask my sister's favour; I have been as secretly industrious to make her sensible of your merit: and since on this occasion you have open'd your whole heart to me, 'tis now with equal pleasure, I assure you, we have both succeeded—she is as firmly yours—

Man. Impossible! you flatter me!

Lord *Town*. I am glad you think it flattery: but she herself shall prove it none: she dines with us alone: when the servants are withdrawn, I'll open a conversation, that shall excuse my leaving you together—*O! Charles!* had I, like thee, been cautious in my choice, what melancholy hours had this heart avoided!

Man. No more of that, I beg, my Lord—

Lord *Town*. But 'twill, at least, be some relief to my anxiety (however barren of content the state has been to me) to see so near a friend and sister happy in it: your harmony of life will be an instance how much the choice of temper is preferable to beauty.

While your soft hours in mutual kindness move,
You'll reach by virtue what I lost by love.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Mrs. Motherly's House.*

Enter Mrs. Motherly, meeting Myrtila.

Moth. So, niece! where is it possible you can have been these six hours?

Myr. O! Madam! I have such a terrible story to tell you!

Moth. A story! ods my life! what have you done with the Count's note of five hundred pounds I sent you about? is it safe? is it good? is it security?

Myr. Yes, yes, it is safe: but for its goodness—mercy on us! I have been in a fair way to be hang'd about it.

Moth. The dickens! has the rogue of a Count play'd us another trick then?

Myr. You shall hear, Madam; when I came to Mr. *Cash*, the Banker's, and shewed him his note for five hundred pounds, payable to the Count, or order, in two months—he looked earnestly upon it, and desired me to step into the inner room, while he examined his books—after I had staid about ten minutes, he came in to me—claps to the door, and charges me with a constable for forgery.

Moth. Ah poor soul! and how didst thou get off?

Myr. While I was ready to sink in this condition, I begg'd him to have a little patience, 'till I could send for Mr. *Manly*, whom he knew to be a gentleman of worth and honour, and who, I was sure, would convince him, whatever fraud might be in the note, that I was myself an innocent abus'd woman—and as good luck would have it, in less than half an hour Mr. *Manly* came—so, without mincing the matter, I fairly told him upon what design the Count had lodg'd that note in your hands, and in short, laid open the whole scheme he had drawn us into, to make our fortune.

Moth. The devil you did!

Myr. Why how do you think it was possible I could any otherwise make Mr. *Manly* my friend, to help me out of the scrape I was in? To conclude, he soon made Mr. *Cash* easy, and sent away the Constable; nay farther promis'd me, if I would trust the note in his hands, he would take care it should be fully paid before it was due, and at the same time would give me an ample revenge upon the Count; so that all you have to consider now, Madam, is, whether you think yourself safer in the Count's hands, or Mr. *Manly's*.

Moth. Nay, nay, child; there is no choice in the matter! Mr. *Manly* may be a friend indeed, if any thing in our power can make him so.

Myr. Well, madam, and now pray how stand matters at home here? What has the Count done with the ladies?

Moth. Why every thing he has a mind to do, by this time, I suppose. He is in as high favour with Miss, as he is with my Lady.

Myr. Pray, where are the ladies?

Moth. Rattling abroad in their own coach, and the well-bred Count along with them: they have been scouring all the shops in town over, buying fine things and new clothes from morning to night: they have made one voyage already, and have brought home such a cargo of bawbles and trumpery—mercy on the poor man that's to pay for them!

Myr. Did not the young Squire go with them!

Moth. No, no; Miss said, truly he would but disgrace their party: so they even left him asleep by the kitchen fire.

Myr. Has he not asked after me all this while? for I had a sort of an assignation with him.

Moth. O yes! he has been in a bitter taking about it. At last his disappointment grew so uneasy, that he fairly fell a crying; so to quiet him, I sent one of the maids and *John Moody* abroad with him to shew him—the lions and the Monument. Ods me! there he is, just come home again—you may have business with him—so I'll even turn you together.

Enter Squire Richard.

Squ. Rich. Soah! soah! Mrs. *Myrtila*, where han yow been aw this day, forsooth?

Myr. Nay, if you go to that, Squire, where have you been, pray?

Squ. Rich. Rich. Why, when I fun' at yow were no loikly to come whoam, I were ready to hong my sel—so *John Moody*, and I, and one o' your lasses have been—Lord knows where—a seeing o' the soights.

Myr. Well and pray what have you seen, Sir?

Squ. Rich. Flesh! I cawnt tell, not I—seen every thing I think. First there we went o' top o' the what d'ye call it? there, the great huge stone post, up the rawnd and rawnd stairs, that twine and twine about, just an as thof it were a cork screw.

Myr. O, the Monument! well, and was it not a fine sight from the top of it?

Squ. *Rich.* Sight, Miss! I know no'—I saw nowght but smoak and brick housen, and steeple tops—then there was such a mortal ting-tang of bells, and rumbling of carts and coaches, and then the folks under one look'd so small, and made such a hum, and a buz, it put me in mind of my mother's great glass bee-hive in our garden in the country.

Myr. I think, Master, you give a very good account of it.

Squ. *Rich.* Ay! but I did no like it: for my head—my head—began to turn—so I trundled me dawn stairs ugain like a round trencher.

Myr. Well! but this was not all you saw, I suppose?

Squ. *Rich.* Noa! noa! we went after that and saw the lions, and I lik'd them better by hawlf; they are pure grim devils; hoh, hoh! I touke a stick, and gave one of them such a poke o' the noase—I believe he would ha' snapt my head off, an he could ha' got me. Hoh! hoh! hoh!

Myr. Well, Master, when you and I go abroad, I'll shew you prettier sights than these—there's a masquerade to-morrow.

Squ. *Rich.* O laud! ay! they say that's a pure thing for *Merry Andrews*, and those sort of comical mummings—and the Count tells me, that there lads and lasses may jig their tails, and eat, and drink, without grudging, all night-lung.

Myr. What would you say now, if I should get you a ticket and go along with you?

Squ. *Rich.* Ah dear!

Myr. But have a care, Squire, the fine ladies there are terribly tempting; look well to your heart, or ads me! they'll whip it up in the trip of a minute.

Squ. *Rich.* Ay, but they can't thoa—soa let 'um look to themselves, an' ony of 'um falls in love with me—mayhap they had as good be quiet.

Myr. Why sure you would not refuse a fine lady, would you?

Squ. *Rich.* Ay, but I would tho' unless it were—one at I know of.

Myr. Oh! oh! then you have left your heart in the country, I find?

Squ. *Rich.* Noa, noa, my heart—eh—my heart e'nt awt o' this room.

Myr. I am glad you have it about you, however.

Squ. *Rich.* Nay, mahap not soa neather, somebody else may have it, 'at you little think of.

Myr. I can't imagine what you mean!

Squ. *Rich.* Noa! why doan't you know how many folks there is in this room, naw?

Myr. Very fine, Master, I see you have learnt the town gallantry already.

Squ. *Rich.* Why doan't you believe 'at I have a kindness for you then?

Myr. Fy! fy! Master, how you talk! beside you are too young to think of a wife. Squ. *Rich.* Ay but I caunt help thinking o' yow, for all that.

Myr. How! why sure, Sir, you don't pretend to think of me in a dishonourable way?

Squ. *Rich.* Nay, that's as you see good—I did no' think 'at you would ha' thought of me for a husband, mayhap; unless I had means in my own hands; and feyther allows me but half a crown a week, as yet a while.

Myr. Oh! when I like any body, 'tis not want of money will make me refuse them.

Squ. *Rich.* Well, that's just my mind now; for 'an I like a girl, Miss, I would take her in her smuck.

Myr. Ay, Master, now you speak like a man of honour: this shews something of a true heart in you.

Squ. *Rich.* Ay, and a true heart you'll find me; try me when you will.

Myr. Hush! hush! here's your papa come home, and my aunt with him.

Squ. *Rich.* A devil rive 'em, what do they come naw for?

Myr. When you and I get to the masquerade, you shall see what I'll say to you.

Squ. *Rich.* Well, hands upon't then—

Myr. There—

Squ. *Rich.* One buss and a bargain.

[*Kisses her.*

Ads wauntlikins! as soft and plump as a marrow-pudding.

[*Exeunt severally.*

*Enter Sir Francis Wronghead and Mrs.
Motherly.*

Sir *Fran.* What! my wife and daughter abroad say you?

Moth. O dear Sir, they have been mighty busy all the day long; they just came home to snap up a short dinner, and so went out again.

Sir *Fran.* Well, well, I shan't stay supper for 'em, I can tell 'em that: For ods-heart! I have had nothing in me, but a toast and a tankard, since morning.

Moth. I am afraid, Sir, these late Parliament hours won't agree with you.

Sir *Fran.* Why, truly, Mrs. *Motherly*, they don't do right with us country gentlemen; to lose one meal out of three, is a hard tax upon a good stomach.

Moth. It is so indeed, Sir.

Sir *Fran.* But, hawsomever, Mrs. *Motherly*, when we consider, that what we suffer is for the good of our country—

Moth. Why truly, Sir, that is something.

Sir *Fran.* Oh! there's a great deal to be said for't—the good of one's country is above all things—A true hearted *Englishman* thinks nothing too much for it—I have heard of some honest gentlemen so very zealous, that for the good of their country—they would sometimes go to dinner at midnight.

Moth. O! the goodness of 'em! sure their country must have vast esteem for them?

Sir *Fran.* So they have Mrs. *Motherly*; they are so respected when they come home to their Boroughs, after a session, and so belov'd—that their country will come and dine with them every day in the week.

Moth. Dear me! what a fine thing it is to be so populous?

