P L A Y S

WRITTEN BY

THOMAS SOUTHERNE, Esq.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

WITH

An Account of the LIFE and WRITINGS of the AUTHOR.

———Your tributary tears we claim,
For scenes that Southerne drew; a fav'rite name.
He touch'd your fathers hearts with gen'rous woe,
And taught your mothers youthful eyes to flow:
For this he claims hereditary praise,
From wits and beauties of our modern days.

HAWKESWORTH.

VOL. II.

LONDON,
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MDCCLXXIV.

THE

WIVES EXCUSE;

OR,

CUCKOLDS MAKE THEMSELVES.

A

COMEDY.

As it was Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL,

By Their MAJESTIES SERVANTS,

In the YEAR 1692.

Nihil est his, qui placere volunt, tam adversarium, quam expectatio.

CICERO.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THO. WHARTON, Esq.

Comptroller of His MAJESTY's Houſhold.

SIR,

EVERY man of fortune has the power of doing a good turn, but there muſt be more in the man one would chuſe to be obliged to: I have a thouſand obligations to you, and have confeſſed them, upon every occaſion: I have enjoyed the benefit of your favours; and have the pride of them yet in my heart, that you have not thought ſo much good-nature thrown away upon me. I would make you what amends I could, and a dedication is all that I have in my power to return: 'tis a poetical payment indeed, which, while it diſcharges one debt, is running into another, begging your protection for a play, which which will almoſt need your intereſt to defend: I will not contend a point, where moſt voices are to carry it: but as I deſigned this play for you, when ſome people thought well of it,

I hope it does not leſſen the preſent, that every body does not. It is only the capacity and commendation of the common miſtreſſes to pleaſe every body, to whom I will leave ſome of my critics, who were affronted at Mrs. *Friendall:* for thoſe ſparks, who were moſt offended with her virtue in public, are the men that loſe little by it, in private; and if all the wives in town were of her mind, thoſe mettled gentlemen would be found to have the leaſt to do, in making them otherwiſe: but if ſhe was of evil example, *Witwoud* makes amends for her, in the moral of her character; where the women are manifeſtly ſafer in the poſſeſſion of a lover, than in the truſt and confidence of a friend: but ſhe was no more underſtood to the advantage of the men, than the Wife was received in favour of the women. As to the muſic-meeting, I always thought it an entertainment reaſonably grown up into the liking of the town: I introduced it, as a faſhionable ſcene of bringing good company together, without a deſign of abuſing what every body likes; being in my temper ſo far from diſturbing a public pleaſure, that I would eſtabliſh twenty more of them, if I could: and for the billet-doux, that was put into Mrs. *Sightly*'s hand, upon leading her out, I have heard of ſuch a thing in a church before now, and never thought the worſe of the place.

Theſe, ſir, are capital objections againſt me; but they hit very few faults: nor have they mortified me into a deſpair of pleaſing the more reaſonable part of mankind. If Mr. *Dryden*'s judgment goes for any thing,

thing, I have it on my ſide: for, ſpeaking of this play, he has publicly ſaid, the town was kind to Sir *Antony Love*, I needed them only to be juſt to this: and to prove there was more than friendſhip in his opinion, upon the credit of this play with him, falling ſick laſt ſummer, he bequeathed to my care the writing of half the laſt act of his tragedy of *Cleomenes*, which, when it comes into the world, you will find to be ſo conſiderable a truſt, that all the town will pardon me for defending this play, that preferred me to it. If modeſty be ſometimes a weakneſs, what I ſay can hardly be a crime: in a fair *Engliſh* trial both parties are allowed to be heard; and without this vanity of mentioning Mr. *Dryden*, I had loſt the beſt evidence of my cauſe. Sir, I have the privilege of a dedication to ſay ſome fine things of my patron; but I will be as little impertinent as I can, and only beg leave to ſay ſome true ones, and no more than I have always declared in the abſence of Mr. *Wharton*, that (without the advantage of your family, and fortune) you are the very man I would chuſe to be, if I could: I would have the force of your underſtanding, and knowledge of mankind, to make a fortune out of the public buſineſs of the world: or, if I were to mend my condition more to my own humour, and a way I ſhould like better than through the hurry of a crowd, your wit and converſation, your perſon and addreſs, would beſt recommend me to the women. I do not know, ſir, how ſucceſsful you have been with that fair ſex; but I would not have it lye at any fair lady's door, (who has a mind to be juſtified in diſ-

posing of herself) that she could not distinguish in your favour, against all the pretenders of the town. If you have any enemies among the women, I must think, it is in a great measure because it was impossible to engage them to be all your friends. Sir, I am a well-wisher to all your interests, and be pleased to accept of this dedication of my respects, as an offering of my inclination, as well as a duty from my gratitude.

I am, SIR,

Your very much obliged

Humble servant,

T. SOUTHERNE.

TO

Mr. SOUTHERNE,

On his COMEDY, called The

WIVES EXCUSE.

SURE there's a fate in plays; and 'tis in vain
To write, while these malignant planets reign:
Some very foolish influence rules the pit,
Not always kind to sense, or just to wit.
And whilst it lasts, let buffoonry succeed,
To make us laugh; for never was more need.
Farce, in itself, is of a nasty scent;
But the gain smells not of the excrement.
The *Spanish* nymph, a wit and beauty too,
With all her charms, bore but a single show:
But, let a monster *Muscovite* appear,
He draws a crowded audience round the year.
May be thou hast not pleas'd the box and pit;
Yet those who blame the tale, commend thy wit;
So *Terence* plotted; but so *Terence* writ.
Like his thy thoughts are true, thy language clean,
Ev'n lewdness is made moral in thy scene.
The hearers may for want of *Nokes* repine,
But rest secure, the readers will be thine.
Nor was thy labour'd drama damn'd or hiss'd,
But with a kind civility dismiss'd:

With ſuch good manners as the * Wife did uſe,
Who, not accepting, did but juſt refuſe.
There was a glance at parting; ſuch a look
And bids thee not give o'er, for one rebuke.
But if thou wou'dſt be ſeen, as well as read;
Copy one living author, and one dead;
The ſtandard of thy ſtyle, let *Etherege* be:
For wit, th' immortal ſpring of *Wycherly*.
Learn after both, to draw ſome juſt deſign,
And the next age will learn to copy thine.

JOHN DRYDEN.

* The Wife in the play, Mrs. *Friendall.*

PRO-

PROLOGUE:

Spoken by Mr. BETTERTON.

GAllants, you're welcome to our homely cheer:
If you have brought your English *stomachs here,*
We'll treat you, as the French *say,* chere entire.
And what we want of humour, or of wit,
Make up with your she-neighbours in the pit;
For on the stage whate'er we do, or say,
The vizard-masks can find you better play:
With all our pains, we can but bring 'em in;
'Tis you must take the damsels out again:
And when we've brought you kindly thus together,
'Tis your fault if you're parted by foul weather.
We hope these natural reasons may produce,
In every whoremaster, a kind excuse
For all our faults, the poet's, and the players.
You'll pardon ours, if you can find out theirs. [To the maskers.
But to the gentler men, who love at sight,
And never care to come to closer fight,
We have provided work for them to-night:
With safety they may draw their cannon down,
And into a surrender bomb the town.
From both side-boxes play their batteries;
And not a bullet shot, but burning eyes:
Those they discharge with such successful arts,
They fire, three deep, into the ladies hearts.
Since each man here finds his diversion,
Let not the damning of our play be one.
But to the ladies, who must sit it out,
To hear us prate, and see the oglers shoot,
Begging their favour, we have this to say,
In hopes of their protection for the play,
Here is a music-meeting every day.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

LOVEMORE,	Mr. *Betterton.*
WELLVILE,	Mr. *Kynnaſton.*
WILDING,	Mr. *Williams.*
COURTALL,	Mr. *Bowman.*
SPRINGAME,	Mr. *Mich. Lee.*
FRIENDALL,	Mr. *Montford.*
RUFFLE,	Mr. *Bright.*
Muſic-Maſter,	Mr. *Harris.*

WOMEN.

Mrs. FRIENDALL,	Mrs. *Barry.*
Mrs. SIGHTLY,	Mrs. *Bracegirdle.*
Mrs. WITWOUD,	Mrs. *Montford.*
Mrs. TEAZALL,	Mrs. *Cory.*
FANNY, her Niece.	
BETTY, WITWOUD's Maid.	Mrs. *Richardſon.*

Two Pages, Footmen, and Linkboys.

SCENE, *London.*

THE

WIVES EXCUSE;

OR,

CUCKOLDS MAKE THEMSELVES.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE *the outward Room to the Music-meeting.*

Several Footmen at Hazard, some rising from Play.

1 FOOTMAN.

A Pox on these music-meetings; there's no fifth act here, a free cost, as we have at the play-houses, to make gentlemen of us, and keep us out of harms way; nothing but lice and linkboys in this anti-chamber; or a merry main to divert us; and that merry main, as you call it, makes most of us sad all the week after.

2 *Foot.* Why, what hast thou done, *Gill?*

1 *Foot.* Undone myself, and a very good friend of mine, my belly, for a week forward: I am hungry already in the apprehension of wanting a supper; for my board-wages is gone to the devil with his bones.

3 *Foot*. Six is the main, gentlemen.

4 *Foot*. That was my laſt teſter. } *Both riſing from play.*
5 *Foot*. I'll play no more—— }

3 *Foot*. Set out my hand, don't leave me ſo, gentlemen.

6 *Foot*. Come, ſir, ſeven to ſix, I ſet you——

3 *Foot*. Briſkly, my boy.

6 *Foot*. I ſet you this.

3 *Foot*. How much ?

6 *Foot*. Three halfperth of farthings.

3 *Foot*. Three halfperth of farthings ! [*Riſes from play.* I ſee thou retain'ſt the ſpirit of thy anceſtors, and as thou wert born and bred, wilt live and die a footman—— Three halfpenny-worth of farthings !

2 *Foot*. He ſets like a ſmall-beer butler in a widow lady's family.

3 *Foot*. May'ſt thou ſtarve under the tyranny of a houſekeeper, and never know the comfort of board-wages again.

6 *Foot*. Well, well, I have my money for all that.

1 *Foot*. Why, what a pretty fellow have we here debauch'd from us, and our ſociety, by living in a civil family ! but this comes of keeping good hours, and living orderly : idleneſs after ſupper, in your private houſes, is the mother of many miſchiefs among the maids.

3 *Foot*. Ay, ay, want of employment has thrown him upon ſome gentle chambermaid, and now he ſets up for good huſbandry, to father her failings, and get a wet-nurſe for his lady.

6 *Foot*. Better ſo than to father your maſter's baſtards, as you do ſometimes ; or now and then cheat him of his wench, in the convoy, and ſteal his clap from him.

4 *Foot*. Gad I mercy i'faith, lad.

3 *Foot*. That indeed is a ſin I often commit, and ſometimes repent of : but, the good with the bad, I have no reaſon to complain of my ſervice.

6 *Foot*. Pray don't trouble your head about mine then.

2 *Foot*. Come, come, we have all good places if we can keep 'em : and for my part, I am too deep in my maſter's

maſter's affairs, to fear the loſing of mine: what think you of the family of the *Friendalls*, my lads? a public private family, newly ſet up, and of very fair reception.

3 *Foot*. Ay, *Dick*; thou haſt the time on't indeed.

2 *Foot*. The maſter of it frank and free, to make an invitation to the whole town; and the miſtreſs hoſpitable and handſome, to give 'em welcome and content: for my maſter knows every body, and contrives that every body ſhall know her.

3 *Foot*. Ay, marry ſir, there's a family to breed up a pimp in! you may make a fortune out of ſuch a miſtreſs, before your maſter can get her with child.

2 *Foot*. My maſter has been married not a quarter of a year, and half the young men in town know his wife already; nay, know that he has known enough of her, not to care for her already.

3 *Foot*. And that may be a very good argument for ſome of 'em, to perſuade her to know a little of ſomebody elſe, and care as little for him.

4 *Foot*. A very good argument, if ſhe takes it by the right handle.

2 *Foot*. Some of your maſters, I warrant you, will put it into her hand.

3 *Foot*. I know my maſter has a deſign upon her.

2 *Foot*. And upon all the women in town.

4 *Foot*. Mine is in love with her.

5 *Foot*. And mine has hopes of her.

3 *Foot*. Every man has hopes of a new marry'd woman: for ſhe marries to like her man; and if upon trial ſhe finds ſhe can't like her huſband, ſhe'll find ſomebody elſe that ſhe can like, in a very little time, I warrant her, or change her men 'till ſhe does.

2 *Foot*. Let her like as many as ſhe pleaſes, and welcome: as they thrive with her, I ſhall thrive by them: I grind by her mill, and ſome of 'em I hope will ſet it a going. Beſides, ſhe has diſcover'd ſome of my maſter's intrigues of late, that may help to fill the ſails; but I ſay nothing, I will take fees on both ſides, and betray neither.

3 *Foot*.

3 *Foot*. If your lady loves play, as they ſay ſhe does, ſhe will be ſo far in your intereſt, that he that makes his court to her, muſt have money to recommend him——

2 *Foot*. To me he muſt indeed, if he expects my aſſiſtance.

5 *Foot*. Come, come, what do you think of my maſter, Mr. *Lovemore*, for the lady?

3 *Foot*. I don't think of him.

2 *Foot*. Not ſo much as ſhe does, I believe you; he's a generous gentleman, and deſerves very well of her, and me.

1 *Foot*. My maſter, Mr. *Wellvile*, is often at your houſe.

3 *Foot*. He follows Mrs *Sightly*, I can tell you. But if your lady, Mrs. *Friendall*, has a mind to be very well us'd; not to ſettle to't; but only by the way of a faſhionable revenge, or ſo, to do herſelf juſtice upon her huſband; I look upon Mr. *Wilding*, my maſter, one or other, to be the cleverest cuckold-maker in *Covent-Garden*.

2 *Foot*. Not to ſettle to't indeed, for your maſter is not over conſtant.

3 *Foot*. He does not ſtay in a family, to be challeng'd into *Weſtminſter-hall*, by the huſband's action of battery, for an aſſault upon his wife; he is not ſo conſtant.

4 *Foot*. Or if your lady be diſpos'd to the more refin'd part of an amour, without the brutality or deſign of enjoyment, only for the pleaſure of being talk'd of, or ſo forth——

3 *Foot* Your maſter *Courtall* will fit her to a hair: for he will be as fond of the appearances of an intrigue, as ſhe can be; to ſee him in the chaſe, you would think he had pleaſure in the ſport; for he will be as ſure always to follow her, as never to preſs her; he will take as much pains to put her undeſervedly into a lampoon, upon his account, as he would to avoid a handſome occaſion, in private, to qualify her for the ſcandal.

2 *Foot*. In ſhort, Mr. *Courtall* will do every thing, but what he ought to do, with a woman.

4 *Foot*.

4 *Foot.* He has broke off with three gentlewomen, upon my word, within these two months, for coming on too fast upon that business.

2 *Foot.* Well, there are pretenders enough; so I have the profit, let my lady take the pleasure of the choice: I'm for the fairest bidder.

3 *Foot.* What, *Harry*, hast thou nothing to say of thy mistress, Mrs *Witwoud?*

7 *Foot.* Nothing extraordinary, but that I'm tir'd of her.

3 *Foot.* She lives as she us'd to do, least at home; has no business of her own, but a great deal of other people's. All the men in town follow her, but 'tis for other women; for she has frightened every one from a design upon her: then she's a general confidant, and sometimes reports no more than she knows; but that's a favour indeed, from a wit, as they say she is.

7 *Foot.* If she be a wit, I'll be sworn she does not take me for one; for she sends me very often upon very ridiculous errands.

3 *Foot.* I think you have a correspondent porter, in every quarter of the town, to disperse her scandalous letters, which she is always bantering one fool or other withal?

7 *Foot.* Four or five always in pay with her.

3 *Foot.* But when Horn-fair comes, that's sure to be a holiday, and every marry'd man that has a wife handsomer than she is, at her proper cost and charges, may expect a fairing, to put him in mind of his fortune.

7 *Foot.* I find you know her too well, to desire to live with her.

3 *Foot.* I had rather be a master of the ceremonies to a visiting lady, to 'squire about her how-d'ye's, and usher in the formal salutations of all the fops in town, upon her day; nay, tho' she kept two days a week, than live in a family with her.

1 *Foot.* Will this damn'd musick-meeting never be done? would the cats-guts were in the fidlers bellies.

Two

Two Pages meeting.

1 *Page.* My lady *Smirkit*'s page.

2 *Page.* Who's there? my lady *Woudmore!*

1 *Page.* At your ſervice, madam.

2 *Page.* O lord, madam! I am ſurpris'd to ſee your ladyſhip here——

2 *Foot.* What have we here?

3 *Foot.* The monkies apeing their ladies, let 'em go on.

2 *Page.* How can your ladyſhip deſcend into theſe little diverſions of the town, the plays and the muſic-meetings?

1 *Page.* Little diverſions indeed, madam, to us, who have ſeen ſo much better abroad, and ſtill retain too much of the delicacy of the *French*, to be pleas'd with the barbarous performances of theſe *Engliſh*.

3 *Foot.* That's a touch for ſome of 'em.

1 *Page.* Yet there's no ſtaying always at home, your ladyſhip knows——

2 *Page.* Nor being always ſeen in the drawing-room, I vow and ſwear——

1 *Page.* So that, madam, we are almoſt under a neceſſity of appearing in theſe public places——

2 *Page.* An abſolute neceſſity of ſhewing ourſelves ſometimes.

1 *Page.* Ay, but, madam, then the men, they do ſo ogle one——

3 *Foot.* Ah! very well, Mr. *Charles*.

1 *Page.* Into all the little confuſions that a woman is liable to upon thoſe occaſions.

2 *Page.* I ſwear my lord *Simperwell* has an irreſiſtible way with him.

1 *Page.* He ogled me all the muſic long, I believe every body took notice of it, ſo furiouſly, I could not bear it myſelf; I vow and ſwear, he almoſt made me bluſh; and I would rather do any thing to deſerve bluſhing, in another place, than by a country modeſty betray ſuch an unpardonable want of breeding, to the cenſure of ſo much good company.