Sir *Fran.* It is a great comfort, indeed! and I can assure you you are a good sensible woman, Mrs. *Motherly*.

Moth. O dear Sir, your Honour's pleas'd to compliment.

Sir *Fran.* No, no, I see you know how to value people of consequence.

Moth. Good lack! here's company, Sir; will you give me leave to get you a little something 'till the ladies come home, Sir?

Sir *Fran.* Why troth, I don't think it would be amiss.

Moth. It shall be done in a moment, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Enter Mr. Manly.

Man. Sir *Francis*, your servant.

Sir *Fran.* Cousin *Manly*!

Man. I am come to see how the family goes on here.

Sir *Fran.* Troth! all as busy as bees; I have been upon the wing ever since eight o'clock this morning.

Man. By your early hour, then, I suppose you have been making your court to some of the great men.

Sir *Fran.* Why, faith! you have hit it, Sir—I was advised to lose no time: so I e'en went straight forward, to one great man I had never seen in my life before.

Man. Right! that was doing business: but who had you got to introduce you?

Sir *Fran.* Why, no body—I remember'd I had heard a wise man say—My son be bold—so troth! I introduced myself.

Man. As how, pray?

Sir *Fran.* Why, thus—look ye—please your Lordship, says I, I am Sir *Francis Wronghead* of *Bumper-hall*, and member of Parliament for the borough of *Guzzledown*—Sir, your humble servant, says my Lord; thof I have not the honour to know your person, I have heard you are a very honest gentleman, and am glad your Borough has made choice of so worthy a representative; and so, says he, Sir *Francis*, have you any service to command me? Naw, cousin! those last words, you may be sure gave me no small encouragement. And thof I know, Sir, you have no extraordinary opinion of my parts, yet I believe, you won't say I mist it naw!

Man. Well, I hope I shall have no cause.

Sir *Fran.* So when I found him so courteous—My Lord, says I, I did not think to ha' troubled your Lordship with business upon my first visit: but since your Lordship is pleas'd not to stand upon ceremony—why truly, says I, I think naw is as good as another time.

Man. Right! there you push'd him home.

Sir *Fran.* Ay, ay, I had a mind to let him see that I was none of your mealy-mouth'd ones.

Man. Very good!

Sir *Fran.* So in short, my Lord, says I, I have a good estate—but—a—it's a little awt at elbows: and as I desire to serve my King, as well as my country, I shall be very willing to accept of a place at Court.

Man. So, this was making short work on't.

Sir *Fran.* I'cod! I shot him flying, cousin: some of your hawf-witted ones naw, would ha' humm'd

and haw'd, and dangled a month or two after him, before they durst open their mouths about a place, and mayhap, not ha' got it at last neither.

Man. Oh! I'm glad you're so sure on't—

Sir Fran. You shall hear, cousin—*Sir Francis*, says my Lord, pray what sort of a place may you ha' turn'd your thoughts upon? My Lord, says I, beggars must not be chusers; but ony a place, says I, about a thousand a year, will be well enough to be doing with 'till something better falls in—for I thowght it would not look well to stond haggling with him at first.

Man. No, no, your business was to get footing any way.

Sir Fran. Right! there's it! ay, cousin, I see you know the world!

Man. Yes, yes, one sees more of it every day—well! but what said my Lord to all this?

Sir Fran. *Sir Francis*, says he, I shall be glad to serve you any way that lies in my power; so gave me a squeeze by the hond, as much as to say, give yourself no trouble—I'll do your business; with that he turn'd him abawt to somebody with a coloured ribbon across here, that look'd in my thowghts, as if he came for a place too.

Man. Ha! so, upon these hopes, you are to make your fortune!

Sir Fran. Why, do you think there's ony doubt of it, Sir?

Man. Oh no, I have not the least doubt about it—for just as you have done, I made my fortune ten years ago.

Sir Fran. Why, I never knew you had a place, cousin.

Man. Nor I neither, upon my faith, cousin. But you perhaps may have better fortune: for I suppose my Lord has heard of what importance you were in the debate to-day—You have been since down at the house, I presume?

Sir Fran. O yes! I would not neglect the house, for ever so much.

Man. Well, and pray what have they done there?

Sir Fran. Why, troth! I can't well tell you, what they have done, but I can tell you what I did: and I think pretty well in the main; only I happened to make a little mistake at last indeed.

Man. How was that?

Sir Fran. Why, they were all got there, into a sort of a puzzling debate, about the good of the nation—and I were always for that, you know—but in short, the arguments were so long winded o' both sides, that, waunds! I did no well understand 'em, hawsomever, I was convinc'd, and so resolv'd to vote right, according to my conscience—so when they came to put the question, as they call it,—I don't know haw 'twas—but I doubt I cry'd ay! when I should ha' cry'd no!

Man. How came that about?

Sir Fran. Why, by a mistake, as I tell you—for there was a good-humour'd sort of a gentleman, one Mr. *Totherside* I think they call him, that sat next me, as soon as I had cry'd ay! gives me a hearty shake by the hand! Sir says he, you are a man of honour, and a true *Englishman*! and I should be proud to be better acquainted with you—and so with that, he takes me by the sleeve, along with the crowd into the lobby, so, I knew nowght—but ods-flesh! I was got o' the wrung side the post—for I were told, afterwards, I should have staid where I was.

Man. And so, if you had not quite made your fortune before, you have clenched it now!—Ah! thou head of the *Wrongheads*.

Sir Fran. Odso! here's my lady come home at last—I hope, cousin, you will be so kind, as to take a family supper with us?

Man. Another time, *Sir Francis*; but to-night I am engaged!

Enter Lady Wronghead, Miss Jenny, and Count Basset.

Lady Wrong. Cousin! your servant; I hope you will pardon my rudeness: but we have really been in such a continual hurry here, that we have not had a leisure moment to return your last visit.

Man. O Madam! I am a man of no ceremony; you see that has not hindered my coming again.

Lady Wrong. You are infinitely obliging; but I'll redeem my credit with you.

Man. At your own time, Madam.

Count Bas. I must say that for Mr. *Manly*, madam; if making people easy is the rule of good-breeding, he is certainly the best bred man in the world.

Man. Soh! I am not to drop my acquaintance, I find—*[Aside.]* I am afraid, Sir, I shall grow vain upon your good opinion.

Count Bas. I don't know that, Sir; but I am sure, what you are pleas'd to say, makes me so.

Man. The most impudent modesty that ever I met with.

[Aside.]

Lady Wrong. Lard! how ready his wit is?

[*Aside.*]

Sir *Fran.* Don't you think, Sir, the Count's a very fine gentleman? |*Apart.*

Man. O! among the ladies, certainly.

Sir *Fran.* And yet he's as stout as a lion: waund, he'll storm any thing.

Man. Will he so? Why then, Sir, take care of your citadel.

Sir *Fran.* Ah! you are wag, cousin.

Man. I hope, Ladies, the town air continues to agree with you?

Jenny. O! perfectly well, Sir! We have been abroad in our new coach all day long—and we have bought an ocean of fine things. And to-morrow we go to the masquerade! and on Friday to the play! and on Saturday to the opera! and on Sunday we are to be at what d'ye call it—assembly, and see the ladies play at quadrille, and piquet and ombre, and hazard, and basset, and on *Monday*, we are to see the King! and so on *Tuesday*—

Lady *Wrong.* Hold, hold, Miss! you must not let your tongue run so fast, child—you forgot! you know I brought you hither to learn modesty.

Man. Yes, yes! and she is improved with a vengeance—

[*Aside.*]

Jenny. Lawrd! Mama, I am sure I did not say any harm! and if one must not speak in ones turn, one may be kept under as long as one lives, for ought I see.

Lady *Wrong.* O! my conscience, this girl grows so headstrong—

Sir *Fran.* Ay, ay, there's your fine growing spirit for you! Now tack it dawn, an' you can.

Jenny. All I said, Papa, was only to entertain my cousin *Manly*.

Man. My pretty dear, I am mightily obliged to you.

Jenny. Look you there now, Madam.

Lady *Wrong.* Hold your tongue, I say.

Jenny. [*Turning away and glowting.*] I declare it, I won't bear it: she is always snubbing me before you, Sir!—I know why she does it well enough—

[*Aside to the Count.*]

Count *Bas.* Hush! hush, my dear! don't be uneasy at that! she'll suspect us.

[*Aside.*]

Jenny. Let her suspect, what do I care—I don't know, but I have as much reason to suspect, as she—tho' perhaps I'm not so afraid of her.

Count *Bas.* [*Aside.*] I'gad, if I don't keep a tight hand on my tit here, she'll run away with my project before I can bring it to bear.

Lady *Wrong.* [*Aside.*] Perpetually hanging upon him! The young harlot is certainly in love with him; but I must not let them see I think so—and yet I can't bear it: Upon my life, Count, you'll spoil that forward girl—you should not encourage her so.

Count *Bas.* Pardon me, Madam, I was only advising her to observe what your Ladyship said to her.

Man. Yes, truly, her observations have been something particular.

[*Aside.*]

Count *Bas.* In one word, Madam, she has a jealousy of your Ladyship, and I am forc'd to encourage her, to blind it; 'twill be better to take no notice of her behaviour to me.

Lady *Wrong.* You are right, I will be more cautious.

Count *Bas.* To-morrow at the masquerade, we may lose her.

Lady *Wrong.* We shall be observ'd. I'll send you a note, and settle that affair—go on with the girl, and don't mind me.

Count *Bas.* I have been taking your part, my little angel.

Lady *Wrong.* *Jenny!* come hither, child—you must not be so hasty my dear—I only advise you for your good.

Jenny. Yes, Mama; but when I am told of a thing before company it always makes me worse, you know.

Man. If I have any skill in the fair sex; Miss, and her Mama, have only quarrel'd, because they are both of a mind. This facetious Count seems to have made a very genteel step into the family.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Myrtila. [*Manly talks apart with her.*]

Lady *Wrong.* Well, Sir *Francis*, and what news have you brought us from *Westminster*, to-day?

Sir *Fran.* News, Madam? I'cod! I have some—and such as does not come every day, I can tell you—a word in your ear—I have got a promise of a place at Court of a thousand pawnd a year already.

Lady *Wrong*. Have you so, Sir? And pray who may you thank for't? Now! who is in the right? Is not this better than throwing so much away, after a stinking pack of fox-hounds, in the country? Now your family may be the better for it!

Sir *Fran*. Nay! that's what persuaded me to come up, my Dove.

Lady *Wrong*. Mighty well—come—let me have another hundred pound then.

Sir *Fran*. Another! child? Waunds! you have had one hundred this morning, pray what's become of that, my dear?

Lady *Wrong*. What's become of it? why I'll shew you, my Love! Jenny! have you the bills about you?

Jenny. Yes, Mama.

Lady *Wrong*. What's become of it? Why laid out, my dear, with fifty more to it, that I was forced to borrow of the Count here.

Jenny. Yes, indeed, Papa, and that would hardly do neither—There's th' account.

Sir *Fran*. [*Turning over the bills.*] Let's see! let's see! what the devil have we got here?

Man. Then you have sounded your aunt you say, and she readily comes into all I propos'd | *Apart.*
to you?

Myr. Sir, I'll answer, with my life, she is most thankfully yours in every article: she mightily desires to see you, Sir.

Man. I am going home directly; bring her to my house in half an hour; and if she makes good what you tell me, you shall both find your account in it.

Myr. She shall not fail you.

Sir *Fran*. Ods-life, Madam, here's nothing but toys and trinkets, and fans, and clock stockings, by whole-sale.

Lady *Wrong*. There's nothing but what's proper, and for your credit, Sir *Francis*—Nay you see I am so good a housewife, that in necessaries for myself I have scarce laid out a shilling.

Sir *Fran*. No, by my troth, so it seems; for the devil o' one thing's here, that I can see you have any occasion for!

Lady *Wrong*. My dear! do you think I came hither to live out of the fashion? why, the greatest distinction of a fine lady in this town is in the variety of pretty things she has no occasion for.

Jenny. Sure, Papa, could you imagine, that women of quality wanted nothing but stays and petticoats?

Lady *Wrong*. Now, that is so like him!

Man. So! the family comes on finely.

[*Aside.*

Lady *Wrong*. Lard, if men were always to govern, what dowdies would they reduce their wives to!

Sir *Fran*. An hundred pound in the morning, and want another before night! waunds and fire! the Lord Mayor of London could not hold it at this rate!

Man. O! do you feel it, Sir?

[*Aside.*

Lady *Wrong*. My dear, you seem uneasy; let me have the hundred pound, and compose yourself.

Sir *Fran*. Compose the devil, Madam! why do you consider what a hundred pound a day comes to in a year?

Lady *Wrong*. My life, if I account with you from one day to another, that's really all my head is able to bear at a time—But I'll tell you what I consider—I consider that my advice has got you a thousand pound a year this morning—That now methinks you might consider, Sir.

Sir *Fran*. A thousand a year? wounds, madam, but I have not touch'd a penny of it yet!

Man. Nor ever will, I'll answer for him.

[*Aside.*

Enter Squire Richard.

Squ. *Rich*. Feyther an you doan't come quickly, the meat will be coal'd: and I'd fain pick a bit with you.

Lady *Wrong*. Bless me, Sir *Francis*! you are not going to sup by yourself!

Sir *Fran*. No, but I am going to dine by myself, and that's pretty near the matter, Madam.

Lady *Wrong*. Had not you as good stay a little, my dear? we shall all eat in half an hour; and I was thinking to ask my cousin *Manly* to take a family morsel with us.

Sir *Fran*. Nay, for my cousin's good company, I don't care if I ride a day's journey without baiting.

Man. By no means, Sir *Francis*. I am going upon a little business.

Sir *Fran*. Well, Sir, I know you don't love compliments.

Man. You'll excuse me, Madam—

Lady Wrong. Since you have business, Sir—

[*Exit Manly.*]

Enter Mrs. Motherly.

O, Mrs. *Motherly!* you were saying this morning, you had some very fine lace to shew me—can't I see it now?

[*Sir Francis stares.*]

Moth. Why, really Madam, I had made a sort of a promise to let the Countess of *Nicely* have the first sight of it for the birth-day: but your Ladyship—

Lady Wrong. O! I die if I don't see it before her.

Squ. Rich. Woan't you goa; Feyther? |*Apart.*
Sir Fran. Waunds! lad, I shall ha' noa stomach at this rate!

Moth. Well, Madam, though I say it, 'tis the sweetest pattern that ever came over—and for fineness—no cobweb comes up to it!

Sir Fran. Ods guts and gizard, Madam! lace as fine as a cobweb! why, what the devil's that to cost now?

Moth. Nay, *Sir Francis* does not like of it, Madam—

Lady Wrong. He like it! dear Mrs. *Motherly*, he is not to wear it.

Sir Fran. Flesh, Madam, but I suppose I am to pay for it.

Lady Wrong. No doubt on't! think of your thousand a year, and who got it you, go! eat your dinner, and be thankful, go. [*Driving him to the door.*] Come, Mrs. *Motherly*.

[*Exit Lady Wronghead with Mrs. Motherly.*]

Sir Fran. Very fine! so here I mun fast, 'till I am almost famished for the good of my country; while Madam is laying me out an hundred pounds a day in lace as fine as a cobweb, for the honour of my family! ods-flesh; things had need go well at this rate!

Squ. Rich. Nay, nay—come, feyther.

[*Exit Sir Francis.*]

Enter Mrs. Motherly.

Moth. Madam, my Lady desires you and the Count will please to come and assist her fancy in some of the laces.

Count Bas. We'll wait upon her—

[*Exit Mrs. Motherly.*]

Jenny. So! I told you how it was! you see she can't bear to leave us together.

Count Bas. No matter, my dear: you know she has ask'd me to stay supper: so when your papa and she are a-bed, Mrs. *Myrtilla* will let me into the house again; then you may steal into her chamber, and we'll have a pretty sneaker of punch together.

Myr. Ay, ay, Madam, you may command me any thing.

Jenny. Well! that will be pure!

Count Bas. But you had best go to her alone, my life: it will look better if I come after you.

Jenny. Ay, so it will: and to-morrow you know at the masquerade. And then!—hey! *Oh, I'll have a husband! ay, marry, &c.*

[*Exit singing.*]

Myr. So, Sir! am not I very *commode* to you?

Count Bas. Well, child, and don't you find your account in it? did not I tell you we might still be of use to one another?

Myr. Well, but how stands your affair with Miss, in the main?

Count Bas. O she's mad for the masquerade! it drives like a nail, we want nothing now but a parson, to clinch it. Did not your aunt say she could get one at a short warning?

Myr. Yes, yes, my Lord *Townly's* chaplain is her cousin, you know; he'll do your business and mine, at the same time.

Count Bas. O! it's true! but where shall we appoint him?

Myr. Why, you know my Lady *Townly's* house is always open to the masques upon a ball-night, before they go to the *Hay-market*.

Count Bas. Good.

Myr. Now the Doctor purposes, we should all come thither in our habits, and when the rooms are full, we may steal up into his chamber, he says, and there—crack—he'll give us all canonical commission to go to bed together.

Count *Bas*. Admirable! Well, the devil fetch me, if I shall not be heartily glad to see thee well settled, child.

Myr. And may the black gentleman tuck me under his arm at the same time, if I shall not think myself oblig'd to you, as long as I live.

Count *Bas*. One kiss for old acquaintance sake—I'gad I shall want to be busy again!

Myr. O you'll have one shortly will find you employment: but I must run to my squire.

Count *Bas*. And I to the ladies—so your humble servant, sweet Mrs. *Wronghead*.

Myr. Yours, as in duty bound, most noble Count *Basset*.

[*Exit Myr.*

Count *Bas*. Why ay! Count! That title has been of some use to me indeed! not that I have any more pretence to it, than I have to a blue ribband. Yet, I have made a pretty considerable figure in life with it: I have loll'd in my own chariot, dealt at assemblies, din'd with Ambassadors, and made one at quadrille, with the first women of quality—But—*Tempora mutantur*—since that damn'd squadron at *White's* have left me out of their last secret, I am reduced to trade upon my own stock of industry, and make my last push upon a wife: if my card comes up right (which I think can't fail) I shall once more cut a figure, and cock my hat in the face of the best of them! for since our modern men of fortune are grown wise enough to be sharpers: I think sharpers are fools that don't take up the airs of men of quality.

[*Exit.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Lord Townly's House.*

Enter Manly and Lady Grace.

Man. THERE'S something, Madam, hangs upon your mind, to-day: is it unfit to trust me with it?

Lady Grace. Since you will know——my sister then——unhappy woman!

Man. What of her?

Lady Grace. I fear is on the brink of ruin!

Man. I am sorry for it——what has happened?

Lady Grace. Nothing so very new! but the continual repetition of it, has at last rais'd my brother to an intemperance that I tremble at.

Man. Have they had any words upon it?

Lady Grace. He has not seen her since yesterday.

Man. What, not at home all night!

Lady Grace. About five this morning in she came! but with such looks, and such an equipage of misfortunes at her heels——what can become of her?

Man. Has not my lord seen her, say you?