3 *Foot.* I dare ſwear for her ladyſhip, ſhe had rather do it than bluſh for't.

1 *Page.*

1 *Page.* Why how now, Jack Sauce? [*To the footman.* But did I blush, madam? [*To the page.*

2 *Page.* Only for your friends, madam, to see us so neglected.

1 *Page.* Fie, fie, madam, you made your conquest too. I minded no body but my lord; and I vow and swear, I must own it, madam, he ogles one more like a man of quality, than any body about town that I know of, and I think I am pretty well acquainted with all the soft looks in town.

2 *Page.* One after another we have 'em all——but Jesu! madam——

1 *Page.* Ay, madam.

2 *Page.* They say the *French* fleet will be here next summer, with their *Tourvilles*, and their things, and Jesu! madam, ravish us all.

1 *Page.* O lord, madam, ravishing us is nothing, but our dear religion, madam, what will they do to that?

2 *Page.* Ay, what indeed, madam?

1 *Page.* I would not lose the gaping galleries of our churches, for the best religion in christendom.

3 *Foot.* You are precious pages indeed, betray your ladies secrets, before you come into 'em.

Within. Make way for my lord there, bear back gentlemen.

1 *Foot.* So, so, 'tis done at last, let's get the coaches to the door. [*Exeunt omnes.*

The curtain drawn up, shews the company at the music-meeting; after an Italian *song,* Lovemore, Wellvile, Wilding, Courtall, Springame, Friendall, Ruffle, *Mrs.* Friendall, Sightly, Witwoud, Fanny *advance to the front of the stage.*

Mr. Fri. Ladies and gentlemen, how do you like the music?

Sight. O very fine sure, sir.

Wit. What say you to't, young gentlemen?

Spring. I have something to say to you, I like a great deal better, provided you won't laugh at me.

[*Going aside with her.*

But

But the music's extremely fine—— [*To the company.*

Well. Especially the vocal part. For I did not understand a word on't.

Mr. Fri. Nor I, faith, *Wellvile*, but the words were *Italian*, they sung well, and that's enough for the pleasure of the ear.

Court. By which I find your sense is sound.

Mr. Fri. And sound sense is a very good thing, *Courtall*—— [*Goes to* Wild.

Well. That thou wo't never be the better for.

Mr. Fri. *Wilding*, thou hast been so busy about that young girl there, thou know'st nothing of the matter.

Wild. O, sir, you're mistaken, I am a great admirer——

Mr. Fri. Of every thing in petticoats.

Wild. Of these musical entertainments; I am very musical, and love any call that brings the women together.

Mr. Fri. Vocal, or instrumental! which do you most approve of? If you are for the instrumental, there were the sonatas to night, and the chacons, which you know——

Wild. The sonatas and the chacons which I know! not I, sir, I don't know 'em: they may be two *Italian* fidlers of your acquaintance, for any thing I know of 'em.

Mr. Fri. Fie, fie, fidlers! masters, if you please, *Wilding*; masters, excellent in their art, and famous for many admirable compositions. [*Mingles with the company.*

Court. So, he's fast in his own snare, with his sonatas and chacons; but how goes the world, *Wilding?*

Wild. The same women every day, and in every public appearance.

Court. Here are some faces, I see, of your acquaintance.

Wild. Ay, pox take 'em, I see 'em too often to forget 'em: would their owners thought as ill of 'em as I do, they would keep 'em at home; but they are for shewing their show still, tho' no body cares for the sight. [*They mix with the company.*

Wit.

Wit. Methinks 'tis but good manners in Mr. *Lovemore*, to be particular to your ſiſter, when her huſband is ſo univerſal to the company.

Spring. Prithee leave her to her huſband: ſhe has ſatiſfied her relations enough in marrying this coxcomb; now let her ſatify herſelf, if ſhe pleaſes, with any body ſhe likes better.

Wit. Fie, fie, there's no talking to you, you carry my meaning further than I deſign'd.

Spring. Faith I took it up but where you left it, very near the matter.

Wit. No, no, you grow ſcandalous; and I would not be thought to ſay a ſcandalous thing of a friend.

Spring. Since my brother in law is to be a cuckold, as it muſt be mightily my ſiſter's fault if he be not, I think *Lovemore* as proper a fellow to carry on ſo charitable a work, as ſhe could ha' lit upon: and if he has her conſent to the buſineſs, ſhe has mine, I aſſure you.

Wit. A very reaſonable brother!

Spring. Would you be as reaſonable a friend, and allow me as many liberties as I do her?

Wit. Why, ſo I will: ſhe has the men, and you ſhall have the women, the whole ſex to pick and chuſe——

Spring. One miſtreſs out of——

Wit. As many as you pleaſe, and as often as you have occaſion.

Spring. Why, faith, that pleaſes me very well; you hit my conſtitution, as if you were familiar with it, or had a mind to be ſo.

Wit. Not I indeed, ſir.

Spring. And I have, as you were ſaying——

Wit. As I was ſaying!

Spring. Very often an occaſion for a miſtreſs.

Wit. You ſay ſo yourſelf, I know nothing of your occaſions.

Spring. Shall I bring you acquainted with ſome of 'em? I have great variety, and have, every day, a new occaſion for a new miſtreſs: if you have a mind to be ſatisfied in this point, let me go along with you——

Wit.

Wit. Home with me?

Spring. Or home with me, will do my buſineſs as well.

Wit. But it won't do mine, ſir.

Spring. Then let it be home with you, tho' my lodging is very convenient.

Wit. Why, this is ſudden indeed, upon ſo ſmall an acquaintance: but 'tis ſomething too ſoon for you, and a little too late for me.

Spring. Not to repent, I hope, madam? better late than never, you know; come, come, I have known a worſe offer better receiv'd.

Wit. And this offer you will make to every woman, 'till it be receiv'd, I dare anſwer for you.

Spring. That's more than you can do for yourſelf for refuſing it. But the folly fall upon your own head: I have done my part, and 'tis your fault if you're idle——

[*Goes away.*

Sight. You have been entertain'd, couſin——

[Sightly *to her.*

Wit. By a very pretty prating fellow, couſin; and I could be contented to let him ſhow his parts this way, as often as he pleas'd.

Sight. What! like a man of honour, he's for making good what he ſays——

Wit. And comes ſo quick upon that buſineſs, he won't afford a woman a reaſonable liking-time, to make a decent excuſe to herſelf, if ſhe ſhou'd allow him a favour.

Sight. The young officer has heard enough of your character, I ſuppoſe, not to put it too much into your power of laughing at him.

Wit. I'm ſorry for't: I would have a man know juſt enough of me to make him a lover: and then, in a little time, I ſhould know enough of him to make him an aſs.

Sight. This will come home to you one day.

Wit. In any ſhape but a huſband, couſin. But methinks *Lovemore* and Mrs. *Friendall* are very ſeriouſly engag'd—

[*Obſerving* Lovemore *with Mrs.* Friendall.

Sight. I have had an eye upon 'em.

Wit.

Wit. For ſuch a trifle as cuckolding a huſband is in this town.

Sight The men will always deſign upon our ſex; but I dare anſwer for her——

Wit. And ſo will I. That if ſhe ſhould fall from the frailty of the fleſh into that folly, ſhe will appear no monſter, whatever her huſband may be. What ſay you to a ramble after the muſic?

Sight. I ſay nothing to't.

Wit. A hackney jaunt, from one end of the town to t'other?

Sight. 'Tis too late.

Wit. I know two ſeveral companies gone into the city, one to *Pontacks*, and t'other to the *Rummer*, to ſupper: I want to diſturb, ſtrangely; what ſay you, cuz? lets put on our maſques, draw up the glaſſes, and ſend up for the men, to make their women uneaſy: there's one of 'em to be marry'd, it may do good upon her, by ſhewing what ſhe muſt truſt to, if ſhe will have a huſband.

Sight. And can you be ſo miſchievous?

Wit. Can you reſiſt the temptation?

Sight. I came with Mrs. *Friendall*, and muſt go home with her. Look to your charge there.

Wit. I have an eye that way.

Sight. We ſhall ſee you to-morrow, couſin?

Wit. At your toilet, couſin; you are always my firſt viſit. [*Goes to* Wilding *and* Fanny.

Mrs. Fri. Is this your friendſhip to Mr. *Friendall?* I muſt not hear it.

Love. You ſee he gives you leave.

Mrs. Fri. Therefore I can't take it; the confidence is ſo generous, that ev'n that would ſecure me to him.

Love. The confidence is as generous on your ſide; and do you think that will ſecure him to you?

Mrs. Fri. I'll aſk him, if you pleaſe.

Love. You'll but diſturb him.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. *Friendall.* [*Calling him.*

Mr. Fri. Ha! what's the matter, madam?

Mrs. Fri. There has happen'd here a ſcurvy diſpute between me and one of your friends, ſir, as you think fit to call 'em.

Mr.

Mr. Fri. A dispute! about what, pr'ythee? but before I hear a word on't, *Lovemore*, thou art certainly in the wrong in holding an argument with a woman.

Love. I begin to think so too, sir, for contending with a lady that will be try'd by no body but her husband.

Mr. Fri. But what's the business? nothing extraordinary between you, I hope?

Mrs. Fri. Believe me, sir, I think it very extraordinary——

Love. Very extraordinary indeed, madam, to be so publicly expos'd for a private opinion.

Mrs. Fri. And you shall be the judge of the difference.

Mr. Fri. No, no, no difference among friends, it must not come to that, I'll make up all differences between you.

Love. You may do much indeed to set all straight.

Mr. Fri. And so I will, i'faith *Lovemore*, I'll reconcile all I'll warrant you; but come, what is this mighty matter between you?

Mrs. Fri. I think it a mighty matter, Mr. *Friendall*, to be so far suspected in my conduct, that any one, under the title of your friend, should dare, in your absence, to be so very familiar with me——

Mr. Fri. How, madam!

Love. All will out, I see, [*Aside.*

Mr. Fri. In my absence, so very familiar with you.

Mrs. Fri. As to censure these innocent liberties that the women allow themselves in the company of their husbands.

Love. So, she has sav'd her credit with me, and mine with her husband.

[*Mrs.* Friendall *joins Mrs.* Sightly *and* Witwoud.

Mr. Fri. Why, *Lovemore*, thou art in the wrong of all this; I desired you to sport off a little gallantry with my wife, to entertain and divert her from making her observations upon me, and thou dost nothing but play the critic upon her.

Love. I find I was mistaken. But how wou'd you have me behave myself?

Mr.

Mr. Fri. Why, I wou'd have you very frequent in your visits, and very obliging to my wife, now and then, to carry on our other pleasures the better: for the amusement, or so, you may say a civil thing to her, for every woman, you know, loves to have a civil thing said to her sometimes; but then you must be very cautious in the expression; if she shou'd in the least apprehend that you had a design upon her, 'twou'd raise the devil in one part of the family, and lay him in another, perhaps, where I had a mind to employ him: therefore I wou'd have you keep in favour with her——

Love. I'll do my best, I promise you.

Mr. Fri. She's inclining, you must know, to speak very well of you; and that she does of very few of the men, I assure you: she approves of the intimacy and friendship between us, and of your coming to the house; and that may stand you in stead with the lady, you wot of—

Love. I apprehend you—so begging the lady's pardon [*To Mrs.* Friendall.] with a design of doing something to deserve it—

Wit. That will never fail with the women, Mr. *Lovemore.*

Love. I will make an interest with the masters, to give you a song at parting. [*Goes to the masters.*

Sight. An *English* song, good Mr. *Lovemore.*

Mr. Fri. O by all means an *English* song.

[*Goes to the masters too.*

Welv. Any song, which won't oblige a man to tell you he has seen an opera at *Venice* to understand.

Mr. Fri. Pray, let him sing the ladies the song I gave him.

Music-master. Which song, sir?

Mr. Fri. The last.

Music-master. 'Tis not set, sir!

Mr. Fri. Not set, sir! [*Turning from him, to the ladies.*

Love. That's a fault he'll never forgive you.

Music-master. Why, really, sir, I would serve any gentleman to my power; but the words are so abominably out of the way of music, I don't know how to humour 'em:

'em: there's no ſetting 'em, or ſinging 'em, to pleaſe any body but himſelf.

Sight. O! but we loſe by this.

Mr. Fri. Hang 'em, idle raſcals; they care not what entertainment we loſe, ſo they have but our money.

Sight. Is it your own ſong, Mr. *Friendall?*

Mr. Fri. I muſt not rob your ladyſhip of your part in it.

Sight. My part in your ſong, ſir!

Mr. Fri. You were the muſe that inſpir'd me; I writ it upon your ladyſhip.

Sight. Fie, fie; that pride wou'd ruin me: but I know you ſay ſo to every woman. [*She turns from him.*

Mr. Fri. I'gad, ſhe's i'th' right on't; I have told a dozen ſo already at the muſic-meeting, and moſt of 'em believe me.

Sight. Does Mr. *Friendall* often write ſongs, madam?

Mrs. Fri. He does many things he ſhou'd not do, madam; but I think he loves me, and that excuſes him to me: tho' you may be ſure, 'tis with the tendereſt concern for my own reputation, that I ſee my huſband daily trifle away his ſo notoriouſly, in one folly or other of the town. [*Goes to Mr.* Friendall.

Wit. For her own reputation, it muſt be; for the world will believe, ſhe turns ſuch a huſband to the right uſe, whatever ſhe ſays to the contrary.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. *Friendall*, pray be ſatisfied with a good eſtate; and not imagine, becauſe you have that, you have every thing elſe. The buſineſs of writing ſongs ſhould be over with a married man. And ſince I can't be ſuſpected to be the *Phillis*, or *Cloris*, 'tis an affront to me, to have any other woman thought ſo.

Mr. Fri. Indeed, madam, ſo far you are right: I never heard of any man, that writ a ſong upon his wife.

SONG

SONG, by Major-general *Sackville*.

INgrateful love! thus, every hour,
To punish me by her disdain!
You tyrannize to shew your pow'r;
And she, to triumph in my pain.

You who can laugh at human woes,
And victims to her pride decree,
On me, your yielding slave, impose
Your chains; but leave the rebel free.

How fatal are your poison'd darts!
Her conqu'ring eyes the trophies boast,
Whilst you insnare poor wand'ring hearts,
That in her charms and scorn are lost.

Impious, and cruel: you deny
A death, to ease me of my care:
Which she delays, to make me try
The force of beauty and despair.

Mr. Fri. Lovemore, we may thank you for this: but when you keep your promise to me at dinner, to-morrow, and you, and you, and all of you, gentlemen, [*Speaks to all the men.*] I'll do you reason to the good company. Some of my servants there——

[*Goes to the door.*

Court. Madam, I am very luckily here to offer you my service.

Mrs. Fri. No particular woman must expect it from so general a follower of the sex, as Mr. *Courtall* is.

Court. A general follower of the sex indeed, madam, in my care of 'em.

Mrs. Fri. Besides, 'tis dangerous to be seen with a man of your character; for if you don't make it an intrigue, the town makes it for you: and that does most of your business as well.

Court. There's no knowing a man by his character in this town; the partiality of friends, and the prejudice

of enemies, who divide it, always makes him better or worſe than he deſerves.

Mrs. Fri. If you have no regard to my reputation, pray be tender of your own. 'Tis now-a-days as ſcandalous in a man, who wou'd be thought to know the town (as I know you wou'd) to wait upon a bare face to her coach, as it us'd to be to lead out a vizard-maſk: but the pit has got the better of the boxes, with moſt of you, in that point of civility; and I don't doubt, but it turns to better account.

Spring. Indeed, ſiſter, it does turn to better account; and therefore we muſt provide for ourſelves——

[*Takes* Courtall *with him to Mrs.* Witwoud.

Why, here's a woman, *Courtall*——If ſhe has a vizard-maſk to encourage me— [Love. *goes to Mrs.* Fri.

I cou'd go to the world's end with her: but as ſhe is, bare-faced, and an honeſt woman—

Wit. You'll do a fooliſh thing, for once; ſee her to her coach, I dare ſay for you, to make her otherwiſe.

Spring. Why, if it muſt be ſo—— [*Addreſſing to her.*

Wild. You own your aunt is a-bed; and you ſee Mrs. *Witwoud*'s too buſy to mind your going away with me.

Fan. I can't to night, but I'll call upon you to-morrow morning, as I go to ſix o'clock prayers.

Love. I hope, madam, I may without exception wait upon you. [*To Mrs.* Friendall.

Welv. And, madam, I have the title of an old ſervant to your ladyſhip, to expect that favour from you——

[*To Mrs.* Sightly.

Sight. Mr. *Friendall*, having a handſome wife in the company, may be jealous; and you will pardon me if I am unwilling to give him a ſuſpicion of a man, whom I would have every body think as well of, as I do myſelf.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. *Friendall* gives you more opportunities than I can approve of, and I cou'd wiſh you wou'd not take the advantage of 'em; they'll turn to no account.

Mr. Fri. Come ladies, I am your man I find—

[*Leads Mrs.* Sightly, *Mrs* Friendall *following.*

Ruf. What think you of this occaſion?

Love.

Love. You can't have a better; follow him——And be famous——[Springame *leads* Witwoud. Wilding *leads.* Fanny *out.* Ruffle *after the Company.*

Wellv. What have you now in hand?

Love. Why all my hopes of the wife depending upon the senseless behaviour of the husband; I have contriv'd, by this fellow, before her face too, to expose him, a way that must ruin him with her for ever; let's follow, and expect the event—— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to the street.*

Several link-boys, and footmen.

Link. Have a light, gentlemen, have a light, Sir. [Springame *with* Witwoud.

Spring. Light yourselves to the devil. [Wilding *with* Fanny, *and several others.*

2 *Link.* Bless you, master, we can find the way in the dark. Shall I light your worship there?

Spring. Then call a coach, and thy wit shall be thy reward.

5 *Foot.* Mr. *Friendall*'s coach there—— 'Tis at the door, sir.

Enter Mr. Friendall *leading Mrs.* Sightly *with his wife;* Ruffle *enters after 'em.* Lovemore *and* Wellvile *in the rear.*

Mr. Fri. I must improve every opportunity with your ladyship, to convince you of the truth I have been telling you to night, and in this billet, I give it under my hand how very much I am your servant—— [Sightly *throws it behind her.*

Sight. Fie, fie, before your wife— [Ruffle *takes it up.*

Mrs. Fri. Sir, that paper does not belong to you.

[Friendall *leads Mrs.* Sightly *off, and returns for his wife.*

Ruf. Don't be jealous, lady, I know no design the gentlewoman has as yet upon my person, and I'll belong to you, if this gentleman pleases.

Mr. Fri. You're pleas'd to be merry, sir, but no touching her, I beseech you.

Mrs. Fri. What wou'd the fellow have?

Ruf. Why, I wou'd have this fellow gone about his buſineſs.

Mr. Fri. My buſineſs lies here at preſent, ſir.

Ruf. You lie there, ſir.

[*Hits Mr.* Friendall *a box on the ear, and draws; the wom n ſhriek, Mrs* Friendall *pretends to hold her huſband, the company come about 'em.*

Mrs. Fri. Good Mr. *Friendall*, another time, conſider where you are. You are more a man of honour, I know, than to draw your ſword among the women; I am ſorry this has happen'd in a place where you can't right yourſelf, without wronging the company. But you'll find a time to do a juſtice to yourſelf, and the ladies, who have ſuffer'd in the apprehenſion of ſuch a brutality.

Spring. I'll go along with you——

[*All go off but* Witwoud.

Wit. Wou'd the devil had 'em, for drawing their ſwords here; I have loſt my little captain in the fray: my charge is departed too, and for this night I ſuppoſe has left me to make an excuſe to the family, for her lying abroad with a country couſin, or ſo; that rogue *Wilding* has carry'd her home with him, and 'tis as well now, as a week hence, for when theſe young wenches once ſet their hearts upon't, every thing gives them an opportunity to ruin themſelves: her aunt *Teazall* has made her riſe to ſix-o'clock prayers to fine purpoſe, if this be the fruits of her devotion: but ſince ſhe muſt fall to ſome body, I'm glad *Wilding* has her, for he'll uſe her ill enough in a little time, to make her wiſer for the future; by the dear experience and vexation of this intrigue, (being diſappointed of many things ſhe expects) ſhe may make a virtue of neceſſity, repent becauſe ſhe can't keep him to herſelf, and make an honeſt man a very good wife yet. [*Exit.*

Lovemore, Wellvile, Ruffle *return.*

Ruf. I have done my part, and am ſatisfied with the honour of the atchievement.

Love. 'Tis a reputation clear gain'd; ſince there's no danger of accounting for't.

Ruf.

Ruf. So thanking you, for this occasion of shewing myself, I am your humble servant—— [*Exit.*

Wellw. Who is this hero, pray?

Love. Why this is a spark, that has had the misfortune of being kick'd very lately, and I have help'd him to this occasion of repairing his honour, upon our very good friend, a greater coward than himself: he has serv'd my ends, now let him serve the town's.

Wellw. But did you observe how the lady behaved herself in the quarrel, to conceal her husband's cowardice?

Love. What a handsome excuse she made in his favour, to the company? when she can never make any for him to herself.

Wellw. This matter well manag'd, may turn to account; tho' you must not be seen to expose him, you may take the advantage of his exposing himself.

Love. And let her say what she can upon this subject, I believe no woman can be contented to have her honour much longer than her fortune in the possession of a man, who has no fund of his own, to answer in security for either.

Thus, who a married woman's love would win,
Should with the husband's failings first begin;
Make him but in the fault, and you shall find
A good excuse will make most women kind. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Witwoud *at a table, with* Betty, *and a footman waiting.*

Wit. NO news of my cousin *Fanny* this morning?

Bet. For God's sake, madam, not a word of her lying out to-night; we shall have the devil to do with the old gentlemoman, if she knows it.

Wit. That's a ſecret I can keep from her, for my own ſake, *Betty*: but how comes this about? I'm quite out of gilt paper: *Harry*, you fetch me two or three quire from Mr. *Bentley*'s, and call at Mrs. *Da Robe*'s, my mantua-woman's, as you come back, for letters—— and, d'you hear? Give this note to *Joe* the porter, he needs no inſtructions; let him leave it for Mr. *Wilding*—— [*footman and maid go out.*] I find I muſt meddle in this buſineſs; for her viſits at this rate, will not only be troubleſome to him (as I would have 'em) but in a little time, be public to the whole town: now, tho' I am very well pleaſed with any matter of ſcandal, I am ſo nearly related to the intereſt of this girl, I would not have her the occaſion of it. They ſay the underſtanding ought to be ſuited to the condition, to make any one happy; would ſhe were in a condition ſuitable to her underſtanding; ſhe has wit enough for a wife, and nothing elſe that I know of.

Teazall *enters to her.*

Teaz. O, madam! you're welcome home.

Wit. Rather good-morrow, couſin.

Teaz. Rather good-morrow indeed, that's the properer ſalutation: for you're never to be ſeen in your lodging at any other time of the day; and then too, as ſoon as you're out a-bed in a morning, you ſummon a congregation of your fellows together, to hear you prate by the hour, flatter every body in the company, ſpeak ill of every one that's abſent, and ſcatter about the ſcandal of that day.

Wit. Why, madam, you won't quarrel at that, I hope; 'tis one of the moſt faſhionable innocent diverſions of the town, it makes a great deal of mirth, ſpeaking ill of people, and never does any body any harm.

Teaz. Not with any that know you, I believe. How came you home laſt night? The night before, you arriv'd like a carted bawd, juſtly puniſh'd for the ſins of the people. You confeſs'd you were forc'd to bilk your coach, to get rid of the coxcombs that dogg'd you from the play-houſe, and being purſu'd by the coachman and footmen,

footmen, (for I don't doubt but you gave the gentlemen encouragement enough to come home with you) you look'd as if you belong'd to a cellar, in some of the alleys you were hunted through, and had been caterwawling in all the kennels of the town.

Wit. That was an unfortunate night indeed.

Teaz. Well, deliver every good woman's child, I say, from such daggle-tail'd courses as these are; what will be the end of 'em, I beseech you? You will make yourself as odious in a little time, as you endeavour to make every body else: this is not the way to get a husband; the men know too much of you already, to desire any more of you.

Wit. I don't set up for a husband.

Teaz. Marry come up here! you may have an occasion for an husband, when you can't get one. Husbands are not always to be had at a month's warning, to finish another man's work: what, 'tis beneath the character of a she wit, I suppose, to be constant: or is a husband out of fashion with you, forsooth? another woman's husband can go down with you to my knowledge, and as ugly a rogue too, with as hanging a countenance, as I cou'd wish any villain I had a mind to be rid of—— your diversion, as you call him.

Wit. O spare my shame, I own he is my curse, doom'd for my plague and pleasure.

Teaz. Spare your shame! I'll say that for you, you have not been sparing of any endeavour that cou'd bring a shame any way into the family, wherever you liv'd yet; if there was ever a fool soft enough to throw it upon. All your relations know you, and are afraid to have you in a house with 'em; and I suppose you are very well pleas'd to be from under their roof; to have your fellows come after you to my house as they do; and as I am fool enough to allow of.

Wit. For no harm, cousin, I hope.

Teaz. Perhaps you think it no harm; and, indeed, it can't easily do you any harm: but, I'm sure, I have one of my nieces already undone, by your bringing her acquainted with some of 'em. I was forc'd to marry her,

you know, below her rank (for the usual reason of this end of the town) into the city, where 'twas less scandalous, the wives there having a charter for what they do And now *Fanny*, a very girl, when I have provided a husband, and all, for her, (for she must have a husband,) she takes after her sister; (as a little thing will make a precedent for what we are inclin'd to;) she takes after her sister, I say, and is unfortunately engaged in a passion for Mr. *Wilding*: and how to prevent it—

Wit. Indeed, I must acknowledge, I was, in a great measure, the unfortunate cause of my cousin *Biddy*'s miscarriage; but for my cousin *Fanny*, rely upon me; nothing shall come on't; I am now going to Mr *Wilding* on that account; and have sent a note to secure him at his lodgings 'till I come.

Enter Betty.

Teaz. Well, where's this girl? Why does not she come, when I send for her?

Betty. Madam, she went to six-o'clock prayers, and is not come back yet.

Teaz. God's bodikins! has she got the trick on't? of abusing the church into the place of assignation already? *Wilding* has carry'd her home with him that's certain: get you gone after her; may be you may prevent his wicked design on her. Go, go, and redeem her, tho' you leave yourself in her room.

Wit. I'm oblig'd to you, truly, madam.

Teaz. I dare venture you, you'll not be in love with him; you'll give him as good as he brings; and, let the worst come to the worst, you have liv'd too long in the town, to be uneasy for any man; or be concern'd beyond the pleasure and convenience of the intrigue. Therefore I may venture you, a little time goes a great way in this business; deliver her, and I won't find fault with you, these three days you shall do what you please——[*Exe*.

SCENE

SCENE *Mr.* Friendall's *houſe.*

Mrs. Friendall *following* *Mr.* Friendall.

Mrs. Fri. Nay, Mr. *Friendall,* I know what you will object to me; but you muſt hear me out. The concern and care of your reputation is as dear to me, as it can be tender to you; ſince I muſt appear to the world, only in that rank of honour which you are pleas'd to maintain.

Mr. Fri. Why, madam, you have as handſome an equipage as any man's wife in town, that has a father alive.

Mrs. Fri. This muſt not put me off. I ſee you make little of the matter, to hide it from my fears; and there indeed you're kind: but 'tis in vain to think of concealing from me what you intend; from what you ought to do, I know what you will do, after ſo baſe a wrong.

Mr. Fri. A drunken extravagance, the fellow will be ſorry for't, when he's ſober——

Mrs. Fri. If you wou'd ſtay 'till then.

Mr. Fri. And beg my pardon.

Mrs Fri. That he ſhall do, if that wou'd ſatisfy you.

Mr. Fri. Satisfy me!

Mrs. Fri. And let it ſatisfy you; it ought to ſatisfy you from ſuch a one. For, I believe he wou'd not have quarrell'd any where elſe, nor there neither, but upon the proſpect of being prevented, or parted, or ſecur'd over night, in order to beg pardon in the morning.

Mr. Fri. Ay, madam, but conſider——

Mrs. Fri. Pray conſider me, Mr. *Friendall,* I muſt ſuffer every way, if you proceed to a revenge; in your danger which muſt be mine; in my honour, which ought to be more yours than to expoſe it upon every little occaſion.——Come, come, in other things you have a good opinion of my conduct, pray let me govern here; you may be aſſur'd, I'll do nothing to leſſen you; the ſatisfaction ſhall be as public as the affront. Leave it to me for once, I will not be deny'd——He is not worth your danger.

Mr. Fri. Well, you ſhall govern me.

Mrs. Fri. What, you are a marry'd man, and have a good eſtate ſettled upon you; and ſhou'd not be accountable to every idle rake-hell, that has a mind to eſtabliſh a renown, from being troubleſome to public places.

Mr. Fri. What then wou'd you propoſe?

Mrs. Fri. A ſmall requeſt; not to ſtir abroad, nor be at home to any body, 'till you hear from me.

Mr. Fri. I promiſe you I won't—— [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fri. I dare take your word: his tameneſs laſt night, and backwardneſs this morning, in reſenting that blow, ſatisfy me that he is not in a fever for fighting: I don't know that he is a coward; but having theſe reaſons to ſuſpect him, I thought this was my beſt way to hinder him from diſcovering himſelf: for if he had betray'd that baſeneſs to me, I ſhou'd deſpiſe him; and can I love the man I muſt deſpiſe? brother, I ſent for you—— [Spring came *to her.*

Spring. To make up this quarrel I know, and I come to lend a helping hand to the work, I deſign to be a ſecond in the buſineſs.

Mrs. Fri. You muſt be my ſecond then, for I have taken the quarrel upon me.

Spring. With all my heart, I 'gad; we, who live all the ſummer for the public, ſhou'd live in the winter for ourſelves——

Mrs. Fri. And the women, good captain——

Spring. That's living for ourſelves, for 'tis not living without 'em: and a duel now might but interrupt a month of other buſineſs perhaps, that would be more agreeable to my conſtitution, I aſſure you: then we are to have no fighting it ſeems?

Mrs. Fri. For reaſons I'll tell you hereafter.

Spring. Nay there was no great danger of it; I have found out the gentlemen's lodgings, and character. We ſhall ſtrike up a peace before a bottle to an end.

Mrs. Fri. This challenge muſt be delivered as from him: I truſt the management to you: only take this in advice, that Mr. *Friendall* wants your aſſiſtance within; you muſt ſtand by him, and oblige the gentleman to make him ſatisfaction, without bringing his perſon in danger.

Spring.

Spring. I underſtand you, and he ſhall ſatisfy him, or me.

Mrs. Fri. See him ſatisfy'd, and I'll ſatisfy you with ſomething ſhall be better to a younger brother than the falſe muſters of a winter's quarter.

Spring. I warrant you. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fri. Whatever I think of him, I muſt not let him fall into the contempt of the town: every little fellow, I know, will be cenſoriouſly inquiſitive, and maliciouſly witty, upon another man's cowardice, out of the pleaſure of finding as great a raſcal as himſelf. How deſpicable a condition muſt that matrimony be, when the huſband (whom we look upon as a ſanctuary for a woman's honour) muſt be oblig'd to the diſcretion and management of a wife, for the ſecurity of his own! have a care of thinking that way; for in a marry'd ſtate, as in the public, we tie ourſelves up, indeed; but to be protected in our perſons, fortunes, and honours, by thoſe very laws that reſtrain us in other things; for few will obey, but for the benefit they receive from the government——

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, Mr. *Lovemore*— [*Goes out.*

Mrs. Fri. *Lovemore* here! I know he comes to tempt me to rebel; but I'm prepar'd for him——Good morrow Mr. *Lovemore.*

Enter Lovemore.

Love. I cou'd not expect to ſee your ladyſhip ſo early: I come to Mr. *Friendall.*

Mrs. Fri. May I thank you for the viſit?

Love. I come as a friend, you may be ſure, madam: where your honour's concern'd, I can't be an enemy.

Mrs. Fri. Not reaſonably, indeed, to any man that wou'd injure it, ſince you are a profeſs'd enemy.

Love. An enemy!

Mrs. Fri. Unleſs you will allow no body to ruin it, but yourſelf.

Love. Indeed, I would allow no body to defend it but myſelf, if I had the keeping of it; but a happier

man has that title, and I can only hope to be a second in your service.

Mrs. Fri. I thank you for the service you design me; but that happier man, as you call him, who has the title, will maintain it, it seems; for he, and my brother *Springame*, I'm afraid, are gone about it already.

Love. Gone, madam!

Mrs. Fri. An hour ago, before I had notice to prevent 'em: for Mr. *Friendall*, you may be sure, was impatient for an occasion of righting himself.

Love. I might have thought so, indeed, madam: would I had come sooner.

Mrs. Fri. You may yet be serviceable to me, sir, tho' you are too late for Mr. *Friendall*.

Love. How, madam, I beseech you?

Mrs. Fri. By endeavouring to prevent 'em: you are acquainted with the ways of reconciling matters of this honourable nature. I am going to make an interest with a kinsman, a colonel of the guards, myself, to secure 'em. Let your good nature in this be a proof of your friendship; and command me to my power——

[*Exit.*

Love. Prevent 'em! yes, yes: that I must do for my own sake; for if he should behave himself better than I imagin'd he would, it may secure him in his wife's esteem, and only ruin me with her, who laid the design. [*Exit.*

SCENE Wilding's *lodgings.*

Enter Wilding, *and his man.*

Wild. Have you dispos'd of her?

Serv. Safe into a chair, sir: she's jogging homeward lighter by a maidenhead, I presume, than she came, sir.

Wild. The loss is not so light, but she may feel it.

Serv. Heavy enough, perhaps, nine months hence, sir. But have you sent ever a lie along with her?

Wild. How, sirrah?

Serv.

Serv. Pardon me, ſir: not that I believe your honour was ſparing of your conſcience, in ſaying any thing, and ſwearing to't, that ſhe had a mind to believe.

Wild. That you may ſwear, indeed.

Serv. But ſhe's gone away ſo very well ſatisfy'd with what you have ſaid and done to her, ſhe's above inventing a lie for herſelf: the firſt angry word they give her at home, I ſuppoſe, you may hear of her; a hackney-coach removes her, and her commodes, upon very little warning; and I expect when ſhe will ſend in half a dozen band-boxes, to take poſſeſſion of your lodgings. But, pray, ſir, if I may be ſo bold——

Wild. Yes, yes; at this time you may be ſo bold: the ſervice of your wit ſecures you the privilege of your jeſt.

Serv. Then, pray ſir, why did you take ſo much pains to perſuade this young creature to come away from her aunt, when I know you never deſign to take care of her yourſelf?

Wild. Why, 'faith, I can't make you a very good anſwer: but the beſt reaſon I know of, is, (beſides the reputation of undoing her) it looks kind, at the time, to talk of providing for the woman that does one the favour. 'Twas a very plauſible argument, to cozen her into a conſent; level to my deſign of lying with her, and carry'd to the very mark of love.

Serv. Indeed it coſts nothing to promiſe, when nothing can oblige you to pay: and if ſhe depends upon it, at her peril; 'tis ſhe will be diſappointed, not you; tho' ten to one, poor little rogue, from the fondneſs of her own inclinations, ſhe gueſſes at yours: and fancies, from the courteſy ſhe has done you, you will be ſo civil a gentleman, to marry her.

Wild. Not unlikely; there's none of theſe young girls, (let a man's character be never ſo looſe among 'em,) but, from one vanity or other, will be encourag'd to deſign and venture upon him: and tho' fifty of their acquaintance have fall'n in the experiment, each of them will ſtill imagine ſhe has ſomething particular in her perſon, forſooth, to reclaim and engage him to herſelf. So

moſt

moſt of 'em miſcarry upon the project of getting huſbands.