Lady Grace. No! he chang'd his bed last night——I sat with him alone till twelve, in expectation of her: but when the clock had struck, he started from his chair, and grew incens'd to that degree, that had I not, almost on my knees, dissuaded him, he had ordered the doors that instant to have been locked against her.

Man. How terrible is his situation? when the most justifiable severities he can use against her, are liable to be the mirth of all the dissolute card-tables in town!

Lady Grace. 'Tis that, I know, has made him bear so long: but you that feel for him, Mr. *Manly*, will assist him to support his honour, and, if possible, preserve his quiet! therefore I beg you don't leave the house, 'till one or both of them can be wrought to better temper.

Man. How amiable is this concern, in you!

Lady Grace. For heaven's sake don't mind me, but think of something to preserve us all.

Man. I shall not take the merit of obeying your commands, Madam, to serve my Lord——but pray, Madam, let me into all that has past, since yesternight.

Lady Grace. When my intreaties had prevail'd upon my Lord, not to make a story for the town, by so public a violence, as shutting her at once out of his doors; he order'd the next apartment to my lady's to be made ready for him——while that was doing——I try'd by all the little arts I was mistress of, to amuse him into temper; in short, a silent grief was all I could reduce him to——on this, we took our leaves, and parted to our repose: what his was, I imagine by my own: for I ne'er clos'd my eyes. About five, as I told you, I heard my lady at the door; so I slipt on a gown, and sat almost an hour with her in her own chamber.

Man. What said she, when she did not find my Lord there?

Lady Grace. O! so far from being shock'd or alarm'd at it; that she blest the occasion! and said that in her condition, the chat of a female friend was far preferable to the best husband's company in the world.

Man. Where has she spirits to support so much insensibility?

Lady Grace. Nay! it's incredible! for though she had lost every shilling she had in the world, and stretch'd her credit ev'n to breaking; she rallied her own follies with such vivacity, and painted the penance, she knows she must undergo for them, in such ridiculous lights, that had not my concern for a brother been too strong for her wit, she had a'most disarm'd my anger.

Man. Her mind may have another cast by this time: the most flagrant dispositions have their hours of anguish; which their pride conceals from company; but pray, Madam, how could she avoid coming down to dine?

Lady Grace. O! she took care of that before she went to bed; by ordering her woman, whenever she was ask'd for, to say, she was not well.

Man. You have seen her since she was up, I presume?

Lady Grace. Up! I question whether she be awake yet.

Man. Terrible! What a figure does she make now! That nature should throw away so much beauty upon a creature, to make such a slatternly use of it!

Lady Grace. O fy! there is not a more elegant beauty in town, when she's drest.

Man. In my eye, Madam, she that's early drest, has ten times her elegance.

Lady Grace. But she won't be long now, I believe: for I think I see her chocolate going up——Mrs.

Trusty,—a hem!

Mrs. Trusty comes to the door.

Man. [*Aside.*] Five o'clock in the afternoon, for a lady of quality's breakfast, is an elegant hour indeed! which to shew her more polite way of living too, I presume, she eats in her bed.

Lady Grace. [*To Mrs. Trusty.*] And when she is up, I would be glad she would let me come to her toilet—That's all, *Mrs. Trusty*.

Trusty. I will be sure to let her ladyship know, Madam.

[*Exit Mrs. Trusty.*]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. *Sir Francis Wronghead*, Sir, desires to speak with you.

Man. He comes unseasonably—what shall I do with him!

Lady Grace. O see him by all means, we shall have time enough; in the mean while I'll step in, and have an eye upon my brother. Nay, nay, don't mind me—have business.—

Man. You must be obey'd—

[*Retreating while Lady Grace goes out.*]

Desire *Sir Francis* to walk in—

[*Exit servant.*]

I suppose by this time his wise worship begins to find, that the balance of his journey to London is on the wrong side.

Enter Sir Francis.

Sir Francis, your servant; how came I by the favour of this extraordinary visit?

Sir Fran. Ah! cousin!

Man. Why that sorrowful face, man?

Sir Fran. I have no friend alive but you—

Man. I am sorry for that—but what's the matter?

Sir Fran. I have play'd the fool by this journey, I see now—for my bitter wife—

Man. What of her?

Sir Fran. Is playing the devil!

Man. Why truly, that's a part that most of your fine ladies begin with, as soon as they get to *London*.

Sir Fran. If I am a living man, cousin, she has made away with above two hundred and fifty pounds since yesterday morning!

Man. Hah! I see a good housewife will do a great deal of work in a little time.

Sir Fran. Work do they call it! fine work indeed!

Man. Well, but how do you mean made away with it? What, she has laid it out, may be—but I suppose you have an account of it.

Sir Fran. Yes, yes, I have had the account indeed; but I mun needs say, it's a very sorry one.

Man. Pray, let's hear.

Sir Fran. Why, first I let her have an hundred and fifty, to get things handsom about her, to let the world see that I was somebody! and I thought that sum very genteel.

Man. Indeed I think so; and in the country, might have serv'd her a twelvemonth.

Sir Fran. Why so it might—but here in this fine tawn, forsooth! it could not get through four and twenty hours—for in half that time, it was all squandered away in baubles, and new fashion'd trumpery.

Man. O! for ladies in *London*, *Sir Francis*, all this might be necessary.

Sir Fran. Noa, there's the plague on't! the devil o' one useful thing do I see for it, but two pair of lac'd shoes, and those stond me in three pound three shillings a pair too.

Man. Dear Sir! this is nothing! Why we have city wives here, that while their good man is selling three penny worth of sugar, will give you twenty pound for a short apron.

Sir Fran. Mercy on us! what a mortal poor devil is a husband!

Man. Well, but I hope you have nothing else to complain of?

Sir Fran. Ah would I could say so too—but there's another hundred behind yet, that goes more to my heart, than all that went before it.

Man. And how might that be disposed of?

Sir Fran. Troth I am almost ashamed to tell you.

Man. Out with it.

Sir *Fran*. Why she has been at an assembly.

Man. What, since I saw you! I thought you had all supt at home last night?

Sir *Fran*. Why, so we did—and all as merry as grigs—I'cod! my heart was so open, that I toss'd another hundred into her apron, to go out early this morning with—but the cloth was no sooner taken away, than in comes my Lady *Townly* here, (—who between you and I—mum! has had the devil to pay yonder—) with another rantipole dame of quality, and out they must have her, they said, to introduce her at my Lady *Noble's* assembly forsooth—a few words, you may be sure, made the bargain—so, bawnce! and away they drive as if the devil had got into the coach box—so about four or five in the morning—home comes Madam, with her eyes a foot deep in her head—and my poor hundred pound left behind her at the hazard-table.

Man. All lost at dice!

Sir *Fran*. Every shilling—among a parcel of pig-tail puppies, and pale fac'd women of quality.

Man. But pray, Sir *Francis*, how came you, after you found her so ill an housewife of one sum, so soon to trust her with another?

Sir *Fran*. Why truly I mun say that was partly my own fault: for if I had not been a blab of my tongue, I believe that last hundred might have been sav'd.

Man. How so?

Sir *Fran*. Why, like an owl as I was, out of goodwill, forsooth, partly to keep her in humour, I must needs tell her of the thousand pound a year, I had just got the promise of—I'cod! she lays her claws upon it that moment—said it was all owing to her advice, and truly she would have her share on't.

Man. What, before you had it yourself?

Sir *Fran*. Why ay! that's what I told her—My dear, said I, mayhap I mayn't receive the first quarter on't this half year.

Man. Sir *Francis*, I have heard you with a great deal of patience, and I really feel compassion for you.

Sir *Fran*. Truly and well you may cousin, for I don't see that my wife's goodness is a bit the better, for bringing to *London*.

Man. If you remember I gave you a hint of it.

Sir *Fran*. Why ay, it's true you did so: but the devil himself could not have believ'd she would have rid post to him.

Man. Sir, if you stay but a fortnight in this town you will every day see hundreds as fast upon the gallop, as she is.

Sir *Fran*. Ah! this *London* is a base place indeed—waunds, if things should happen to go wrong with me at *Westminster*, at this rate, how the devil shall I keep out of jail!

Man. Why truly, there seems to me but one way to avoid it.

Sir *Fran*. Ah! wou'd you could tell me that, cousin.

Man. The way lies plain before you, Sir; the same road that brought you hither will carry you safe home again.

Sir *Fran*. Ods-flesh! cousin, what! and leave a thousand pound a year behind me?

Man. Pooh! pooh! leave any thing behind you, but your family, and you are a saver by it.

Sir *Fran*. Ay, but consider, cousin, what a scurvy figure I shall make in the country, if I come dawn withawt it!

Man. You will make a much more lamentable figure in jail without it.

Sir *Fran*. Mayhap 'at yow have no great opinion of it then, cousin?

Man. Sir *Francis*, to do you the service of a real friend, I must speak very plainly to you: you don't yet see half the ruin that's before you.

Sir *Fran*. Good-lack! how may yow mean, cousin?

Man. In one word, your whole affairs stand thus—In a week you'll lose your seat at *Westminster*: In a fortnight my lady will run you into jail, by keeping the best company—In four and twenty hours, your daughter will run away with a sharper, because she han't been us'd to better company: and your son will steal into marriage with a cast-mistress, because he has not been us'd to any company at all.

Sir *Fran*. I'th' name of goodness why should you think all this?

Man. Because I have proof of it; in short, I know so much of their secrets, that if all this is not prevented to-night, it will be out of your power to do it to-morrow morning.

Sir *Fran*. Mercy upon us! you frighten me—Well, Sir, I will be govern'd by yow: but what am I to do in this case?