Serv. Gad forgive me for ſwearing; but, as I hope to be ſav'd, and that's a bold word for a footman, I beg your pardon; there's a lady below, in a vizard, to ſpeak with you. [*Exit.*

Wild. Get you gone, you raſcal; beg her pardon, and leave to wait upon her; ſhe would have been admitted, in leſs time, to a privy-conſellor's levée, though he had laid aſide the buſineſs of the nation to manage her's. This muſt be the letter-lady: ſhe comes a little unſeaſonable, if ſhe knew all: if ſhe has experience enough to allow for ſome natural miſcarriages, which may happen in the beginning of an amour, I may pacify her that way: 'tis but ſwearing heartily, damning the modeſty of my conſtitution, laying its faults upon an over-reſpect to her, and promiſing better things for the future: that us'd to be a current excuſe; but 'tis the women's fault if it paſs too often upon 'em——If ſhe prove an old acquaintance, the coldneſs of the entertainment will ſecure me from the perſecution of her viſits hereafter; but if it be a face I never ſaw, I may uſe her well enough yet, to encourage her to another appointment. So every way does my buſineſs, whatever becomes of the ladies—— [Witwoud *enters mask'd.*] O, madam, I beg your pardon——

Wit. No excuſes, good ſir; men of employment are above good breeding; and I ſee you have a great deal upon your hands.

Wild. I am a man of buſineſs, indeed, madam; and, as you were pleas'd to ſignify in your letter, my practice lies among the women: what can I do for you?

Wit. Can't you tell what, ſir? You are not the man I took you for: but you are like our fortune-tellers, who come into our ſecrets more by our own folly, in betraying ourſelves, than by any ſkill or knowledge of their own.

Wild. Indeed I ſhould ha' proceeded, as moſt of thoſe fellows do, ſet out impudently at firſt, taken ſeveral things for granted (as that you were no maid, and ſo forth

forth) ventur'd briſkly at every thing, and ſomething might have happen'd to pleaſe you.

Wit. Did the lady, juſt gone away from you, find it ſo?

Wild. She had what ſhe came for: you would take it ill to loſe your labour yourſelf, madam.

Wit. She ventur'd at every thing, as briſkly as you could, I ſuppoſe, ſir?

Wild. 'Tis a towardly girl indeed, and comes on finely; I have no reaſon to complain of loſing my labour upon her: ſhe's ready for running away from her relations already. Are you not a little that way inclin'd? Come, come, if you have any troubles upon your ſpirits, child—

Wit. You can remove 'em into the fleſh, I warrant you.

Wild. If you have ever a huſband, that lies heavy upon your conſcience, I have a cordial will drive the diſtemper from your heart.

Wit. Why that's kind indeed, to make ſome room for the lover: but this is not my diſtemper: I could reſolve it myſelf, if I had a huſband, whither I would make him a cuckold, or no: but I lye under a difficulty of diſpoſing of a maidenhead.

Wild. There I muſt reſolve you, that caſe I often handle.

Wit. But hear it, I beſeech you, before you decide it.

Wild. That would do well in *Weſtminſter-hall*, I grant you, but in proceedings of this nature, we are always on the plantiff's ſide: let the ſober party ſay what they can to the reaſon of the thing; you are certainly in the right, in pleaſing yourſelf.

Wit. 'Twill come to that, I believe: for you muſt know, ſir, that being under the diſcretion and tyranny of an old aunt——

Wild. You will naturally run away from her.

Wit. And being conſiderable enough, to be followed for my fortune——

Wild. You will certainly be betray'd, and ſold by her—

Wit. To ſome booby of her own breed, who paying

too

too dear for the purchaſe, will undo himſelf, to undo me.

Wild. Come, come, you are now under my care, 'tis my fault, if you miſcarry——

Wit. And mine too, if I do.

Wild. Let me be your truſtee——

Wit. Indeed the woman ſhould cheat the man, as much as ſhe can, before marriage, becauſe, after it, he has a title of cheating her as long as he lives.

Wild. If you can't make over your money, make over your——

Wit. Common conveyances both in our ſex, ſir.

Wild. A maidenhead's a jewel of no value in marriage——

Wit. 'Tis never ſet down indeed, in the particular of a woman's eſtate.

Wild. and therefore leaſt miſs'd by a huſband, of any thing ſhe brings along with her.

Wit. If indeed, by the articles of marriage, a man ſhould covenant for a maidenhead, the woman, in a legal honeſty, ought to ſatisfy the bargain; but the men never mention that, for fear of inflaming the jointure.

Wild. And the women never put 'em upon't.

Wit. Out of a conſcience in their dealings to be ſure, for fear they ſhould not always be able to be as good as their words.

Wild. I ſee, madam, we differ only in our ſexes; and now, if you pleaſe, we will beget a right underſtanding between them too.

Wit. How, ſir!

Wild. I'll ſhew you how: have a care what you do, madam; 'tis a very difficult matter, let me tell you, to refuſe a man handſomely: look you, madam, I would have you make a decent reſiſtance, a little of it enhances the favour, and keeps up the value of our perſon; but too much on't is an undervaluing of mine. Nay, nay, when it once comes to fighting, you often ruin what you wou'd raiſe. Struggling too long, is as much to your diſadvantage, as not ſtruggling at all; and you know 'tis the

the ſame thing to a woman, a man's being indifferent, as his being incapable to oblige her——come, come, enough of this——

Wit. So I ſay too, ſir, the jeſt will go no further, I ſee. [*Unmaſks, he declines into a reſpect to her.*

Wild. Mrs. *Witwoud!* I did not expect to ſee you here, indeed, madam.

Wit. I came upon buſineſs, Mr. *Wilding*, but the temptation of a vizard maſk, and the pleaſure of prating upon ſuch an occaſion, has carried me a little beyond it.

Wild. I am oblig'd to you for a great deal of wit, whatever elſe you deſign me by this viſit.

Wit. Which now you hardly thank me for; ſince 'tis impoſſible for an old acquaintance to anſwer your expectations of a new face.

Wild. To ſhew how I value your viſit, and the regard I have for you, I will give ſome neceſſary orders in the family, to prevent your being ſeen in my lodgings, and wait upon you again. [*Exit.*

Wit. By this extraordinary care of my reputation, I find he has no deſign upon it himſelf: not that I have any deſign upon Mr. *Wilding*; but I am ſorry to find, that every man has not a deſign upon me; for ſince want is the rate of things, I know no real value of reputation, but in regard of common women, who have none; no extraordinary worth of a maidenhead, but as 'tis a temptation to the man to take it away; and the beſt commendation of virtue is, that every man has a deſign to put it to the trial. It vexes me tho', to think he ſhould grow ſo tame upon the ſight of me; not that I believe I had any thing in my face that alter'd him; ſomething did, that's certain; by which I find 'tis not enough for a woman to be handſome, there muſt be a probability of making that handſome woman kind, to make a man in love with her, for no man is in love without ſome encouragement to hope upon: now from one of my character, who have impertinently prated away ſo much of my time, (in ſetting up for a wit, to the ruin of other people's pleaſure, and the loſs of my own) what encou-

ragement

ragement or probability can there be, but that, as I have liv'd a fool, I ought to die repenting, unpity'd, and a maid: if I had dy'd a maid, 'tis but what I deserv'd for laughing so many honest gentlemen off their charitable design of making me otherwise.

Wilding *enters to her.*

Wild. Now, madam, you command me.

Wit. It shall be to do yourself a favour then, Mr. *Wilding*, to rid you of an incumbrance, which lies as heavy upon your pleasures, as a wife upon her husband.

Wild. O defend me from a wife!

Wit. And from a silly mistress, sir, the greater burthen of the two: a wife you may lay aside, but a foolish fond mistress will hang about you like your conscience, to put you in mind of your sins, before you are willing to repent of 'em: you know whom I mean, Mr. *Wilding*; you may trust me with the secret, because I know it already.

Wild. That's one very good reason truly, madam.

Wit. My cousin *Fanny* indeed is very well in her person——

Wild. I'm glad on't.

Wit. Very well to be lik'd I mean.

Wild. I mean so too, madam: tho' I have known a clap mistaken for a maidenhead before now. [*Aside.*

Wit. But she's a girl, and I can guess how very unfit a girl must be to give you any desire beyond undoing her: for I know your temper so well, (now you have satisfy'd the curiosity or vanity of your love) you would not bear the punishment of her company another day, to have the pleasure of it another night, whatever you have said to persuade her to the contrary.

Wild. Fie, madam; think better of me.

Wit. Better nor worse than I do of all the yonng men in town: for I believe you would now resign her to any body else, with as much satisfaction as you got her for yourself: I know most of those matters end in the benefit of the public: and a little of your ill usage (which you will take care to supply her withal) may make her

one

one of the common goods of the town: but that's a ruin I would prevent if I could: therefore, to ſave you the labour of getting rid of her (for that's the only deſign you have now upon her, I'm ſure) I came to ſpare your good-nature the trouble, by making you a very fair offer.

Wild. Let's ſee how reaſonable you can be, in another body's bargain.

Wit. Very reaſonable you ſhall find me, if you will but give over your farther attempts upon her, (which now you may eaſily be perſuaded to I ſuppoſe) and contribute, by your aſſiſtance, to my deſign of marrying her; I will engage myſelf and intereſt (which you know is very conſiderable in my own ſex) to ſerve you in any other woman of my acquaintance.

Wild. Faith, madam, you bid like a chapman.

Wit. Any woman, of any family or condition, the beſt friend I have I'll befriend you in, and thank you into the bargain.

Wild. Stay, let me conſider which——

Wit. But take this advice along with you; raiſe the ſcene of your affairs above the conqueſt of a girl. Some of you ſparks think, if you can but compaſs a maidenhead, though but your taylor's daughter's, you have ſettled a reputation for ever. Why, ſir, there are maidenheads among the women of quality, though not ſo many perhaps; but there are favours of all kinds to be had among 'em; as eaſily brought about, and at the ſame price of pains, that you can purchaſe a chambermaid's.

Wild. I'm glad you tell me ſo.

Wit. Why, there's Mrs. *Newlove* and her couſin *Truegame*, Mrs. *Artiſt*, Mrs. *Dancer*, lady *Smirkit*, lady *Wou'dmore*; and twenty more of your acquaintance and mine, all very fine women to the eye——

Wild. And of reputation to the world.

Wit. Why thoſe very women of reputation to the world have every one of 'em, to my certain knowledge, an intrigue upon their hands, at this very time; for I'm intimate with all of 'em.

Wild.

Wild. I see you are.

Wit. But, as fine as they seem to the eye, Mr. *Wilding*, what with the false complexions of their skins, their hair and eye-brows; with other defects about 'em, which I must not discover of my friends, you know; with their stinking breath in the morning, and other unsavory smells all the day after, they are most of them intolerable to any man that has the use of his nose.

Wild. That I could not believe indeed, but that you tell me so.

Wit. Then there's Mrs. *Faceall*, a very fair woman indeed, and a great fortune: as much in shape as you see her, I have been a godmother to two of her children, and she passes for a very good maid still.

Wild. She pass'd upon me I assure you; for I was very near marrying her myself once.

Wit. Chuse where you please, but I would not advise you to any I have nam'd yet.

Wild. Is there any hopes of Mrs. *Friendall?*

Wit. Little or none, yet a while, I believe: Mr. *Lovemore* has at present engaged her: but there's my cousin *Sightly!* Lord, that I should forget her so long! that I should be so backward in serving a friend! she is the fittest woman in the world for you; the most convenient for your purpose in all the town; easy in her humour and fortune, and able to make her lover so every way; she shall be the woman.

Wild. Would you would make her so.

Wit. I can and will make her so. We shall walk in the *Mall* this morning, if you think fit to be there, it may introduce the acquaintance.

Wild. I'll but dress, and be with you.

Wit. I don't doubt, but in a little time, to give you an opportunity, and the lady an inclination of having it improved, but that must be your business: I'm a-going about mine, to make her a visit. Remember our bargain, sir. [*Exit.*

Wild. I warrant you:

Let whore-masters rejoice; the times must mend,
If every woman has but such a friend. [*Exit.*

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE Ruffle's *Lodgings.*

Enter Ruffle *and Servant.*

Ruf. A Gentleman to ſpeak with me! I am gone to *Banſtead-downs* to the horſe-match.

Serv. There's no match there, ſir, this fortnight.

Ruf. Not this fortnight! I had forgot myſelf: but you may ſay, I went out by five in the morning, and you don't know when I come back. Go, tell him ſo.

Serv. I have told him already you were within, ſir.

Ruf. Pox on him, what manner of man is he? Does he look like a man of buſineſs?

Serv. Not much like a man of buſineſs.

Ruf. No, I warrant you; ſome coxcombly companion or other, that viſits in a morning; and makes other people idle, not to be idle himſelf. But can't you tell what he would have with me?

Serv. I'll aſk him, if you pleaſe.

Ruf. He may be a meſſenger for ought I know.

Serv. I'll bring an account of him. [*Exit.*

Ruf. Would he were a meſſenger: I could be contented to pay the fees, to be ſecur'd in the hands of the government for a fortnight. Well, this guilt is certainly very terrible. The blow I gave *Friendall* was a very ill thing done of me; it lies heavier upon my conſcience this morning, than it did upon his face laſt night.

Servant re-enters.

Serv. His name is captain *Springame:* you know his buſineſs, he ſays.

Ruf. Yes, yes, I gueſs at it: I thought what it wou'd come to. Shew him up to me. [*Exit Servant.* I muſt do as well as I can. [*Strips into his gown and cap.* There comes no good of being too forward upon theſe occaſions——'twill require ſome time to dreſs again: 'tis gaining time at leaſt.

Enter

Enter Springame.

Spring. Good morrow, ſir, I have a ſmall bill upon you here.

Ruf. A challenge I ſuppoſe.

Spring. Payable at ſight, as you will find it.

Ruf. You take me unprovided, you ſee, ſir, to anſwer you at ſight.

Spring. I'll ſtay 'till you dreſs, ſir, if that be all, to have you along with me.

Ruf. Ay, ay, ſir, I'll go along with you; never doubt it, ſir; you ſhan't ſtay long for me; I may dreſs time enough for ſomebody, if that be your buſineſs; I'll do the gentleman reaſon, I warrant him.

Spring. We aſk no more, ſir.

Ruf. You are his friend, I ſuppoſe?

Spring. At your friend's ſervice: I ſerve upon theſe occaſions ſometimes, by way of ſecond, or ſo, when I want employment of my own.

Ruf. Is fighting your employment?

Spring. 'Tis a ſoldier's employment.

Ruf. Why, really, ſir, I beg your pardon, I'm ſorry I muſt diſappoint you; I never make uſe of a ſecond; eſpecially in ſuch a quarrel as this is; where I am ſo much in the wrong already, that I am almoſt unwilling to engage in it any farther myſelf: where is your friend, pray?

Spring. Below in a coach, ſir.

Ruf. O dear ſir, don't let him wait upon me, bring him up, I beſeech you —— and d'ye hear, ſir, I'm loath to juſtify an ill thing, if he is reſolv'd to be ſatisfy'd, why with all my heart, ſir, I'll give him the ſatisfaction of a gentleman, I'll beg his pardon; pray tell him ſo.

[*Exit* Springame.

Ruf. If fighting be his employment, wou'd he were at it, or any where elſe, and I fairly rid of him: I cou'd diſcover now that *Lovemore* ſet me on to affront him; that wou'd throw the quarrel upon *Lovemore:* but then *Lovemore* knows me, and I muſt expect to be ſcurvily us'd

us'd by him if I do: hang baſeneſs; 'tis but begging pardon at laſt.

Springame *enters with Mr.* Friendall.

Spring. A very civil gentleman, brother, he is not the man you took him for.

Ruf. No indeed, ſir, the captain's in the right; I never juſtify an ill thing.

Mr. Fri. 'Tis very well you don't, ſir.

Ruf. I am more a man of honour, I aſſure you, ſir.

Mr. Fri. I ſhall be glad to find you ſo.

Ruf. Sir, you ſhall find me ſo; I ſcorn to do an ill thing as much as any man: I was laſt night in the wrong, as every man is ſometimes; and I'm ſorry for't: what would you have more, ſir?

Mr. Fri. That is not enough, ſir, I muſt have more.

Ruf. Why, I beg your pardon, ſir.

Mr. Fri. What's begging my pardon, ſir, for ſuch a public affront?

Spring. So, now he grows upon him. [*Aſide.*

Mr. Fri. That won't do my buſineſs, begging my pardon: my reputation's at ſtake, and that muſt be ſatisfy'd before you and I part, ſir.

Ruf. Lord, ſir, you are the ſtrangeſt man in the world; you won't oblige me to juſtify an ill thing, wou'd you?

Mr. Fri. Damme, ſir, what do you mean, not to give me ſatisfaction?

Ruf. I mean, ſir, to give you any ſatisfaction in reaſon; but I can't fight againſt my conſcience if I were to be hang'd, ſir, not I.

Spring. No, brother, that's a little too hard upon the gentleman; you ſee his conſcience won't ſuffer him to fight with you.

Mr. Fri. Damn him and his conſcience; he made no conſcience of affronting me.

Spring. But his conſcience has flown in his face ſince, it ſeems.

Mr. Fri. And now he finds it only in his fears.

Spring. Come, come, you may be ſatisfy'd without fighting.

Mr.

Mr. Fri. If you think ſo, brother——

Lovemore *enters and joins with* Friendall.

Love. Pox on't, they're here before me.

Ruf. Captain, I'll beg your friend's pardon, in any public place, at the muſic-meeting, if he pleaſes——

Spring. That's ſtaying too long for't.

Ruf. Or in full *Mall*, before the beaux, or the officers of the guard; or at *Will*'s coffee-houſe before the wits, or in the playhouſe, in the pit, before the vizard-maſks, and orange-wenches; or behind the ſcenes, before the women actors; or any where elſe, but upon the ſtage; and you know, one wou'd not willingly be a jeſt to the upper galleries.