Man. I have not time here to give you proper instructions; but about eight this evening, I'll call at your lodgings; and there you shall have full conviction, how much I have it at heart to serve you.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord desires to speak with you.

Man. I'll wait upon him.

Sir Fran. Well then, I'll go straight home, naw.

Man. At eight depend upon me.

Sir Fran. Ah! dear cousin! I shall be bound to you as long as I live. Mercy deliver us! what a terrible journey have I made on't!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

The SCENE opens to a dressing room. Lady Townly, as just up, walks to her toilet, leaning on Mrs. Trusty.

Trusty. Dear Madam, what should make your Ladyship so out of order!

Lady Town. How is it possible to be well, where one is kill'd for want of sleep?

Trusty. Dear me! it was so long before you rung, Madam, I was in hopes your Ladyship had been finely compos'd.

Lady Town. Compos'd! why I have laid in an inn here! this house is worse than an inn with ten stage-coaches! What between my lord's impertinent people of business in a morning, and the intolerable thick shoes of footmen at noon, one has not a wink all night.

Trusty. Indeed, Madam, it's a great pity my Lord can't be persuaded into the hours of people of quality—Though I must say that, Madam, your Ladyship is certainly the best matrimonial manager in town.

Lady Town. Oh! you are quite mistaken, *Trusty!* I manage very ill! for notwithstanding all the power I have, by never being over-fond of my lord—yet I want money infinitely oftener than he is willing to give it me.

Trusty. Ah, if his lordship could but be brought to play himself, Madam, then he might feel what it is to want money.

Lady Town. Oh! don't talk of it! do you know that I am undone, *Trusty?*

Trusty. Mercy forbid, Madam!

Lady Town. Broke! ruin'd! plunder'd!—stripp'd, even to a confiscation of my last guinea.

Trusty. You don't tell me so, Madam!

Lady Townly. And where to raise ten pound in the world—What is to be done *Trusty?*

Trusty. Truly, I wish I was wise enough to tell you, Madam: but may be your ladyship may have a run of better fortune, upon some of the good company that comes here to-night.

Lady Town. But I have not a single guinea to try my fortune!

Trusty. Ha! that's a bad business indeed, Madam—Adad! I have a thought in my head, Madam, if it is not too late—

Lady Town. Out with it quickly then, I beseech thee?

Trusty. Has not the steward something of fifty pound, Madam, that you left in his hands to pay somebody about this time?

Lady Town. O! ay! I had forgot—'twas to—a—what's his filthy name?

Trusty. Now I remember, Madam, 'twas to Mr. *Lutestring*, your old mercer, that your ladyship turn'd off, about a year ago, because he would trust you no longer.

Lady Town. The very wretch! if he has not paid it, run quickly, dear *Trusty*, and bid him bring it hither immediately—[*Exit Trusty.*] Well! sure mortal woman never had such fortune! five! five, and nine, against poor seven for ever!—No! after that horrid bar of my chance, that *Lady Wronghead's* fatal red fist upon the table, I saw it was impossible, ever to win another stake—Sit up all night! lose all one's money! dream of winning thousands! wake without a shilling! and then how like a hag I look! In short—the pleasures of life are not worth this disorder! If it were not for shame now, I could almost think, *Lady Grace's* sober scheme not quite so ridiculous—If my wise lord could but hold his tongue for a week, 'tis odds, but I should hate the town in a fortnight—But I will not be driven out of it, that's positive!

[*Trusty returns.*]

Trusty. O Madam! there is no bearing it! Mr. *Lutestring* was just let in at the door, as I came to the stair-foot! and the steward is now actually paying him the money in the hall.

Lady Town. Run to the stair case head, again—and scream to him, that I must speak with him this instant.

[*Trusty runs out, and speaks.*]

Trusty. Mr. *Poundage*—a hem! Mr. *Poundage*, a word with you quickly.

[*Without.*]

Pound. [*Within.*] I'll come to you presently.

Trusty. Presently won't do, man, you must come this minute.

Pound. I am but just paying a little money, here.

Trusty. Cods my life! paying money? is the man distracted? come here I tell you, to my lady, this moment, quick!

[*Trusty returns.*]

Lady *Town.* Will the monster come or no?—

Trusty. Yes, I hear him now, Madam, he is hobbling up, as fast as he can.

Lady *Town.* Don't let him come in—for he will keep such a babbling about his accounts,—my brain is not able to bear him.

[*Poundage comes to the door with a money-bag in his hand.*]

Trusty. O! it's well you are come, Sir! where's the fifty-pound?

Pound. Why here it is; if you had not been in such haste, I should have paid it by this time—the man's now writing a receipt, below, for it.

Trusty. No matter! my lady says, you must not pay him with that money, there is not enough, it seems; there's a pistole and a guinea that's not good, in it—besides there is a mistake in the account too—[*Twitching the bag from him.*] But she is not at leisure to examine it now; so you must bid Mr. What-d'ye-call-um call another time.

Lady *Town.* What is all that noise there?

Pound. Why and it please your Ladyship—

Lady *Town.* Pr'ythee! don't plague me now, but do as you were order'd.

Pound. Nay, what your Ladyship pleases, Madam—

[*Exit Poundage.*]

Trusty. There they are, Madam—[*Pours the money out of the bag.*] The pretty things—were so near falling into a nasty tradesman's hands, I protest it made me tremble for them—I fancy your ladyship had as good give me that bad guinea, for luck's sake—thank you, Madam.

[*Takes a guinea.*]

Lady *Town.* Why, I did not bid you take it.

Trusty. No, but your ladyship look'd as if you were just going to bid me, and so I was willing to save you the trouble of speaking, Madam.

Lady *Town.* Well! thou hast deserv'd it, and so for once—but hark! don't I hear the man making a noise yonder? though I think now we may compound for a little of his ill humour—

Trusty. I'll listen.

Lady *Town.* Pr'ythee do.

[*Trusty goes to the door.*]

Trusty. Ay! they are at it, Madam—he's in a bitter passion, with poor *Poundage*—bless me! I believe he'll beat him—mercy on us; how the wretch swears!

Lady *Town.* And a sober citizen too! that's a shame!

Trusty. Ha! I think all's silent, of a sudden—may be the porter has knock'd him down—I'll step and see—

[*Exit Trusty.*]

Lady *Town.* Those trades-people are the troublesomest creatures! no words will satisfy them!

[*Trusty returns.*]

Trusty. O Madam! undone! undone! my lord has just bolted out upon the man, and is hearing all his pitiful story over—if your ladyship pleases to come hither, you may hear him yourself!

Lady *Town.* No matter: it will come round presently: I shall have it all from my Lord, without losing a word by the way, I'll warrant you.

Trusty. O lud! Madam! here's my lord just coming in.

Lady *Town.* Do you get out of the way then. [*Exit Trusty.*] I am afraid I want spirits! but he will soon give 'em me.

Enter Lord Townly.

Lord *Town.* How comes it, Madam, that a tradesman dares be clamorous in my house, for money due to him, from you?

Lady *Town.* You don't expect, my lord, that I should answer for other peoples impertinence!

Lord *Town.* I expect, Madam, you should answer for your own extravagances, that are the occasion of it—I thought I had given you money three months ago, to satisfy all these sort of

people!

Lady *Town*. Yes, but you see they are never to be satisfied.

Lord *Town*. Nor am I, Madam, longer to be abus'd thus! what's become of the last five hundred I gave you?

Lady *Town*. Gone.

Lord *Town*. Gone! what way, Madam?

Lady *Town*. Half the town over, I believe, by this time.

Lord *Town*. 'Tis well! I see ruin will make no impression, 'till it falls upon you.

Lady *Town*. In short, my Lord, if money is always the subject of our conversation, I shall make you no answer.

Lord *Town*. Madam, Madam! I will be heard, and make you answer.

Lady *Town*. Make me! then I must tell you, my Lord, this is a language I have not been us'd to, and I won't bear it.

Lord *Town*. Come! come, Madam, you shall bear a great deal more before I part with you.

Lady *Town*. My Lord, if you insult me, you will have as much to bear, on your side, I can assure you.

Lord *Town*. Pooh! your spirit grows ridiculous—you have neither honour, worth, or innocence, to support it!

Lady *Town*. You'll find, at least, I have resentment! and do you look well to the provocation!

Lord *Town*. After those you have given me, Madam, 'tis almost infamous to talk with you.

Lady *Town*. I scorn your imputation and your menaces! The narrowness of your heart's your monitor! 'tis there! there, my lord, you are wounded; you have less to complain of than many husbands of an equal rank to you.

Lord *Town*. Death, Madam! do you presume upon your corporal merit! that your person's less tainted, than your mind! is it there! there alone an honest husband can be injur'd? Have you not every other vice that can debase your birth, or stain the heart of woman? Is not your health, your beauty, husband, fortune, family disclaim'd, for nights consumed in riot and extravagance? The wanton does no more; if she conceals her shame, does less: And sure the dissolute avow'd, as sorely wrongs my honour, and my quiet.

Lady *Town*. I see, my Lord, what sort of wife might please you.

Lord *Town*. Ungrateful woman! could you have seen yourself, you in yourself had seen her—I am amaz'd our legislature has left no precedent of a divorce for this more visible injury, this adultery of the mind, as well as that of the person! when a woman's whole heart is alienated to pleasures I have no share in, what is't to me whether a black ace, or a powder'd coxcomb has possession of it?

Lady *Town*. If you have not found it yet, my lord, this is not the way to get possession of mine, depend upon it.

Lord *Town*. That, Madam, I have long despair'd of; and since our happiness cannot be mutual, 'tis fit, that with our hearts, our persons too should separate.—This house you sleep no more in! tho' your content might grosly feed upon the dishonour of a husband, yet my desires would starve upon the features of a wife.