Mr. Fri. You hear what he ſays, Mr. *Lovemore*.

Love. I'll do you juſtice, ſir.

Ruf. If none of theſe offers will ſerve his turn,

[*Seeing* Lovemore *he takes heart a*

Sir, if your friend will be ſatisfy'd with nothing but extremities, let him look to himſelf, let what will be the conſequence; I muſt do as well as I can with him.

Love. So, he has ſeen me I find. [*Aſide.*

Spring. What the devil he won't fight at laſt ſure. [*Aſide.*

Ruf. Sir, your moſt humble ſervant; you gueſs theſe gentlemen's buſineſs I ſuppoſe: I have offer'd 'em any ſatisfaction in reaſon: but taking me, as you ſee, ſir, at a diſadvantage, two to one, nothing wou'd content 'em without expoſing myſelf, as a raſcal, to all the town, ſir; now, ſir, you are more a gentleman I know, and they ſhall be damn'd before I give 'em any other ſatisfaction, now I have a man of honour to ſtand by me.

Love. Gentlemen, I came to reconcile you if I can: what ſay you?

Spring. He offer'd juſt now to beg my brother's pardon in the playhouſe.

Ruf. Make your beſt on't; I did ſo.

Mr. Fri. Then let it be to-night in the ſide-box, before the ladies——

Ruf. With all my heart, ſir.

Mr. Fri. For they are the part of the town that a man of

of pleasure should secure a reputation withal. Your servant sir. *Lovemore*, your humble servant.

[Friendall *and* Springame *go out*.

Love. And hast thou begg'd his pardon?

Ruf. And glad to come off so: I was never so put to't, to bring myself off a quarrel before: it had been impossible, if the captain had not done a good office between us; but I bore up as soon as I saw you.

Love. But then 'twas too late. You had sneakingly begg'd his pardon before: if you had sent to me at first, I wou'd have brought you off cleverly: suppose he had carry'd you behind *Southampton* house, which he never intended, 'twas but falling down, or dropping your sword, when you came there, to have sav'd all: but now you have ruin'd your own reputation, and my design upon him for ever.

Ruf What cou'd I do? He not only sent me a challenge, but came himself to carry me along with him.

Love. How? Send you a challenge, and come with it himself! that's something odd; pray, let's see the challenge.

Ruf. There 'tis; make your best on't; the paper will make admirable crackers for a lord mayor's show, every word in't is as hot as gun-powder; I am glad I am rid on't. [*Exit*.

Love. If this be *Friendall*'s stile, 'tis mightily mended of late: I have a note of his about me upon *Child*, for money won at play: I'll compare 'em——'Tis not his had neither——Nay then there's more in't——This may be a stratagem of his wife's——I've seen her hand, and think this very near it: it must be so: but then *Friendall*'s coming for satisfaction, is an argument he might send this challenge: but coming at the same time with it himself, is an argument against him, that he knew nothing of the matter. For tho' he delivers his love-letters, he wou'd hardly deliver his challenges himself: and for his coming here, *Springame* might put him upon't, from a reasonable probability that this fellow was a rascal. I don't know what to fix upon: this challenge will be of use to me with the lady: I'll take it for granted that she writ it, and proceed upon it accordingly. [*Exit*.

SCENE *changes to St.* James's Park.

Enter Mr. Friendall, Springame, *Mrs.* Friendall, *and Mrs.* Teazall.

Spring. Brother, if you have no farther ſervice for me, I muſt think of employing myſelf, my walk lies another way. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fri. I'm glad you're rid of this buſineſs ſo handſomely Mr. *Friendall*, and that Mr. *Lovemore* was by at his begging your pardon.

Mr. Fri. When I undertake things of this kind, I always go thro' with 'em.

Mrs. Fri. This is very well over, and I hope you will take care to keep out of 'em for the future.

Mr. Fri. Every man has the misfortune of 'em ſometimes, madam.

Mrs. Fri. But 'tis a prudent man's part to keep out of the occaſion of 'em: and, in order to't, Mr. *Friendall*, I cou'd wiſh you wou'd not make your houſe, as you daily do, one of the public places of the town.

Teaz. She's in the right on't indeed, Mr. *Friendall*; you are very happy in the diſcretion of a good lady, if you know when you're well; there are very few women wou'd quarrel with your good nature in this point, ſir; but ſhe has too great a regard to her own and your reputation, you ſee, not to apprehend the malice of ill tongues upon the liberties you allow in your family; the graver part of your friends take notice of it already, and let me tell you, ſir, are extremely concern'd.

Mr. Fri. That they are paſt the pleaſures of good company themſelves: why really, madam, I believe it: but they may ſay what they will, I ſhall do what I pleaſe: I live to myſelf, and not to the whimſical humour of the graver part of my friends, and ſo you may tell 'em, good madam, from your humble ſervant. [*Going.*

Mrs. Fri. You wont't leave us, Mr. *Friendall?*

Mr. Fri. I'll go home with you like a good huſband, madam: but no man of faſhion, you know, walks with his wife; beſides, there's a noble lord I muſt walk with. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fri. Any thing to be rid of my company.

Teaz. Why, how have the men, at this rate, the impudence to think the women ſhould not cukold 'em! if I had ſuch a huſband, as old as I am, a'my conſcience, I believe, I ſhou'd uſe him as he deſerv'd: but that's ſome comfort, uſe him as you pleaſe, nobody will think you wrong him; and let me tell you, 'tis a great thing to have the town on one's ſide.

Mrs. Fri. I'll keep 'em ſo, if I can.

Teaz. Nay, faith and troth, you have given him fair warning; if he won't take it, he muſt anſwer himſelf for all the miſcarriages you can be guilty of in your conduct hereafter.

Mrs. Fri. There's ſomething more in that, Mr. *Teazall.* [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lovemore *and* Wellvile *following 'em.*

Well. There's your Mrs. *Friendall* before us: I honour her character as much as I deſpiſe her huſband's.

Love. Tho' he has 'ſcap'd the public diſcovery, if ſhe knows him to be a coward, it does my buſineſs ſtill as well.

Well. If I did not think him one, I wou'd put him to a trial he ſhou'd not ſo eaſily get clear off, for putting a note into Mrs. *Sightly*'s hand at the muſic-meeting.

Love. How!

Well. But I owe him a good turn for it.

Love. It comes into my head, and you ſhall pay him the good turn: what if you put Mrs. *Sightly* upon telling his wife of it?

Well. Ha!

Love. You ought to do it.

Well. I think ſo too myſelf; and you may be ſatisfy'd I'll do it; more out of a regard to the woman I value ſo much, than any deſign of promoting your cuckolding the fool.

Love. Good grave ſir, the plot is never the worſe, I hope, for carrying your friend's intereſt along with the ladies.

Well. Make your beſt uſe on't, *Lovemore,* I'm contented we ſhou'd thrive together. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs. Sightly *and* Witwoud *after 'em.*

Wit. You are mightily injur'd indeed, madam, to be perſuaded to come abroad, ſo much to your diſadvantage, ſuch a delicate morning as this is, ſo much againſt your inclinations: but you'll know your int'reſt better, in a little time, and me for your friend, I ſuppoſe, when you find the benefit of it.

Sight. Nay, couſin, the injury may be forgiven, for the pleaſure of the walk, at this time of the year.

Wit. Why, the very walk is to be lik'd, tho' there were nobody in it to like us: but there's a great deal of good company in the Mall, and I warrant you, we'll have our ſhare of the commendation of the place, in ſpight of freſher faces: you are ſure of your part of it already.

Sight. How ſo, good Mrs. *Witwoud?*

Wit. Why, good Mrs. *Sightly*, there's Mr. *Wellvile* before you.

Sight. My Platonic lover as you call him.

Wit. And as you find him.

Sight. I think him very much my friend.

Wit. Very much your friend! I grant you indeed, every woman, that is not wholly inſenſible, (and one would not be thought inſenſible you know) every woman ought to have a Platonic paſſion for one man or other: but a Platonic lover in a man! is——

Sight. What pray?

Wit. Why, he is a very unmannerly fellow; he is not what he ſhould be, that's certain: as for the matter of reſpect, which we keep ſuch a clatter about, and ſeem to value ſo much in the men, all that I know of it is, that if any man pretended to follow and like me, I ſhould never believe what he ſaid, if he did not do ſomething to convince me: I ſhould think he affronted me extremely, if upon the firſt handſome occaſion, he did not offer me every thing in his power.

Sight. How couſin!

Wit. I hate a blockhead that will never give a woman a reputable occaſion of refuſing him: 'tis one of the beſt compliments a lover can make his miſtreſs's pride, and I never knew any man that did his buſineſs without it.

Sight.

Sight. Why *Witwoud*, thou art mad ſure.

Wit. Not for your Mr. *Wellvile*; if I were in your place, I ſhould have ſomething the better opinion of him, if he would have a worſe opinion of me: but between you and me, I ſhould not like him for a lover.

Sight. He does not pretend to be one.

Wit. Who's here? *Wilding* and *Courtall* behind us? That *Wilding*, couſin, is a very pretty gentleman.

Sight. And *Courtall* too, very well.

Wit. I muſt bring you acquainted with *Wilding*.

Sight. No more acquaintance, good *Witwoud*.

Wit. For his diſcretion and conduct, his good behaviour, and all that, *Wellvile* is his acquaintance, and will anſwer for: but his agreeable, eaſy wit, and good humour, you may take upon my word: you'll thank me when you know him. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Wilding *and* Courtall.

Wild. She's a woman of her word: you ſee ſhe has brought Mrs. *Sightly* along with her.

Court. I never doubted it: ſhe'll carry her to ſupper in a night or two: ſhe's never the worſe bawd, I hope, for being a gentlewoman.

Wild. A good family indeed gives a countenance to the profeſſion; and a reputation is neceſſary to carry on the credit of a trade.

Court. Here's *Wellvile* juſt behind us.

Wild. Pr'ythee ſtay with him: I'll tell you how I thrive. [*Exit.*

Enter Wellvile.

Well. Good morrow Mr. *Courtall*.

Court. O ſir, yours.

Well. Was not that *Wilding* left you?

Court. He's in his employment, ſir, very buſy.

Well. In purſuit of the women I know: it hardly anſwers the expence I doubt.

Court. You have no reaſon to ſay ſo: there's a lady before us of your acquaintance, Mrs. *Sightly* by name, of another opinion: I ſuppoſe ſhe thinks ſuch an aſſurance as his, in coming to the point, is more to the nature of the thing, than all your ceremony and reſpect.

Well. Mrs. *Sightly!*

Court. She, ſir, the very ſame: I could tell you a ſecret, *Wellvile*; but you are one of thoſe fellows, that hate another man ſhould lye with a woman, tho' you never attempt her yourſelf: I confeſs I am ſomething of your mind: I think enjoyment the dull part of an intrigue, and therefore I give it over, when I ſee the lady in earneſt.

Well. But the ſecret, *Courtall.*

Court. Why faith, *Wellvile*, if you have temper to manage it, the ſecret may be of uſe to you: *Wilding*, you know, never debauches a woman, only for himſelf; where he viſits, in a little time, every man may be receiv'd in his turn. You muſt know, 'twas *Witwoud* put him upon Mrs. Sightly; ſhe knew what ſhe did I ſuppoſe, and has promis'd him a good office in her way: make your advantage of what I tell you; but not a ſyllable to any one.

Enter Springame.

Spring. O *Courtall!* here are a couple of vizard-maſks have ſet upon me in the next walk, and I wanted thee to take one of 'em off my hands.

Court. I'll ſtand by you, my noble captain. [*Exeunt.*

Well. (*ſolus*) I'll think no more on't, 'tis impoſſible: what's impoſſible? nothing's impoſſible to a woman: we judge but on the outſide of that ſex; and know not what they can, nor what they do, more than they pleaſe to ſhew us. I have known Mrs. *Sightly* theſe ſeven years——known her, I mean, I have ſeen her, obſerv'd her, follow'd her: may be there's no knowing a woman: but in all that time, I never found a freedom that allowed me any encouragement beyond a friend——May be I have been wanting to myſelf——but then ſhe would not throw herſelf away upon a common lover; that's not probable: if ſhe had been affectedly reſerv'd, I wou'd ſuſpect the devil in her heart had ſtampt the ſign of virtue in her looks, that ſhe might cheat the world, and ſin more cloſe. But ſhe is open in her carriage, eaſy, clear of thoſe arts that have made luſt a trade——Perhaps that

openneſs

openness may be design——'tis easy to raise doubts—— and still she may be——I won't think she can——'till I know more: but *Witwoud* is, I know her, every thing that's mischievous; abandon'd and undone; undone herself, she wou'd undo the sex: she is to bawd for *Wilding*: I know her bad enough for any trade. But bawds have some good nature, and procure pleasure for pay: *Witwoud* has baser ends, a general ruin upon all her friends. [*Several pass over the stage, Mr.* Friendall *slighted by 'em, one after another.*

1 *Lord.* I have a little business at present; but I shall see you at the play. [*Exit.*

Mr. Fri. In the king's box, my lord—— My dear lord, I am your humble servant. [*To another.*

2 *Lord.* Another time, good Mr. *Friendall*; you see I'm engag'd. [*Exit.*

Mr. Fri. A pox o'their engagements: a man can't make one among 'em. O my most noble lord!

3 *Lord.* I know you will upbraid me, Mr. *Friendall*; but I'll recover your opinion, and come and dine with you. Let's have *Jock Dryden* and *Will Wycherly*, as you call 'em: some of these days we'll be very witty together: but now I am your servant. [*Exit.*

Mr. Fri. This is a very unfortunate morning with me: I have not walk'd one turn with a lord since I came in: I see I must take up with the men of wit to-day——O Mr. *Wellvile!*

Well. Don't let me keep you from better company.

Mr. Fri. Faith, sir, I prefer a man of wit to a man of of quality at any time.

Well. If she thinks *Witwoud* her friend after this, 'tis a sign she's pleas'd with it, and there's an end on't.

Mr. Fri. Why, *Wellvile*, thou art *cogitabund*, as a man may say; thy head is running upon thy poetry.

Well. I beg your pardon, sir, I did not mind you indeed. Your servant, Mr. *Wilding*——

Wilding *enters to 'em.*

Mr. Fri. Wilding, yours. But *Wellvile*, pr'ythee, what is't to be? A song? a tribute to the whole sex? or

a particular ſacrifice? or is't a libel upon the court? ha! (w'll keep your counſel) or a lampoon upon the town? What, I am a great honourer and humble ſervant of the Muſes myſelf——

Well. A very favourite of 'em, I hear ſir.

Mr. Fri. I ſometimes ſcribble indeed for my diverſion——

Wild. And the diverſion of the ladies, Mr. *Friendall*—

Well. And the diverſion of the town, Mr. *Friendall.*

Mr. Fri. Why, faith gentlemen, poetry is a very pretty amuſement, and, in the way of intrigue or ſo, among the better rank of people, I have known a paper of verſes go farther with a lady in the purchaſe of a favour, than a preſent of fifty pounds would have done.

Wild. O, ſir, 'tis the only way of purchaſing a woman that is not to be bought.

Mr. Fri. But, *Wildvile*, pr'ythee communicate, man.

Well. Why, if you will have it, I have a deſign upon a play.

Mr. Fri Gad ſo, let me write a ſcene in it; I have a thouſand times had it in my head, but never could bring it about to write a play yet.

Wild. No, no; you had it not in your head, ſir.

Mr. Fri. I vow to gad, but I have then twenty times, I'm confident; but one thing or other always kick'd it out again: but I promiſe you I'll write a ſcene for you.

Wild. Before you know the ſubject?

Mr. Fri. Pr'ythee, what is't? But be what it will, here's my hand upon't, I'll write it for you.

Well. You muſt know then, ſir, I am ſcandaliz'd extremely to ſee the women upon the ſtage make cuckolds at that inſatiable rate they do in all our modern comedies; without any other reaſon from the poets, but, becauſe a man is married he muſt be a cuckold: now, ſir, I think, the women are moſt unconſcionably injur'd by this general ſcandal upon their ſex; therefore to do 'em what ſervice I can in their vindication I deſign to write a play, and call it——

Mr. Fri. Ay, what, I beſeech you? I love to know the name of a new play.

Well. The Wives Excuſe; or, Cuckolds make Themſelves.

Mr.

Mr. Fri. A very pretty name faith and troth; and very like to be popular among the women.

Wild. And true among the men.

Mr. Fri. But what characters have you?

Well. What characters? why I design to shew a fine young woman marry'd to an impertinent, nonsensical, silly, intriguing, cowardly, good-for-nothing coxcomb.

Wild. This blockhead does not know his own picture. [*Aside.*

Mr. Fri. Well, and how? She must make him a cuckold I suppose.

Well. 'Twas that I was thinking on when you came to me.

Mr. Fri. O, yes, you must make him a cuckold.

Wild. By all means a cuckold.

Mr. Fri. For such a character, gentlemen, will vindicate a wife in any thing she can do to him. He must be a cuckold.

Well. I am satisfied he ought to be a cuckold; and indeed, if the lady would take my advice, she should make him a cuckold.

Mr. Fri. She'll hear reason I warrant her.

Well. I have not yet determin'd how to dispose of her. But in regard to the ladies, I believe I shall make her honest at last.

Mr. Fri. I think the ladies ought to take it very ill of you if you do: but if she proves honest to the last, that's certain, 'tis more than the fellow deserves. A very pretty character this, faith and troth. [*To* Wilding.

Wild. And very well known in this town.

Mr. Fri. Gad, I believe I can help you to a great many hints, that may be very serviceable to you.

Well. I design to make use of you; we, who write plays, must sometimes be beholden to our friends. But more of this at leisure.

Mr. Fri. Will you walk, gentlemen, the ladies are before us.

Well. I have a little business with *Wilding.* We'll follow you. [*Exit* Friendall.

Wild. Business with me, *Wellvile?*

Well. About a fair lady, I'll tell you as we walk.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Lovemore *with Mrs.* Friendall, *Mrs.* Sightly, *Mrs.* Witwoud, *and Mrs.* Teazall.