Lady *Town*. Your stile, my lord, is much of the same delicacy with your sentiments of honour.

Lord *Town*. Madam, Madam! this is no time for compliments—I have done with you.

Lady *Town*. If we had never met, my Lord, I had not broke my heart for it! but have a care I may not, perhaps, be so easily recall'd as you imagine.

Lord *Town*. Recall'd—Who's there!

Enter a Servant.

Desire my sister and Mr. *Manly* to walk up.

Lady *Town*. My Lord, you may proceed as you please, but pray what indiscretions have I committed, that are not daily practis'd by a hundred other women of quality?

Lord *Town*. 'Tis not the number of ill wives, Madam, that makes the patience of a husband less contemptible: and though a bad one may be the best man's lot, yet he'll make a better figure in the world, that keeps his misfortunes out of doors, than he that tamely keeps her within.

Lady *Town*. I don't know what figure you may make, my Lord, but I shall have no reason to be asham'd of mine in whatever company I may meet you.

Lord *Town*. Be sparing of your spirit, Madam, you'll need it to support you.

Enter Lady Grace and Manly.

Mr. *Manly*, I have an act of friendship to beg of you, which wants more apologies, than words can make for it.

Man. Then pray make none, my Lord, that I may have the greater merit in obliging you.

Lord *Town*. Sister, I have the same excuse to intreat of you too.

Lady *Grace*. To your request, I beg, my Lord.

Lord *Town*. Thus then—as you both were present at my ill considered marriage, I now desire you each will be a witness of my determin'd separation—I know, Sir, your good nature, and my sister's must be shock'd at the office I impose on you! but as I don't ask your justification of my cause; so I hope you are conscious—that an ill woman can't reproach you, if you are silent, upon her side.

Man. My lord, I never thought, 'till now, it could be difficult to oblige you.

Lady *Grace*. [*Aside*.] Heaven's! how I tremble!

Lord *Town*. For you, my Lady *Townly*, I need not here repeat the provocations of my parting with you—the world, I fear, is too well informed of them—For the good lord, your dead father's sake, I will still support you, as his daughter—As the lord *Townly's* wife, you have had every thing a fond husband could bestow, and (to our mutual shame I speak it) more than happy wives desire—But those indulgences must end! State, equipage and splendor, but ill become the vices that misuse 'em—The decent necessaries of life shall be supply'd—but not one article to luxury! Not even the coach that waits to carry you from hence, shall you ever use again! Your tender aunt, my Lady *Lovemore*, with tears, this morning has consented to receive you; where if time, and your condition brings you to a due reflection, your allowance shall be increased—But if you still are lavish of your little, or pine for past licentious pleasures, that little shall be less! nor will I call that soul my friend, that names you in my hearing!

Lady *Grace*. My heart bleeds for her.

[*Aside*.

Lord *Town*. O *Manly*! look there! turn back thy thoughts with me, and witness to my growing love; there was a time when I believ'd that form incapable of vice or of decay! There I proposed the partner of an easy home! There I for ever hoped to find, a chearful companion, an agreeable intimate, a faithful friend, a useful help-mate, and a tender mother—But oh! how bitter now the disappointment!

Man. The world is different in its sense of happiness: offended as you are, I know you still will be just.

Lord *Town*. Fear me not.

Man. This last reproach, I see, has struck her.

[*Aside*.

Lord *Town*. No, let me not (though I this moment cast her from my heart for ever) let me not urge her punishment beyond her crimes—I know the world is fond of any tale that feeds its appetite of scandal: and as I am conscious, severities of this kind seldom fail of imputations too gross to mention, I here, before you both acquit her of the least suspicion rais'd against the honour of my bed. Therefore when abroad her conduct may be question'd, do her fame that justice.

Lady *Town*. O sister!

[*Turns to Lady Grace weeping*.

Lord *Town*. When I am spoken of, where without favour this action may be canvass'd, relate but half my provocations, and give me up to censure.

[*Going*.

Lady *Town*. Support me! save me! hide me from the world!

[*Falls on Lady Grace's neck*.

Lord *Town*. [*Returning*.]—I had forgot me—You have no share in my resentment; therefore, as you have liv'd in friendship with her, your parting may admit of gentler terms than suit the honour of an injur'd husband.

[*Offers to go out*.

Man. [*Interposing*.] My Lord, you must not, shall not leave her thus! one moment's stay can do your cause no wrong! If looks can speak the anguish of the heart, I'll answer with my life, there's something labouring in her mind, that would you bear the hearing, might deserve it.

Lord *Town*. Consider! since we no more can meet; press not my staying to insult her.

Lady *Town*. Yet stay my Lord—the little I would say, will not deserve an insult; and undeserv'd, I know your nature gives it not. But as you've call'd in friends, to witness your resentment, let them be equal hearers of my last reply.

Lord *Town*. I shan't refuse you that, Madam—be it so.

Lady *Town*. My Lord, you ever have complain'd I wanted love; but as you kindly have allowed I never gave it to another; so when you hear the story of my heart, though you may still complain, you will not wonder at my coldness.

Lady *Grace*. This promises a reverse of temper.

[*Apart*.

Man. This, my Lord, you are concern'd to hear!

Lord *Town*. Proceed, I am attentive.

Lady *Town*. Before I was your bride, my Lord, the flattering world had talk'd me into beauty; which, at my glass, my youthful vanity confirm'd: wild with that fame, I thought mankind my slaves, I triumph'd over hearts while all my pleasure was their pain: yet was my own so equally insensible to all, that when a father's firm commands enjoin'd me to make choice of one, I even there declin'd the liberty he gave, and to his own election yielded up my youth—his tender care, my Lord, directed him to you—Our hands were join'd! But still my heart was wedded to its folly! My only joy was power, command, society, profuseness, and to lead in pleasures! The husband's right to rule, I thought a vulgar law, which only the deform'd or meanly spirited obey'd! I knew no directors, but my passions; no matter but my will! even you, my lord, some time o'ercome by love, was pleas'd with my delights; nor, then foresaw this mad misuse of your indulgence—And, though I call myself ungrateful, while I own it, yet as a truth, it cannot be deny'd—That kind indulgence has undone me! it added strength to my habitual failings, and in a heart thus warm, in wild unthinking life, no wonder if the gentler sense of love was lost.

Lord *Town*. O *Manly*! where has this creature's heart been buried?*Apart.*

Man. If yet recoverable—How vast a treasure?

Lady *Town*. What I have said, my lord, is not my excuse; but my confession! my errors (give 'em if you please, a harder name) cannot be defended! No! What's in its nature wrong, no words can palliate, no plea can alter! What then remains in my condition but resignation to your pleasure? Time only can convince you of my future conduct: Therefore till I have liv'd an object of forgiveness, I dare not hope for pardon—The penance of a lonely contrite life were little to the innocent; but to have deserv'd this separation, will strew perpetual thorns upon my pillow.

Lady *Grace*. O happy, heavenly hearing!

Lady *Town*. Sister, farewell! [*Kissing her.*] Your virtue needs no warning from the shame that falls on me: but when you think I have aton'd my follies past—persuade your injur'd brother to forgive them.

Lord *Town*. No, Madam! Your errors thus renounc'd, this instant are forgotten! So deep, so due a sense of them, has made you, what my utmost wishes form'd, and all my heart has sigh'd for.

Lady *Town*. [*Turning to Lady Grace.*] How odious does this goodness make me!

Lady *Grace*. How amiable your thinking so?

Lord *Town*. Long-parted friends, that pass through easy voyages of life, receive but common gladness in their meeting: but from a shipwreck sav'd, we mingle tears with our embraces!

[*Embracing Lady Townly.*

Lady *Town*. What words! what love! what duty can repay such obligations!

Lord *Town*. Preserve but this desire to please, your power is endless.

Lady *Town*. Oh!—'till this moment, never did I know, my Lord, I had a heart to give you!

Lord *Town*. By heav'n this yielding hand, when first it gave you to my wishes, presented not a treasure more desirable! O *Manly*! sister! as you have often shar'd in my disquiet, partake of my felicity! my new-born joy! see here the bride of my desires! this may be called my wedding-day!

Lady *Grace*. Sister! (for now methinks that name is dearer to my heart than ever) let me congratulate the happiness that opens to you.

Man. Long, long and mutual may it flow—

Lord *Town*. To make our happiness compleat, my dear, join here with me to give a hand, that amply will repay the obligation.

Lady *Town*. Sister! a day like this—

Lady *Grace*. Admits of no excuse against the general joy.

[*Gives her hand to Manly.*

Man. A joy like mine—despairs of words to speak it.

Lord *Town*. O *Manly*! how the name of friend endears the brother!

[*Embracing him.*

Man. Your words, my Lord, will warn me to deserve them.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lord, the apartments are full of masqueraders—And some people of quality there desire to see your Lordship and my Lady.

Lady *Town*. I thought, my Lord, your orders had forbid this revelling?

Lord *Town*. No, my dear, *Manly* has desir'd their admittance to-night, it seems, upon a particular occasion—Say we will wait upon them instantly.

[*Exit Servant.*

Lady *Town*. I shall be but ill company to them.

Lord *Town*. No matter: not to see them, would on a sudden to be too particular. Lady *Grace* will

assist you to entertain them.

Lady *Town*. With her, my Lord, I shall be always easy—Sister, to your unerring virtue, I commit the guidance of my future days.

Never the paths of pleasure more to tread,
But where your guarded innocence shall lead.
For in the marriage-state the world must own,
Divided happiness was never known.
To make it mutual, nature points the way:
Let husbands govern: gentle wives obey.