Teaz. Nay, indeed, Mr. *Lovemore*, as matters are manag'd between the men and women of the town, 'tis no less a blessing for a lady to have a husband that will but so much as offer to fight for her and her honour, than 'tis for a husband to have a lady that has any honour to defend; there's such a depravity in matrimony, on both sides now-a days.

Sight. Why, good madam, is it such a business, for a man to offer to fight for his wife?

Wit. All that I know is, the man that would not fight for me, should do nothing else for me.

Teaz. You'll have your wit, let who's will blush for't.

Love. As you say, madam, [*To Mrs.* Teazall.] a man of honour is a great blessing in a husband; such as Mr. *Friendall* has shewn himself to be. And here's a lady will value the blessing as it deserves.

Mrs. Fri. I must indeed despise him in my thoughts.
[*Aside.*

Wit. Fulsome and foolish! let's hear no more on't: they don't think this can blind us. [*Walking off with* Sightly.

Love. If you were not inclin'd to it before, madam, this last behaviour of his would engage you to value such a blessing as you ought.

Mrs. Fri. My duty would engage me——what does he mean by this?

Wit. Cousin *Teazall*, your opinion pray.

Love. I have something to tell you, madam, if you would but allow me; this is no place.

Mrs. Fri. You'll find a time I warrant you. Ladies, the Mall begins to thin. [*Goes to 'em.*

Wellvile *and* Wilding *coming forward.*

Wild. Well, sir, since you declare yourself in love with the

the lady, and I am not, I promiſe you, and you may truſt me, I'll never follow her more.

Will. I do truſt, and thank you for the promiſe. Ladies your ſervant. [*He addreſſes to* Sightly.

Wit. O! he's come at laſt. [Wilding *to* Witwoud. There's nothing to be done here; you've outſtaid your time; but we'll call at the Chocolate-houſe in St. *Alban-ſtreet*, as we go home; you may meet us there by accident, you know.

Wild. If I were to be hang'd now, I muſt meet 'em there; though I have given my word to the contrary.

Teaz. Is that the filthy fellow?

Wit. That's *Wilding*, madam.

Teaz. I ſee there's no knowing a whore maſter by his face; he looks like a modeſt, civil gentleman.

Well. Your friend, Mrs. *Witwoud*, madam, [*To* Sightly.] may be of that good-natur'd opinion that *Lovemore* is familiar with the huſband, only to be more familiar with the wife. But you muſt be cautious of what you ſay, for fear we turn the ſcandal upon you.

Sight. Upon me, Mr. *Wellvile?*

Well. Pardon me, madam, I have the freedom of a friend: but Mr. *Friendall* declares he is in love with you; and after that, the good-natur'd town (whatever they believe) will go near to ſay, that your familiarity with his wife may be in order to the huſband.

Sight. Contemptible! ſure nobody would think ſo?

Well. 'Tis an ill natur'd age to handſome women, madam.

Sight. Muſt I ſuffer becauſe he's a fool?

Well. You may ſuffer becauſe he's a fool.

Sight. This is not only to be accountable for our own conduct, but to anſwer for all the indiſcretion of the men's.

Well. You muſt madam, for thoſe men's you allow to be ſo near you.

Sight. It would be but an ungrateful piece of news to Mrs. *Friendall*, if I ſhould be ſerious enough to tell her of it.

Well. 'Twould be more ungrateful to her if any body else did; and would go near to make you serious, if another should tell her for you.

Sight. But who can tell? It may be the cause of a breach between 'em.

Well. Nay, madam, if it be considerable enough to make a breach in marriage, you may be sure 'twill make a breach in friendship; and how much that will be to the advantage of your reputation upon such an occasion—

Sight. I am convinc'd you are my friend, Mr. *Wellvile*, and thank you for this care of me.

[*They mingle with* Lovemore, *Mrs.* Friendall, *and the rest.*

Wit. This is the aunt would ha' been upon your bones, I assure you, if I had not deliver'd you.

Wild. How shall I do to appease her?

Wit. There's but one way now to please her. You must know she has been in her time, like other women, in at most of the pleasures of this town; but being too passionate a lover of the sport, she has been——a bubble at all games: and having now nothing to lose but her money, she declares for *lanterelow*, and is contented to be only cheated at cards.

Mr. Friendall *with* Springame *and* Courtall.

Mr. Fri. Why, what do you think, ladies? these gentlemen here, in spight of the temptation of so much good company, refuse to dine with me.

Spring. O madam! are you there? [*To* Witwoud.

Court. Your brother has seduced me, madam.

[*To Mrs.* Fri.

Spring. We'll visit you at night, ladies, in masquerade; when the privilege of a vizard will allow us a conversation, out of your forms, and more to our humour a great deal, ladies. [*Exeunt* Spring. *and* Court.

Mr. Fri. Lovemore, Wellvile, Wilding—you'll follow us?

Love. We won't fail you, sir.

[*Mr.* Friendall *goes out with the ladies.*

Wit.

Wit. St. *Alban-ſtreet*——

Wild. Will tell you more of this.

Well. *Wilding*, you'll take another turn with us?

Wild. Faith, no, I'm tir'd: we ſhall meet at *Friendall*'s all. [*Exit.*

Well. At *Friendall*'s be it then;
Where the kind huſband welcomes every gueſt.

Love. He but invites, his wife muſt make the feaſt.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE *Mr.* Friendall's *Houſe.*

All the company enter after dinner.

Love. MR. *Friendall*, you have the beſt wines, and the greateſt choice of any man in town.

Mr. Fri. There's an elegance in eating and drinking, gentlemen, as well as in writing.

Well. Or your ſtyle wou'd never go down. [*Aſide.*

Mr. Fri. How did you like the *Lucina* I gave you, the *Gallicia*, the *Mountain-Alicant?* You taſte the ſun in them perfectly, gentlemen.

Wild. O plainly, ſir!

Mr. Fri. Then the *Arcina*, the *Ranebio*, and the *Peralta*, the *Carcavelis*, the *Lacrymæ*, the *Schiveas*, the *Zephalonia*, the *Montalchyno*, with all the *Muſchatellos*, and to conclude, my ſingle bottle of *Tokay*.

Love. Admirable all, ſir.

Mr. Fri. A friend of mine, that brought the *Tokay* from *Buda*, aſſures me, the ſtones of all thoſe grapes are gold.

Well. That makes the wine ſo ſcarce.

Mr. Fri. Nay, not unlikely: but of all the wines of all the climates under the ſun——

Wild.

Wild. Give me the *Greek.*

Mr. Fri. O, I abominate——

Well. The language, but not the wines; you may relish them without it.

Mr. Fri. Ay, that may be; but of all the wines, Pagan, or Christian, in the world, I think the *Borachio* the noblest.

Well. 'Tis of the roughest kind indeed, of beasts; wou'd he were in the skin of one of 'em.

Wild. But your vine de congress, Mr. *Friendall*——

Mr. Fri. True; but 'tis a *Dutch* wine, and grows in the province of *Zealand*, I have drank it upon the place.

Wild. But, Mr. *Friendall*, pray in all your variety and interest among your friends in the city, have you not sometimes met with such a wine as the vine de Shorneck!

Mr. Fri. Vine de Shorneck? yes, I have drank of it at *Thompson*'s, and was the first that took notice of it; but 'tis a prohibited *French* wine, and I have too great an acquaintance with the members of parliament, not to drink according to law.

Wild. Yours is very good snuff, Mr. *Friendall.*

Mr. Fri. Yes, truly, I think 'tis pretty good powder.

Wild. Pray your opinion of mine, you are a critic.

Mr. Fri. This is *Havanah* indeed; but then 'tis wash'd: give me your dry powders, they never lose their scent: besides, yours is made of the leaves of the tobacco——

Well. Why, what the devil's yours?

Mr. Fri. Mine, sir, is right *Palillio*, made of the fibres, the spirituous part of the plant; there's not a pinch of it out of my box in *England*; 'twas made I assure you to the palate of his most Catholic majesty, and sent me by a great don of *Spain*, that's in his prince's particular pleasures. [*Goes to the women.*

Well. And his, it seems, lie in his nose.

Mr. Fri. Ladies, what say you to the fresco of the garden? We'll drink our tea upon the mount, and be the envy of the neighbourhood.

Wit. O delicately thought upon!

Mr. Fri. Madam, which tea shall we have?

Mrs. Fri. Which the company pleases, Mr. *Friendall.*

Mr.

Mr. Fri. The plain *Canton*, the *Nanquin*, the *Bohea*, the *Lantheroon*, the *Sunloe*, or which? ha!

Well. Have you any of the *Non Amo Te?*

Mr. Fri. Faith, no, sir, there came but little of it over this year; but I am promis'd a whole canister by a friend of a considerable interest in the committee.

Love. Then the *Bohea*, sir, the *Bohea* will do our business.

Mr. Fri. My *Bohea*, at the best hand too, cost me ten pound a pound, but I have a tea with a damn'd heathenish hard name, that I think I was very much befriended in at an *Indian* house in the city, if you please, we'll have some of that.

Mrs. Fri. 'Tis in my cabinet, Mr. *Friendall*, I must order it myself for you. [*Goes out.*

Mr. Fri. That madam must make the compliment the greater to the company; *allons*, you know the way, I wait upon you. [*All go out but* Lovemore.

Love. This way she must come, she can't avoid me, thanks to the honest husband. [*Mrs.* Friendall *returns.*

Mrs. Fri. Are you one of the gentlemen that love the tea with a hard name?

Love. Faith, madam, I must love any thing that gives me an opportunity——

Mrs. Fri. With any woman that has a mind to improve it.

Love. Of adoring you.

Mrs. Fri. Me, Mr. *Lovemore!* I was going before, but now you drive me.

Love. Stay, this violence, if you can call it violence, on my knees, excuses you to all your female forms; nay, to yourself, severer than your form, if you should stay and hear me.

Mrs. Fri. Well, what's the matter?

Love. Every thing is matter of your praise, the subject of fresh wonder: your beauty made to tire the painter's art, your wit to strike the poet's envy dumb.

Mrs. Fri. Are you turn'd poet too?

Love. Indeed you can inspire me——

Mrs. Fri. With the spirit of scandal I may, a small matter

matter conjures up a lampoon against the women—— But to the purpose, sir; you pretend business with me, and have insinuated a great deal of pains all this day to get an occasion of speaking to me in private; which now, by Mr. *Friendall*'s assistance, you think you have ingeniously secur'd: why, sir, after all, I know no business between us that is to be carry'd on, by my being alone with you.

Love. I'm sorry for that indeed, madam.

Mrs. Fri. Suppose, Mr. *Lovemore*, a man shou'd hit you a box on the ear.

Love. Only suppose it, good madam.

Mrs. Fri. Why, sir, any man that's brute enough may do it; tho' that brute should beg your pardon never so publicly for the wrong, you wou'd never heartily forgive him for pitching upon you.

Love. Not heartily I believe indeed.

Mrs. Fri. Why, very well: you keep me here against my will, against all rules of decency to me, my sex, and character; the worst of wrongs; yet you will think it hard to be condemn'd, or hated, for your light opinion of me, that first encourag'd you to this design.

Love. Hated for loving you!

Mrs. Fri. Ay, there's the business: who wou'd not stay to see her worshipper upon his knees, thus prais'd and ador'd? her beauty made to tire the painter's art, her wit to strike the poet's envy dumb; and all deliver'd in such a dying tone, no lady can out-live it. Mr. *Lovemore*, you might have known me better, than to imagine your sly flattery could softly sing me into a consent to any thing my virtue had abhorr'd. But how have I behav'd myself? what have I done to deserve this? what encouragement have I given you?

Love. A lover makes his hopes.

Mrs. Fri. Perhaps 'tis from the general encouragement of being a married woman, supported on your side by that honourable opinion of our sex, that because some women abuse their husbands, every woman may. I grant you indeed, the custom of *England* has been very prevailing in that point; and I must own to you an ill

husband is a great provocation to a wife, when she has a mind to believe as ill of him as she can.

Love. How if the wife believe too well of him?

Mrs. Fri. Why then the folly's hers: for my part, I have known Mr. *Friendall* too long, not to know justly what he deserves; I won't justify his faults, but because he does not take that care of me he shou'd, must not I have that regard to myself I ought? what I do is for my own sake: nay what is past, which, by your hints, I know you do suspect, I own I did it; not for the commendation of your wit, nor as a debt to him, but to myself, foreseeing a long life of infamy, which in his follies I was married to; and therefore sav'd myself by saving him.

Love. Your conduct every way is excellent, but there it was a master-piece indeed, and worthy admiration.

Mrs. Fri. And wou'd you have me lose that character, so worthy your admiration, which, even you, an enemy, must praise, when you wou'd ruin? no; what I've done to raise this character: may be an argument I will do more to heighten it, to the last act of life.

Love. And all for the reward of being thought too good a wife to such a husband.

Mrs. Fri. How! you know him then?

Love. You and I know him.

Mrs. Fri. Fit to bear a wrong? is that the reason of your wronging him? I want but that; O let me but believe you injure him, because you know you may, and attempt me, because you think it safe; and I will scorn you low, as you do him: you say you know him: now, sir, I know you, you, and your practices against us both: you have encourag'd all that has been done, exposing him, only to ruin me. 'Tis necessary to believe as ill of you as I can: and for the future, 'till you clear yourself——

Love. I can clear myself.

Mrs. Fri. I'll think you capable of every thing; of any baseness to advance your ends; so leave you to your triumph. [*Going.*

Love. Madam, stay, I must be justify'd: this challenge here

here has taught me all I know; made me ſuſpect who writ it, and preſume all I have ſaid to you.

Mrs. Fri. Where had you it?

Love. *Ruffle* gave it me. I hope you may forgive my knowing it, ſince by reſigning it into your hands, I give you up the only evidence that can riſe up againſt him: ſuch a piece of news, madam, wou'd have been welcome enough to the ill-nature of the town; and I might have had my ends in ſuch a report, had I encourag'd the expoſing him; but when I ſaw how near you were concern'd, I had no other pleaſure but the thought of ſerving you; if I have ſerv'd you, I am over paid; if not, I muſt ſerve on: for I but live to ſerve you.

Mrs. Fri. My employment calls upon me; are not you for tea?

Two footmen enter with a ſervice of tea, and go out with Mrs. Friendall.

Love. I find I am reſtored, but I was reduc'd to the neceſſity of a lie to come into favour again; but that's a neceſſity that every man of honour muſt ſubmit to ſometimes, that has any thing to manage with the women: for a lover, that never ſpeaks more than the truth, is never believ'd to be a lover: and he that won't lie to his miſtreſs, will hardly lye with her: ſo let his honeſty reward him; the lady won't, I dare ſay for her. There muſt be a cheat upon the ſenſe ſometimes, to make a perfect pleaſure to the ſoul: for if the women did but always know what really we are; we ſhou'd not ſo often know ſo much of them as we do: but 'tis their own faults; they know we can't live without 'em, and therefore aſk more of us than we have honeſtly to give for the purchaſe. So, very often, they put us upon diſſimulation, flattery, and falſe love, to come up to their price. Mrs. *Friendall* went away a little abruptly: I'm glad ſhe did: for that methinks confeſſes an obligation which ſhe has not yet in her power to return.

Enter Wellvile *to him.*

Well. *Lovemore*, your plot begins to thrive: I left Mrs. *Sightly*

Sightly telling Mrs. *Friendall* every thing between her and Mr. *Friendall*: I thought fit to acquaint you with it, that you might be prepar'd: you know best what use to turn it to: my business is with Mrs. *Sightly*.

Love. I thank you for the news: they're coming this way, I wou'd not have 'em see us: I must hover here.

[*Exeunt* Lov. *and* Wellv.

Enter Mrs. Friendall *and Mrs.* Sightly.

Mrs. Fri. I cou'd have believ'd it.

Sight. I am sorry you have reason to believe it upon my account: indeed, I was unwilling to believe it; I suffer'd it as long as I cou'd; but finding no end of this persecution——

Mrs. Fri. You have us'd me like a friend, and I thank you——his note since dinner desires you wou'd meet him at seven, at *Rosamond*'s pond: you can't be so hard-hearted to disappoint him?

Sight. If you have a mind to have a plainer proof of his treachery——

Mrs. Fri. The proof is plain enough: you say it: besides he has given it under his hand here; and I believe the gentleman, tho' you won't.

Sight. Or if you wou'd, let him know you have discover'd him, and upbraid him with his baseness before me—

Mrs. Fri. That wou'd but harden him, or make him vain, by shewing a concern for him.

Sight. If you have any curiosity to be satisfy'd, I'll go with you to the place appointed.

Mrs. Fri. I wou'd not have him know either of us.

Sight. Then we must have a man to secure us.

Mrs. Fri. We may trust your friend Mr. *Wellvile*.

Sight. Mr. *Friendall*, you must know, thinks him in love with me; so being a rival, may make him avoid us: but Mr. *Lovemore* will do as well.

Mrs. Fri. I wou'd not have him know it.

Sight. He knows it already; I made no secret of it, and Mr. *Wellvile* told it him.

Mrs. Fri. Then he, or any one——

Enter

Enter Lovemore *to 'em.*

Sight. O! here he comes; Mr. *Lovemore*, we muſt employ you this afternoon.

Love. To ſerve myſelf, in waiting upon you.

The reſt of the company enter to them.

Teaz. Well, here's ſuch a clutter to get you to cards: you have drank your tea: what will you do next, I trow?

Wit. Why take a napp, or ſmoak a pipe, any body that has a mind to be private.

Teaz. Wou'd I had one civilly in a corner.

Mr. Fri. Get the cards in the drawing-room. [*To a ſerv.*

Wit. Not till we have the ſong, Mr. *Friendall*, you promis'd us.

Mr. Fri. Why, faith, I was forc'd to ſet it myſelf: I don't know how you'll like it with my voice; but faith and troth, I believe the maſters of the muſic-meeting, may ſet their own words, for any trouble I ſhall give 'em for the future about mine.

Wild. Nay, then you ruin 'em.

Wit. The ſong, the ſong, ſir.

SONG, written by a man of quality.

I.

SAY, cruel Amoret, *how long*
In billet-doux, and humble ſong,
Shall poor Alexis *woo?*
If neither writing, ſighing, dying,
Reduce you to a ſoft complying:
O! when will you come to?

II.

Full thirteen moons are now paſt o'er,
Since firſt thoſe ſtars I did adore,
That ſet my heart on fire:
The conſcious play-houſe, parks, and court,
Have ſeen my ſufferings made your ſport:
Yet am I ne'er the nigher.

III.

III.

A faithful lover ſhou'd deſerve
A better fate than thus to ſtarve
In ſight of ſuch a feaſt:
But oh! if you'll not think it fit,
Your hungry ſlave ſhou'd taſte one bit;
Give ſome kind looks at leaſt.

Wild. Admirable well.——

Wit. Sett and ſung, ſir.

Love. A gentleman does theſe things always beſt.

Wild. When he has a genius.

Mr. Fri. Ay, ſir, he muſt have a genius: there's no being a maſter of any thing without a genius.

Mrs. Fri. Mrs. *Teazall*, Pam wants you in the next room. [*Scene draws, ſhews tables and cards.*

Teaz. I'll make the more of him, when I get him into my hands.

Well. I have ſomething to tell you, worth more than the cards can win for you.

Mr. Fri. Who's for come t

Love. I am your man, madam.

Mrs. Fri. You play too deep for me.

Wit. Couſin, you'll make one of us?

Sight. I go your halves, if you pleaſe, I don't care for playing myſelf. [*They go in to play. The ſcene ſhuts upon 'em.* Wellvile *and* Sightly *ſtay.*

Sight. Now, Mr. *Wellvile*, you have ſomething extraordinary to ſay to me.

Well. I have, indeed, madam; but I ſhou'd prepare you for the ſtory, there are ſome friends in it, that you will be concern'd to have an ill opinion of.

Sight. I have reaſon to think you my friend.

Well. Then pray give me leave to aſk, how long you have known Mr. *Wilding*.

Sight. I never ſpoke to him 'till this morning at the chocolate-houſe, as we came from the park.

Well. I think he's Mrs. *Witwoud*'s particular acquaintance.

Sight.

Sight. That, I ſuppoſe, gave him the title of ſpeaking to us.

Well. And ſhe has a mind to bring him acquainted with you. I'm ſorry I muſt warn you of him: I was in hopes it wou'd have dy'd of itſelf: but his talking to you, at the chocolate-houſe, after he had promis'd never to follow you more, makes me apprehend, that he is ſtill carrying on his deſign upon you.

Sight. A deſign upon me!

Well. He has a deſign upon you: and you have heard enough of his character, to ſuſpect the honour of any deſign he has upon any woman: but ſuch as it is, your couſin *Witwoud*, and very good friend, for ends of her own, which I can inform you in, has undertaken to bring it about. I ſee you are ſurpris'd.

Sight. I pray, ſir, go on.

Well. I never pretended to be a friend of Mrs. *Witwoud*'s, but now I hate her: and what I tell you, is not to ruin her with you; but of nearer conſequence, to ſave you from being undone by her: this is not a ſecret; I'll tell her of it myſelf, and my thoughts of her into the bargain: but, madam, you know beſt, how far ſhe has ſolicited his cauſe to you; how far my ſtory is probable; and whither you don't think, ſhe perſuaded you to walk this morning in the Mall, in order to meet Mr. *Wilding*: that was the buſineſs of her viſit to you, as he tells me, whatever ſhe pretended to the contrary.

Sight. You aſtoniſh me.

Well. I am aſtoniſh'd myſelf, indeed, madam, not to find her as I always thought her, fit for any miſchief: but to think ſhe can pretend to be a bawd, and provide no better for a friend: to ſacrifice you to a man, who wou'd tell all the town of it, as well as *Courtall*, and has confeſs'd to me, that he never was in love with you, nor had a thought that way, 'till ſhe put it into his head, and promis'd to aſſiſt him in't.

Sight. Unheard of villany!

Well. Faith, madam, if I might adviſe you, it ſhou'd be to a man of honour at leaſt; that can be ſo tender of a reputation, not to leſſen a lady's favour ſo far, to make it

it the common mirth of the town: if you have any favours to dispose of, dispose of 'em yourself: let not another run away with the benefit of your good turns. I have been an old admirer, madam; and I hope stand as fair, and have as good a title to put in my claim, as any man of her providing.

Sight. So, sir, then it seems you think I must be provided for, and therefore these advances must please me: I have some reason to believe what you say of my cousin *Witwoud*; but I have no reason to think you very much my friend; she has betray'd me, and you are pleased to think I deserve it: I thank you for your caution: but it shall secure me for the future, against her and you. For as much as I thought you my friend; nay, though I languish'd for you, the encouragement you are pleas'd to make, from other peoples base opinion of me, shall teach me to despise you. [*The scene opens, the company rise from play, and come forward.*

Teaz. Nay, nay, I have done with you: if this be your fair play, there's no danger of your soul; why, you make no conscience of cheating any body out of your own gang.

Wit. Conscience at cards, cousin! you are a better bred lady than to expect it.

Mr. Fri. Conscience, madam, is of serious affairs, no body minds it at play.

Teaz. Nay I'm ev'n right enough serv'd; I deserv'd it, that's the truth on't: I must be playing with company so much younger than myself; but I shall be wiser for the future, and play the fool in my own form, where I may cheat in my turn.

Mrs. Fri. If you speak of your losings, madam, I believe my fortune has been harder than yours; in ten sets running with Mr. *Wilding*, I never turn'd one, nor had comet in my hand.

Wit. Nay, if you win her money, you may win every thing of her, of you know how to manage your game. [*Goes to Mrs.* Sightly.

Wild. And faith I'll play it as well as I can.

Wit. Cousin, I have won an estate for you.

Sight.

Sight. You have undone me. [*Exit*, Wit. *following.*

Wild. I'll watch my time, and follow 'em.

Mr. Fri. Lovemore, pr'ythee keep the company together; I have an appointment upon my hands, and muſt leave you: we muſt ſerve one another ſometimes, you know. [*Goes off.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, the Jew, newly turn'd proteſtant, that my maſter was godfather to, has brought the eſſences and ſweet-waters he order'd him to raffle for.

Mr. Fri. Shall we try, whether we like any of 'em. [*Going.*

Well. We ſhall find him a Jew ſtill in his dealings, I ſuppoſe.

Love. You wou'd not have him loſe by his converſion, I hope.

Wild. Like other wiſe men, he's for ſaving ſoul and body together, I warrant him. [*They go in.*

SCENE *changes to the garden.*

Witwoud *following* Sightly.

Sight. Never think of denying, or excuſing it to me, I am ſatisfied there's more in it than you ought to defend; there are ſo many circumſtances to convince me of your treachery to me, I muſt believe it.

Wit. I ſee, couſin, you will believe any thing againſt me: but as I hope to be ſav'd, upon the faith of a chriſtian, and may I never riſe off my knees into your good opinion again, if I don't abhor the villany you lay to my charge; ſomething I muſt confeſs to you, but I beg you to forgive me, 'twas unadvis'd indeed, but innocent, and without a deſign upon you: *Courtall*'s a coxcomb, and nothing but *Wilding*'s vanity, or *Wellvile*'s revenge, cou'd be acceſſary to the ruin of me with you, the only relation I love and value in the world.

Sight. O! I had forgot the pains you took to ſecure me, to-morrow night at cards at your lodgings with Mr. *Wilding*: couſin, let me tell you, a bawd is the worſt part

part of an intrigue, and the leaſt to be ſaid for't in excuſe of the infamy. But you had ſomething more than a lover to provide for me, or you wou'd not have expos'd me to a man that wou'd expoſe me to all the town; is it becauſe I have been your beſt and laſt friend, (for you will hardly find ſuch another in your family) that thus you reward me for the folly? Or is it becauſe I am a witneſs of your ſhame, that you wou'd be a contriver of mine? I know, (and I look upon it as a judgment upon the former follies of your life) that you are notoriouſly abandon'd to the beaſtly love of a fellow, that no body elſe can look upon; and may be, you are miſchievouſly pleas'd to make me as deſpicable as yourſelf; there muſt be the devil in the bottom on't, and I'll fly from him in you.

Wit. O! don't leave me in this paſſion, I am utterly ruin'd if you go; upon my knees I beg it of you.

Sight. Couſin, I forgive you: what's paſt ſhall be a ſecret for both our ſakes; but I'm reſolv'd never more to come into your power; ſo farewell, and find a better friend than I have been. [*Goes out.*

Wit. She's loſt, and my deſign upon her, which is yet a greater misfortune to me. [Welv. *and* Wild. *enter to her.* O! ſir, I am oblig'd to you——and you are oblig'd to yourſelf for your ſucceſs with Mrs. *Sightly*; ſo like a boy, to diſcover the ſecret, before 'twas in your power to expoſe! away, I'll have no more to ſay to you. [*Goes out.*

Wild. So, ſir, you have made fine work on't with the women. I thought I had ſatify'd you in the Mall this morning.

Well. Sir, I muſt be better ſatisfy'd than I was in the morning, I find there's no relying upon your word, ſince, after your promiſe, never to follow her more, you could excuſe yourſelf to me in the Mall to meet her at the chocolate-houſe.

Wild. Nay then we have both our grievances, and this muſt anſwer 'em. [*Going to fight,* Court. *enters to part 'em.*

Court. Fie, fie, friends, and fighting! that muſt not be gentlemen. Mrs. *Witwoud* has told me the matter; and

unleſs you had a fourth man to entertain me, you had ev'n as good put up again: we are all in fault, and all deſerv'd to be ſwing'd for't, that's certain: *Wilding* was a fool for telling you of his deſign, and I was a fool for talking on't to *Wellvile*; and *Wellvile* no wiſer than either, for making ſuch a buſtle about it: therefore pray gentlemen let's agree in this opinion, that by our own prating, and prying into other people's affairs, we often diſcover and ruin one another's deſigns;

For women are by nature well inclin'd:
Our follies frighten 'em from being kind. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE Witwoud's *lodgings*.

Enter Wilding *following* Witwoud.

Wit. NAY I don't wonder you thrive no better with the women, when you can part with ſuch an advantage over Mrs. *Friendall*: you ſay you have won a ſum of her, which ſhe would not be known to loſe: why, another man would take the privilege of a winning gameſter, upon ſuch an occaſion, to preſs her to a promiſe, at leaſt, of coming out of your debt.

Wild. I ſhall improve, I find, upon the advantage of your hints: but Mrs. *Sightly*, madam——

Wit. Mrs. *Sightly* indeed: was that a woman to throw away upon the vanity of being talk'd of for her? In the time you were bragging to other people of being in her favour, you might have been every-where you deſir'd.

Wild. Nay, not unlikely.

Wit. I have made all the excuſe I could for you; ſome too, that in my conſcience I thought very unreaſonable myſelf; and could paſs upon no body but a woman that was eaſily diſpos'd to forgive you.

Wild. If ſhe would but hear what I have to ſay for myſelf.

Wit.

Wit. Nay, ſhe's pretty well prepar'd, but you muſt not think of ſpeaking to her bare-fac'd, that ſhe can't conſent to for her own ſake: you have made the matter ſo public, ſhe has eyes upon her to be ſure now: but it happens very luckily, *Friendall* has a maſquerade to-night at his houſe: there, if you pleaſe, I can give you an opportunity of clearing yourſelf to her.

Wild. I aſk no more of you.

Wit. Never think of defending yourſelf, for what's paſt you were certainly i'th' wrong; and ſhe thinks you ſo: you know well enough what to ſay to a woman, that has a mind to believe you.

Wild. How ſhall I know her at the maſquerade?

Wit. Go you, and prepare for't: and depend upon me for your intelligence. [Wilding *goes out.*] I find I am declining in my reputation; and will bring every woman of my acquaintance into my own condition, of being ſuſpected at leaſt: I have promis'd more than I can do with my couſin *Sightly*; I have loſt my credit with her too lately, to betray her in the way of friendſhip—— let me ſee——*Betty*——

Enter Betty.

You know where the man lives that made my couſin *Sightly*'s ſcarf; go to him from me, deſire him to borrow it, that a lady may ſee it, who likes it, and deſires to have one made of the ſame pattern—— [*Exit* Betty. I deſpair of bringing her to the maſquerade: I muſt perſonate her myſelf, and meet *Wilding* in her room: but what may be the iſſue of that? Let what will be the iſſue: the farther he preſſes his deſign upon me, the farther I carry my deſign upon her: and for once, in order to my revenge, rather than not expoſe her, I'll venture to grant him the favour, that he may tell on't: and ſhe ſhall have the benefit of the ſcandal—— [*Goes out.*

SCENE *in St.* James's *Park.*

Enter Lovemore *with Mrs.* Friendall, *and Mrs.* Sightly.

Love. Yonder comes Mr. *Friendall*, madam.

Mrs. Fri. Would I were at home again: I came upon

a foolish discovery of his actions, to be surpris'd in a very unaccountable one of my own.

Sight. That is, walking *incognito* on this side the Park with a man of your character, Mr. *Lovemore.*

Mrs. Fri. I hope he won't know us.

[*They put on their masks.*

Sight. He's too busy in his own affairs.

Love. He comes upon us. I must speak to him.

Enter Friendall.

Mr. Fri. You are provided for, I see: the ladies, I suppose, wish I could say as much for them too: very genteel women both faith and troth: I warrant 'em women of condition, if not women of quality, by their assignation at *Rosamond*'s pond.

Love. You fancy that from the quality of your own intrigue.

Mr. Fri. Why there's something in that too: and the truth on't is, my assignation is with a woman of quality.

Love. Mrs. *Sightly*, I fancy, *Friendall.*

Mr. Fri. Fie, fie, why should you think so? But let her be who she will, if she disappoint me, I'll own it tomorrow to every body——

Love. That she disappointed you?

Mr. Fri. No; that 'twas Mrs *Sightly* I had an intrigue with.

Sight. A small matter makes an intrigue of his side, I find.

Mr. Fri. Sure I have seen somebody very like this lady? [*Viewing his wife.*

Mrs. Fri. I would not be known for the world.

Love. I'll bring you off, I warrant you.

Mr. Fri. She has the air and mein very much, of a lady of my acquaintance.

Love. Not unlikely, faith: it may be she herself, for ought I know to the contrary: but if you have a mind to be satisfied——

Mrs. Fri. Lord! what do you do?

Love. I have no occasion for her at present: this is my

my woman: ſhe's but an ill-natur'd incumbrance, at this time; and you'll do me a favour to diſpoſe of her.

[*To Mrs.* Sightly.

Mr. Fri. Nay, if you are ſo free to diſpoſe of her, I'm ſatisfy'd ſhe is not the woman I took her for: for, to tell you the truth, *Lovemore*, I thought 'twas my wife: and, I gad, I began to be very uneaſy; not ſo much for finding her in your company, as that ſhe ſhould come ſo peeviſhly to diſturb me, in an affair ſo very much above her.

Sight. Why, ſir, they ſay your wife is a very fine woman.

Mr. Fri. A wife a fine woman, madam; I never knew a huſband that thought ſo in my life.

Mrs. Fri. But ſome body elſe may, ſir, if you allow her to make thoſe entertainments for the town, that I hear you do.

Mr. Fri. Gad ſo, *Lovemore*, pr'ythee bring the ladies to my maſquerade to-night; there's no body but people of quality to be there, for pleaſure is my buſineſs, you know; and I am very well pleas'd, to allow my wife the liberties ſhe takes, in favour of my own; for to tell you the truth, the chief end of my marrying her, (next to having the eſtate ſettled upon me) was to carry on my intrigues more ſwimmingly with the ladies.

Love. That's a convenience in matrimony, I did not think of.

Mr. Fri. One of the greateſt, upon my word, ſir. For being ſeen ſo often abroad, and viſiting with my wife, I paſs upon the formal part of the town for a very good huſband; and upon the privilege of that character, I grow intimate with all her acquaintance, (and, by the way, there's hardly a family in town, but I can contrive to come acquainted with, upon her account) there I pick and chuſe in the very face of their reverend relations, and deliver my billets myſelf.

Mrs. Fri. You have 'em ready then?

Mr. Fri. Two or three always in my pocket:—[*Shews 'em.*] I write half a dozen in a morning, for the ſervice of that day.

Love. Hard ſervice, I aſſure you.

Mr. Fri. Not at all: the letters are but copies one of another; and a love-letter ſhould be a love-letter, you know, paſſionate and tender, whoever 'tis deſign'd for. Ha! yonder are two women in maſks! I muſt not be ſeen with you: ladies, you know when you're well, I ſuppoſe, by the choice of your man; make much of him, he's my boſom-friend, and confident of my pleaſures.

Mrs. Fri. And you of his, I ſuppoſe? there's no pleaſure without a confident.

Mr. Fri. Faith, madam, I am of your mind: but *Lovemore*'s a little too reſerved, 'tis, at preſent, his fault, from a want of knowing the town; but he'll mend of it, I hope, when he comes to have a woman worth talking of. *Lovemore*, not a word at home of ſeeing me here, as you value the fortune of your friend: adieu. [*Goes out.*

Mrs. Fri. Are you the confident of the gentleman's pleaſures?

Love. I have not betray'd 'em, madam.

Mrs. Fri. Methinks a friend ſhould have warn'd me of em.

Love. I would not be thought to do ill offices, eſpecially in marriage, madam.

Mrs. Fri. I don't think you would; would Mr. *Friendall* were as tender of wronging me—— [*Aſide.*

Sight You have had a handſome account of their expedition; and we are both oblig'd to Mr. *Friendall.*

Mrs. Fri. I am very well paid for my curioſity of coming here: I ſuppoſe we ſhall have a rendezvous of his wenches at the maſquerade, pray let's be ready to receive 'em. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *Mr.* Friendall's *houſe.*

Men and women in maſquerading habit.

Enter Wellvile, Wilding, Courtall, Springame, Witwoud, *and* Betty.