[*Exit.*

The SCENE opening to another apartment discovers a great number of people in masquerade talking all together, and playing one upon another: Lady Wronghead as a shepherdess; Jenny, as a nun; the Squire as a running footman; and the Count in a Domino. After some time, Lord and Lady Townly, with Lady Grace, enter to them unmask'd.

Lord *Town*. So! here's a great deal of company.

Lady *Grace*. A great many people, my Lord, but no company—as you'll find—for here's one now, that seems to have a mind to entertain us.

[*A mask, after some affected gesture, makes up to Lady Townly.*

Mask. Well, dear Lady *Townly*, shan't we see you, by-and-by?

Lady *Town*. I don't know you, Madam.

Mask. Don't you, seriously?

[*In a squeaking tone.*

Lady *Town*. Not I, indeed.

Mask. Well, that's charming; but can't you guess?

Lady *Town*. Yes, I could guess wrong, I believe.

Mask. That's what I'd have you to do.

Lady *Town*. But, Madam, if I don't know you at all, is not that as well?

Mask. Ay, but you do know me.

Lady *Town*. Dear sister, take her off o' my hands; there's no bearing this.

[*Apart.*

Lady *Grace*. I fancy I know you, Madam.

Mask. I fancy you don't: what makes you think you do?

Lady *Grace*. Because I have heard you talk.

Mask. Ay, but you don't know my voice, I'm sure.

Lady *Grace*. There is something in your wit and humour, Madam, so very much your own, it is impossible you can be any body but my Lady *Trifle*.

Mask. [Unmasking.] Dear Lady *Grace*! thou art a charming creature.

Lady *Grace*. Is there no body else we know here?

Mask. O dear, yes! I have found out fifty already.

Lady *Grace*. Pray who are they?

Mask. O, charming company! there's Lady *Ramble*—Lady *Riot*—Lady *Kill-Care*—Lady *Squander*—Lady *Strip*—Lady *Pawn*—and the Dutchess of *Single-Guinea*.

Lord *Town*. Is it not hard, my dear! that people of sense and probity are sometimes forc'd to seem fond of such company? [*Apart.*

Lady *Town*. My Lord, it will always give me pain to remember their acquaintance, but none to drop it immediately.

Lady *Grace*. But you have given us no account of the men, Madam. Are they good for any thing?

Mask. O yes! you must know, I always find out them by their endeavours to find out me.

Lady *Grace*. Pray who are they?

Mask. Why, for your men of tip-top wit and pleasure, about town, there's my Lord—*Bite*—Lord *Arch-wag*—Young *Brazen-wit*—Lord *Timberdown*—Lord *Joint-Life*—and—Lord *Mortgage*. Then for your pretty fellows only—there's Sir *Powder-Peacock*—Lord *Lapwing*—*Billy Magpye*—Beau *Frightful*—Sir *Paul Plaster-crown*, and the Marquis of *Monkey-man*.

Lady *Grace*. Right; and these are fine gentlemen that never want elbow-room at an assembly.

Mask. The rest I suppose, by their tawdry hired habits are tradesmens wives, inns-of-court beaux, *Jews*, and kept mistresses.

Lord *Town*. An admirable collection!

Lady *Grace*. Well, of all our public diversions, I am amaz'd how this, that is so very expensive, and has so little to shew for it, can draw so much company together.

Lord *Town*. O! if it were not expensive, the better sort would not come into it: and because money can purchase a ticket, the common people scorn to be kept out of it.

Mask. Right, my Lord, poor Lady *Grace*! I suppose you are under the same astonishment, that an opera should draw so much good company.

Lady *Grace*. Not at all, Madam; it is an easier matter sure to gratify the ear, than the understanding. But have you no notion, Madam, of receiving pleasure and profit at the same time?

Mask. Oh! quite none! unless it be sometimes winning a great stake; laying down a Vole, sans prendre may come up, to the profitable pleasure you were speaking of.

Lord *Town*. You seem attentive, my dear?

|*Apart.*

Lady *Town*. I am, my Lord; and amaz'd at my own follies so strongly painted in another woman.

Lady *Grace*. But see, my Lord, we had best adjourn our debate, I believe, for here are some masks that seem to have a mind to divert other people as well as themselves.

Lord *Town*. The least we can do is to give them a clear stage then.

[*A dance of masks here in various characters.*

This was a favour extraordinary.

Enter Manly.

O *Manly*! I thought we had lost you.

Man. I ask pardon, my Lord; but I have been oblig'd to look a little after my country family.

Lord *Town*. Well, pray, what have you done with them?

Man. They are all in the house here, among the masks, my Lord; if your Lordship has curiosity enough, to step into a lower apartment, in three minutes I'll give you an ample account of them.

Lord *Town*. O! by all means: we'll wait upon you.

[*The scene shuts upon the masks to smaller apartments.*

Manly re-enters with Sir Francis Wronghead.

Sir *Fran*. Well, cousin, you have made my very hair stand on an end! Waunds! if what you tell me be true, I'll stuff my whole family into a stage-coach, and trundle them into the country on *Monday* morning.

Man. Stick to that, Sir, and we may yet find a way to redeem all: in the mean time, place yourself behind this screen, and for the truth of what I have told you take the evidence of your own senses: but be sure you keep close till I give you the signal.

Sir *Fran*. Sir! I'll warrant you—Ah! my Lady, my Lady *Wronghead*! What a bitter business have you drawn me into!

Man. Hush! to your post; here comes one couple already.

Sir Francis retires behind the screen.

[*Exit Manly.*

Enter Myrtila with Squire Richard.

Squ. *Rich*. What! is this the doctor's chamber?

Myr. Yes, yes, speak softly.

Squ. *Rich*. Well, but where is he?

Myr. He'll be ready for us presently, but he says he can't do us the good turn, without witnesses: so, when the Count and your sister come, you know he and you may be fathers for one another.

Squ. *Rich*. Well, well, tit for tat! ay, ay, that will be friendly.

Myr. And see! here they come.

Enter Count Basset, and Miss Jenny.

Count *Bas*. So, so, here's your brother, and his bride, before us, my dear.

Jenny. Well, I vow my heart's at my mouth still! I thought I should never have got rid of Mama! but while she stood gaping on the dance, I gave her the slip! Lawd! do but feel how it beats here.

Count *Bas*. O the pretty flutterer! I protest, my dear, you have put mine into the same palpitation!

Jenny. Ah! you say so—but let's see now—O lud! I vow it thumps purely—well, well, I see it will do, and so where's the parson?

Count *Bas.* Mrs. *Myrtila*, will you be so good as to see if the doctor's ready for us?

Myr. He only staid for you, Sir: I'll fetch him immediately.

[*Exit Myrtila.*]

Jenny. Pray, Sir, am not I to take place of Mama, when I am a countess?

Count *Bas.* No doubt on't, my dear.

Jenny. O lud how her back will be up then, when she meets me at an assembly! or you and I in our coach and six, at *Hyde-Park* together!

Count *Bas.* Ay, or when she hears the box-keepers, at an Opera, call out—*The Countess of Basset's servants!*

Jenny. Well, I say it, that will be delicious! And then, mayhap, to have a fine gentleman with a star and what-d'ye-call-um ribbon, lead me to my chair, with his hat under his arm all the way! Hold up, says the chairman, and so, says I, my Lord, your humble servant. I suppose, Madam, says he, we shall see you at my Lady *Quadrille's!* Ay, ay, to be sure, my Lord, says I—So in swops me, with my hoop stuff'd up to my forehead! and away they trot, swing! swang! with my tassels dangling, and my flambeaux blazing, and—Oh! it's a charming thing to be a woman of quality!

Count *Bas.* Well, I see that plainly, my dear, there's ne'er a Dutchess of 'em all will become an equipage like you.

Jenny. Well, well, do you find equipage, and I'll find airs, I warrant you.

[*Sings.*]

Squ. *Rich.* Troth! I think this masquerading's the merriest game that ever I saw in my life! Thof, in my mind, and there were but a little wrestling, or cudgel playing naw, it would help it hugely. But what a-rope makes the parson stay so?

Count *Bas.* Oh! here he comes, I believe.

Enter Myrtila with a constable.

Const. Well, Madam, pray which is the party that wants a spice of my office here?

Myr. That's the gentleman.

[*Pointing to the Count.*]

Count *Bas.* Hey-day! what in masquerade, doctor?

Const. Doctor! Sir, I believe you have mistaken your man: but if you are called Count *Basset*, I have a *billet-doux* in my hand for you, that will set you right presently.

Count *Bas.* What the devil's the meaning of all this?

Const. Only my Lord Chief Justice's warrant against you for forgery, Sir.

Count *Bas.* Blood and thunder!

Const. And so, Sir, if you please to pull off your fool's frock there, I'll wait upon you to the next Justice of peace immediately.

Jenny. O dear me! what's the matter?

[*Trembling.*]

Count *Bas.* O! nothing, only a masquerading frolic, my dear.

Squ. *Rich.* Oh oh! is that all?

Sir *Fran.* No, Sirrah! that is not all.

[*Sir Francis coming softly behind the Squire, knocks him down with his cane.*]

Enter Manly.

Squ. *Rich.* O lawd! O lawd! he has beaten my brains out!

Man. Hold, hold, Sir *Francis*, have a little mercy upon my poor godson, pray, Sir.

Sir *Fran.* Waunds, cousin, I han't patience.

Count *Bas.* *Manly!* nay, then I'm blown to the devil.

[*Aside.*]

Squ. *Rich.* O my head! my head!

Enter Lady Wronghead.

Lady *Wrong.* What's the matter here, gentlemen? for heav'ns sake! what, are you murd'ring my children?

Con. No, no, Madam! no murder! only a little suspicion of felony, that's all.

Sir *Fran.* [*To Jenny.*] And for you, Mrs. *Hot-upon't*, I could find in my heart to make you wear that

habit, as long as you live, you jade you. Do you know, hussy, that you were within two minutes of marrying a pickpocket?

Count *Bas*. So, so, all's out, I find.

[*Aside*.

Jenny. O the mercy! why, pray, Papa, is not the Count a man of quality then?

Sir *Fran*. O yes! one of the unhang'd ones, it seems.

Lady *Wrong*. [*Aside*.] Married! O the confident thing! There was his urgent business then—slighted for her! I han't patience!—and for ought I know, I have been all this while making a friendship with a highwayman!

Man. Mr. *Constable*, secure that door there.

Sir *Fran*. Ah, my Lady! my Lady! this comes of your journey to *London*! but now I have a frolick of my own, Madam; therefore pack up your trumpery this very night, for the moment my horses are able to crawl, you and your brats shall make a journey into the country again.

Lady *Wrong*. Indeed you are mistaken, Sir *Francis*—I shall not stir out of town yet, I promise you.

Sir *Fran*. Not stir! Waunds! madam—

Man. Hold, Sir!—if you'll give me leave a little—I fancy I shall prevail upon my Lady to think better on't.

Sir *Fran*. Ah? cousin, you are a friend indeed!

Man. [*Apart to my Lady*.] Look you, Madam, as to the favour you design'd me, in sending this spurious letter inclosed to my Lady *Grace*, all the revenge I have taken, is to have sav'd your son and daughter from ruin—Now if you will take them fairly and quietly into the country again, I will save your Ladyship from ruin.

Lady *Wrong*. What do you mean, Sir?

Man. Why Sir *Francis*—shall never know what is in this letter; look upon it. How it came into my hands you shall know at leisure.

Lady *Wrong*. Ha! my *billet-doux* to the Count! and an appointment in it! I shall sink with confusion!

Man. What shall I say to Sir *Francis*, Madam?

Lady *Wrong*. Dear Sir, I am in such a trembling! preserve my honour and I am all obedience!

[*Apart to Manly*.

Man. Sir *Francis*—my Lady is ready to receive your commands for her journey whenever you please to appoint it.

Sir *Fran*. Ah cousin! I doubt I am obliged to you for it.

Man. Come, come, Sir *Francis*! take it as you find it. Obedience in a wife is a good thing, though it were never so wonderful—And now, Sir, we have nothing to do but dispose of this gentleman.

Count *Bas*. Mr. *Manly*! Sir, I hope you won't ruin me.

Man. Did not you forge this note for five hundred pounds, Sir?

Count *Bas*. Sir—I see you know the world, and therefore I shall not pretend to prevaricate—But it has hurt nobody yet, Sir! I beg you will not stigmatize me! since you have spoil'd my fortune in one family, I hope you won't be so cruel to a young fellow, as to put it out of my power, Sir, to make it in another, Sir!

Man. Look you, Sir, I have not much time to waste with you: but if you expect mercy yourself, you must show it to one you have been cruel to.

Count *Bas*. Cruel, Sir!

Man. Have not you ruin'd this young woman?

Count *Bas*. I, Sir!

Man. I know you have—therefore you can't blame her, if, in the fact you are charg'd with, she is a principal witness against you. However, you have one and one only chance to get off with. Marry her this instant—and you take off her evidence.

Count *Bas*. Dear Sir!

Man. No words, Sir; a wife or a *mittimus*.

Count *Bas*. Lord, Sir! this is the most unmerciful mercy!

Man. A private penance, or a public one—constable.

Count *Bas*. Hold, Sir, since you are pleas'd to give me my choice; I will not make so ill a compliment to the Lady, as not to give her the preference.

Man. It must be done this minute, Sir: the chaplain you expected is still within call.

Count *Bas*. Well, Sir,—since it must be so—come, spouse—I am not the first of the fraternity that has run his head into one noose, to keep it out of another.

Myr. Come, Sir, don't repine: marriage is, at worst, but playing upon the square.

Count Bas. Ay, but the worst of the match too, is the devil.

Man. Well, Sir, to let you see it is not so bad as you think it; as a reward for her honesty, in detecting your practices, instead of the forged bill you would have put upon her, there's a real one of five hundred pounds, to begin a new honey-moon with.

[*Gives it to Myrtila.*]

Count Bas. Sir, this is so generous an act—

Man. No compliments, dear Sir,—I am not at leisure now to receive them: Mr. *Constable*, will you be so good as to wait upon this gentleman into the next room, and give this lady in marriage to him?

Const. Sir, I'll do it faithfully.

Count Bas. Well! five hundred will serve to make a handsome push with, however.

[*Exeunt Count, Myr. and Constable.*]

Sir Fran. And that I may be sure my family's rid of him for ever—come, my Lady, let's even take our children along with us, and be all witness of the ceremony.

[*Exeunt Sir Fran, Lady Wrong, Miss and Squire.*]

Man. Now, my Lord, you may enter.

[*Enter Lord and Lady Townly, and Lady Grace.*]

Lord Town. So, Sir, I give you joy of your negotiation.

Man. You overheard it all, I presume?

Lady Grace. From first to last, Sir.

Lord Town. Never were knaves and fools better dispos'd of.

Man. A sort of poetical justice, my Lord, not much above the judgment of a modern comedy.

Lord Town. To heighten that resemblance, I think, sister, there only wants your rewarding the hero of the fable, by naming the day of his happiness.

Lady Grace. This day, to-morrow, every hour, I hope, of life to come, will shew I want not inclination to complete it.

Man. Whatever I may want, Madam, you will always find endeavours to deserve you.

Lord Town. Then all are happy.

Lady Town. Sister! I give you joy! consummate as the happiest pair can boast.

In you methinks, as in a glass, I see
The happiness that once advanc'd to me.
So visible the bliss, so plain the way,
How was it possible my sense could stray?
But now, a convert, to this truth, I come,
That married happiness is never found from home.

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. OLDFIELD.

M^{ETHINKS} *I hear some powder'd Critics say,*

*"Damn it! this Wife Reform'd has spoil'd the play!
The coxcomb should have drawn her more in fashion,
Have gratify'd her softer inclination,
Have tipt her a gallant, and clinch'd the provocation."
But there our Bard stopt short: for 'twere uncivil
T' have made a modern Belle all o'er a Devil!
He hop'd, in honour of the sex, the age
Would bear one mended woman——on the stage.*

}
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*From whence, you see by common sense's rules,
Wives might be govern'd, were not husbands fools.
Whate'er by Nature dames are prone to do,
They seldom stray but when they govern you.
When the wild wife perceives her deary tame,
No wonder then she plays him all the game.
But men of sense meet rarely that disaster;
Women take pride, where merit is their master:
Nay, she that with a weak man wisely lives,
Will seem t' obey the due commands he gives!
Happy obedience is no more a wonder,
When men are men, and keep them kindly under.
But modern consorts are such high-bred creatures,
They think a husband's power degrades their features;
That nothing more proclaims a reigning beauty,
Than that she never was reproach'd with duty;
And that the greatest blessing Heav'n e'er sent,
Is in a spouse, incurious and content.*

*To give such dames a diff'rent cast of thought,
By calling home the mind, these scenes were wrought.
If with a hand too rude, the task is done,
We hope the scheme by Lady Grace laid down,
Will all such freedom with the sex atone.
That virtue there unsoil'd, by modish art,
Throw out attractions for a Manly's heart.*

*You, you, then Ladies, whose unquestion'd lives
Give you the foremost fame of happy wives,
Protect, for its attempt, this helpless play;
Nor leave it to the vulgar taste a prey;
Appear the frequent champions of its cause,
Direct the crowd and give yourselves applause.*

Sung by Mrs. CIBBER, in the Fourth Act.

The Words by MR. CAREY.

O^H, I'll have a husband! ay, marry;

For why should I longer tarry,
For why should I longer tarry
Than other brisk girls have done?
For if I stay, 'till I grow gray,
They'll call me old maid, and fusty old jade;
So I'll no longer tarry;
But I'll have a husband, ay, marry,
If money can buy me one.

My mother she says I'm too coming;
And still in my ears she is drumming,
And still in my ears she is drumming,
That I such vain thoughts shou'd shun.
My sisters they cry, oh fy! and oh fy!
But yet I can see they're as coming as me;
So let me have husbands in plenty:
I'd rather have twenty times twenty,
Than die an old maid undone.

Sung by Mrs. CIBBER, in the Fifth Act.

The Words by MR. CAREY.

I.

WHAT tho' they call me country lass,
I read it plainly in my glass,
That for a Dutchess I might pass:
 Oh, could I see the day!
Would fortune but attend my call,
At park, at play, at ring and ball,
I'd brave the proudest of them all,
With a *stand by*—*clear the way*.

II.

Surrounded by a crowd of beaux,
With smart toupees, and powder'd clothes,
At rivals I'll turn up my nose;
 Oh, could I see the day!
I'll dart such glances from these eyes,
Shall make some Lord or Duke my prize;
And then, oh! how I'll tyrannise,
With *stand by*—*clear the way*.

III.

Oh! then for ev'ry new delight,
For equipage and diamonds bright,
Quadrille, and plays, and balls all night;
 Oh! could I see the day!
Of love and joy I'd take my fill,
The tedious hours of life to kill,
In ev'ry thing I'd have my will,
 With a *stand by*—*clear the way*.

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Silently corrected simple spelling, grammar, and typographical errors.
Retained anachronistic and non-standard spellings as printed.

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