Wit. Wilding has his eye upon us I ſee: I have ſomething to ſay to him, in my own perſon, and then I muſt change ſcarfs with you: be ſure you are i'th way.

Well.

Well. I thought I had known you; [*To* Betty.] I beg your pardon, madam, for the miſtake.

Betty. You're very welcome to't, ſir, I would have you miſtaken; and that you will always be, when you judge upon the outſides of the women.

Well. You are for a ſtricter examination, I find: there are conveniences for a full diſcovery, in the next room, ſome body will ſhow you the way. [*Leaves her.*

Wild. That's *Sightly* in the ſcarf, and *Witwoud* with her, I ſuppoſe; I muſt not be miſtaken.

Court. I like the freedom of a maſquerade, very well; but it confounds a man's choice.

Spring. Why, faith, I have a mind to be particular, if I could but hit upon the woman.

Wit. And that you ſhall preſently, little captain, I'll put myſelf in your way.

Spring. Behind a cloud my pretty moon! [*To* Betty. Shall I be the man in you?

Betty. With the buſh at your back-ſide: you deſerve to be whipt for your wit, ſir. [*Goes from him.*

Spring. I ſtand corrected, madam.

Wit. Does ſhe beat thee, little maſter? Come a'me, and I'll make much of thee——

Spring. As much as you can of me, I dare ſay for you.

Wit. Come, come, I'll uſe you better——

Spring. To uſe me worſe; is not that your deſign? She has given me my anſwer at once; you perhaps would linger me thro' a winter's expectation, and not do my buſineſs at laſt——

Wit. What's your buſineſs, pray?

Spring. Why your buſineſs, any woman's buſineſs, that has a mind to employ me in't.

Wit. No touching me: I have an unfaſhionable huſband in the company, that won't thank you for making him a cuckold——

Spring. But you will, I'm ſure, if it be but to teach him better manners.

Wit. I like your company extremely; but I have a great deal of buſineſs, and would willingly be rid of you,

at this time; but this ring ſhall anſwer for me, 'till I ſee you again. [*Going.*

Spring. Pray redeem it, as ſoon as you can.

Wit. Sir, ſir, if you have any intereſt in the family, pray let's have a ſong, or a dance, to divert us.

Spring. I'll ſee what I can do for you—— [*Goes away.*

Wit. You ſhould be *Wilding.*

Wild. And you ſhould be as good as your word.

Wit. The lady is better than you can expect: that's ſhe in the embroider'd ſcarf. You muſt not ſpeak to her, before the company; take her aſide, by and by, in a corner; ſhe'll thank you for your care of her. Here's more company:

Enter Lovemore *with Mrs.* Friendall, *and Mrs.* Sightly.

I won't be ſeen with you—now *Betty* for the change— [Witwoud *and* Betty *go out.*

Well. Lovemore, I am in diſgrace with Mrs. *Sightly:* And can't find her, to come into favour again.

Love. That's ſhe, that came in juſt now with Mrs. *Friendall:* I'll direct you to one, by going to the other. [*They go to 'em.*

A SONG, written by *Tho. Cheek,* Eſq.

Corinna, *I excuſe thy face;*
The erring lines which nature drew:
When I reflect, that every grace
Thy mind adorns, is juſt and true:
But oh! thy wit what God has ſent?
Surprizing, airy, unconfin'd:
Some wonder ſure Apollo *meant,*
And ſhot himſelf into thy mind.

A SONG in the firſt ſcene of the fourth act.

Hang this whining way of wooing,
Loving was deſign'd a ſport:
Sighing, talking, without doing,
Makes a ſilly idle court.

Don't

Don't believe that words can move her,
If ſhe be not well inclin'd:
She herſelf muſt be the lover,
To perſuade her to be kind.
If, at laſt, ſhe grants the favour,
And conſents to be undone:
Never think her paſſion gave her
To your wiſhes, but her own.

After the ſong, Witwoud *and* Betty, *having chang'd ſcarfs, enter, to be ready for the dance; after which*——

Love, Some can't get huſbands, and others can't get rid of 'em.

Mrs. Fri. Every woman carries her croſs in this world: a huſband happens to be mine, and I muſt bear it, as well as I can.

Love. I would eaſe you of it.

Mrs. Fri. No more upon this ſubject, you have carried the argument ſo far, 'tis allowing what you ſay, to liſten any longer. But Mr. *Lovemore,* I will give you what ſatisfaction I have in my power, and praiſe is the reward of virtue, you know; I think you have proceeded like a man of experience in this buſineſs, and taken the natural road to undermine moſt women. I muſt do you this juſtice, that nothing has been wanting on your ſide.

Love. I would have nothing wanting on my ſide, madam.

Mrs. Fri. And however you came by the knowledge of Mr. *Friendall's* weakneſſes, you have improv'd 'em as much as they could bear upon the conduct of his wife: if they have not carry'd me as far as you deſign'd; 'tis the fault of my heavineſs, perhaps, that can't be tranſported into the woman you'd have me.

Love. There's a fault ſomewhere.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. *Lovemore,* ſome women won't ſpeak ſo plain, but I will own to you, I can't think the worſe of you for thinking well of me: nay, I don't blame you for deſigning upon me, cuſtom has faſhion'd it into the way of living among the men; and you may be i'th' right to all the town: but let me be i'th' right too to

my ſex and to myſelf: thus far may be excus'd: you've prov'd your paſſion, and my virtue try'd; but all beyond that trial is my crime, and not to be forgiven; therefore I intreat you, don't make it impoſſible to me for the future, to receive you as a friend: for I muſt own, I would ſecure you always for my friend: nay more, I will confeſs my heart to you: if I could make you mine——

Love. For ever yours.

Mrs. Fri. But I am marry'd, only pity me——

[*Goes from him.*

Love. Pity her! ſhe does not deſerve it, that won't better her condition, when ſhe may: but ſhe's marry'd ſhe ſays; why, that was the beſt of my reaſons of following her at firſt; and I like her ſo well, as ſhe's another man's wife, I ſhould hardly mend the matter by making her my own. I won't think yet my two months thrown away upon her: one time or other, ſome way or other, I may be the better for her; at leaſt with ſome other women: but I begin to believe that every man loſes his labour this way ſometimes.

Sight. Who can that woman be?

[*Obſerving* Wilding *and* Witwoud.

Well. *Wilding*'s the man I know.

Sight. Then it may be my good couſin *Witwoud.*

Well. Preſuming upon the ſcarf, which is very like yours, I ventur'd, and ſpake to her. I ſhould have known Mrs. *Witwoud,* I believe.

Sight. Pray try if you can learn who ſhe is.

[*They parl in a low voice.*

Wit. This place is too public for a vindication of this nature, if you retire into the next room, I may accept of your excuſes; upon your promiſe of good behaviour, and better conduct for the future.

Wild. I'll follow you——

[Witwoud *retires:* Wellvile *to* Wilding.

Well. You will be the man I ſee, *Wilding*; the lady's withdrawn; don't let her ſtay for you.

Wild. Faith, *Wellvile*, 'tis a fortune thrown upon me; and ſince it came without my ſeeking, methinks you ſhould

ſhould hardly think it worth your courting: ſhe'll bring it about one way or other, you find.

Well. You ſpeak as if I knew the lady.

Wild. I would have you know ſo much, that ſhe is not worth the honourable care you have of her.

Well. Of whom?

Wild. As if you did not know her.

Well. Why, 'tis not Mrs. *Sightly*.

Wild. I have declin'd it as much as I could in regard to a friend; but when ſhe follows me——

Well. Mrs. *Sightly* follow you!

Mr. Friendall *enters and joins with Mr.* Lovemore.

Wild. No naming names, good *Wellvile*.

Well. Nay, then I muſt convince you; I juſt left Mrs. *Sightly* to come to you; ſhe's now in the company, and I'll carry you to hear me ſpeak to her——

[*Carries* Wilding *to* Sightly.

Love. Why, this was a terrible diſappointment.

Mr. Fri. There are lampoons, ſir, I ſay no more; but I may do myſelf reaſon in one of 'em, and diſappoint her yet of her diſappointment.

[*Among the women faſtens upon* Sightly.

Wild. Why then *Witwoud* has put another woman upon me; and abus'd Mrs. *Sightly* and me: I am ſatisfied of the cheat, and would be aſſiſting to the revenge of it if I could.

Well. You would not be the inſtrument to make it public yourſelf?

Wild. No, that I can't conſent to.

Well. Then leave it to me: *Friendall*'s a property fit for our ſeveral intereſts: but *Lovemore* muſt employ him.

[Wellvile *to* Lovemore.

Mr. Fri. Faith, madam, I am very fit for your purpoſe, at preſent, I have met with a little ill uſage from a lady; by not meeting with her: but you may be the better for it, if you pleaſe: you ſhall have the pleaſure, and ſhe ſhall have the reputation of the intrigue.

Sight. I am for all or none. [Lovemore *comes to him.*

Love. The rareſt accident, *Friendall*; the reaſon that

you were disappointed in the Park, I can tell you, was, the lady had appointed to meet *Wilding* here: she is now withdrawn into the next room in expectation of him; which *Wellvile*, her old lover, suspecting, has tax'd him of, and ruin'd the design. Now, if you would have me, I'll keep up the jealousy between 'em, and give you an opportunity to go in to her.

Mr. Fri By all means, *Lovemore*, this was unexpected, and done like a friend; I owe you a good turn for't, be sure you keep 'em here. [*Sneaks out after* Witwoud.

Sight. What are you designing upon Mr. *Friendall?* [*To* Wellvile.

Well. There's mischief in't; and you may all be the better for't. [*Mrs.* Teazall *pressing in with a Footman upon the company.*

Mrs. Fri. What's the noise there?

Foot. Madam, here's a rude, unmannerly gentlewoman presses in upon me, and refuses to pull off her mask, as your honour order'd.

Teaz. You saucy rascal you, I shew a better face than thy mother had, when she laid thee to the parish, you rogue: prate to me, you varlet! and an honester one, tho' I say it, than any of the company: here's fine work indeed in a civil family! what, are you asham'd of your doings, that you won't discover yourselves?

Spring. Mistress, you have the natural privilege of a mask. And being disguised in your own face, you may say what you please.

Teaz. Marry, come up here; will nothing but a good face down with you? a woman has a fine time on't, with your finical fancy: but I want leisure to laugh at you. [*Looking every where for her niece.*

Court. Do you know me?

Teaz. Ay, ay, I guess at you: learn to speak without a question, you fool, before you set up for a wit.

Court. I know you.

Teaz. Why then you may be satisfied, I shall think you an ass.

Spring. Nay, good mother, you had e'en as good pull off your mask. You see you are discover'd.

Teaz. Diſcover'd, you ſnotty-nos'd jackanapes! would I could diſcover your maſter; I would ſend him a note of your name: you are not yet clean from ſchool, and are ſetting up for the women forſooth: you have been ſo us'd to be turn'd up for a blockhead, that you are for peeping into every body's back-door, to find as great a fool as yourſelf: ſirrah, ſirrah, a good birch rod for your miſtreſs; that would tickle your tail, as you deſerve.

Spring. Nay, good your reverence.

Mrs. Fri. What's the matter, pray?

Teaz. Why the wicked ways of living in this town, are matter enough for the vexation of any woman that has a girl to look after: God's my life! can't you keep up your maſquerades, in the primitive inſtitution of making cuckolds, as it us'd to be, without bringing the young wenches into the myſtery of matrimony before their time? Where's my niece among you? 'tis a burning ſhame to draw away a poor young girl into theſe debauch'd galloping doings, as you do.

Mrs. Fri. Good Mrs. *Teazall*, not ſo cenſorious: pray where's the harm of a little innocent diverſion?

Teaz. Innocent diverſion, with a pox to't! for that will be the end on't at laſt: very innocent diverſion indeed! why, your muſic-meetings, dancing-meetings, maſking-meetings, are all but pretences to bring you together: and when you meet, we know what you meet for well enough; 'tis to the ſame purpoſe, in good troth: all ends in the innocent diverſion.

Well. Nay, faith, the gentlewoman has reaſon for what ſhe ſays.

Teaz. Well, make me thankful for it; there's one civil gentleman among you: and really there's a great deal of comfort in opening a poor woman's caſe to a diſcreet, good natur'd gentleman: pray, ſir, hear me; and if you don't allow that I have ſome cauſe for what I do, I will be contented never to ſee a coat-card, nor have Pam in my pocket again.

Mrs. Fri. But who are you looking for all this while?

Teaz.

Teaz. An untowardly girl, to be ſure, my couſin *Fanny*, madam: ſhe has undone herſelf, and my hopes of a huſband for her: gad forgive me, I have no patience, when I think upon't: laſt night, *Witwoud* forſooth, ſhe carries her to the muſic-meeting; then one *Wilding*, an impudent whore-maſtering fellow, he carries her home with him, which I could forgive well enough too, if it ended there: but now, when all things were agreed upon, and Mr. *Buttybun* was to give us a ſupper, and ſign the writings, in order to marry her to-morrow; when the baggage was call'd upon, to perform her part, whip, ſhe had given us the ſlip, tuck'd up her tail, and run a roguing after that fellow again: but I ſhall light upon her.

Love. Wilding, what ſay you to this?

Teaz. O, ſir, are you there? if there be any juſtice in *England* for the women, I'll have you bound to the good behaviour; I'll ſwear the peace againſt you myſelf; for there's no-body ſafe, young or old, at this rate, if ſuch whore-maſters as you are allow'd to do as you do.

Wild. I am bound already to behave myſelf like a gentleman: I do what good I can, in my generation; but injure no-body.

Teaz. Sirrah, ſirrah, you ſhall find you have injur'd my neice, and me, before I have done with you.

Wild. You won't bring it to *Weſtminſter*, I hope, to be decided, who has moſt injur'd her; I, by being civil to her; or you, by telling it to all the town.

Teaz. Why that's true again.

Wild. And let the company judge, who appears to be moſt her enemy; I, in teaching her a very good trade: or you, in endeavouring to break her, before ſhe's well ſet up in't.

Court. Nay, now it goes againſt you. [*To* Teazall.

Wild. I have put her in a very good way; if ſhe manage it well, ſhe'll make more on't, than her mother made of her matrimony.

Teaz. Nay, 'twas the ruin of her, that I grant you.

Wild. And let the worſt come to the worſt, if ſhe fails in this calling, ſhe may begin in another, (as they do

do in the city ſometimes) 'tis but ſetting up for a huſband at laſt.

Teaz. But that you won't conſent to, it ſeems.

Wild. Faith, madam, I ha'nt ſeen your neice ſince morning; and then Mrs. *Witwoud* obliged me to give over my pretenſions to her, upon the promiſe of procuring Mrs. *Sightly* for me.

Sight. Without my knowledge, ſir?

Wild. Indeed, madam, you were not to know of the bargain.

Teaz. Then you don't know where *Fanny* is?

Wild. Not I faith, madam.

Well. We were juſt complaining of Mrs. *Witwoud's* unkindneſs to you, as you came in.

Teaz. Ay, ſir, I am beholding to you.

Well. She has been very buſy all this night in carrying on an intrigue, between your neice and ſomebody: they are retir'd into the next room; they went out at that door, if you have a mind to be ſatisfy'd.

Teaz. I'm ſorry, ſir, I han't time to thank you for this favour: I muſt make haſte, for I'm reſolv'd to be ſatisfied.

Scene draws, ſhows Friendall *and* Witwoud *upon a couch.*

Very fine! here is a ſight indeed!

Wit. Confuſion!

Mr. Fri. What a pox! diſturb a gentleman's pleaſures! and in his own houſe too! ha! *Witwoud* here! nay then, would you had come ſooner: madam, I beg your pardon for ſome liberties I have taken with your ladyſhip; but, faith, I took your for Mrs. *Sightly*.

Wit. I never was miſtaken in you.

Wild. You ſee I had too great a reſpect for you, and therefore provided you a more deſerving——

Wit. Fool.

Well. And one that had as good natur'd a deſign upon Mrs. *Sightly*, as you had yourſelf.

Teaz. Nay, now, gentlewoman, I think 'tis come home to you, and I am glad on't, with all my heart.

Sight.

Sight. You have paid dear enough for that ſcarf; you may keep it for a pattern for your friends, as 'twas borrow'd for: I won't inſult over you, and am only pleas'd that I have 'ſcap'd your ſnares.

Wit. That diſappointment is my greateſt curſe; and diſappointments light upon you all. [*Goes out.*

Court. This is your miſtreſs, captain.

Spring. And I 'gad ſhe ſhall be mine now in ſpight of her teeth: for ſince I find ſhe can be civil upon occaſion, I ſhall beat her into good manners, if ſhe refuſes me. [*Goes after her.*

Well. Every thing has fallen ſo much to your advantage, that ſure the fault I made may be forgiven: what amends I have in my power, I am ready to make you: my liberty, of what I have to give, is what I value moſt; and that is yours, when you conſent to let me make you mine.

Sight. This is too ſudden to be ſerious; when you're in earneſt, you won't need an anſwer.

Wild. They are ſtriking up a peace on all hands, gentlemen; we ſhall be left out of the treaty.

Love. There's yet a lady to declare herſelf.

Mrs. Fri. Mr. *Friendall*, I'm ſorry you thought it neceſſary to your pleaſures, to make me a witneſs of my ill uſage: you know I can, and have paſt many things, ſome women would think wrongs, as ſuch reſent 'em, and return 'em too: but you can tell how I've behav'd myſelf.

Mr. Fri. Like a gentlewoman always, madam, and my wife.

Mrs. Fri. The unjuſt world, let what will be the cauſe of our complaint (as there is cauſe ſufficient ſtill at home) condemn us to a ſlavery for life: and if by ſeparation we get free, then all our huſband's faults are laid on us: this hard condition of a woman's fate, I've often weigh'd, therefore reſolv'd to bear: and I have born; O! what have I not born? but patience tires with ſuch oppreſſing wrongs, when they come home to triumph over me; and tell the town how much I am deſpis'd.

Mr. Fri.

Mr. Fri. I ſee we are both diſappointed in this affair of matrimony; it is not the condition you expected; nor has it the advantages I propos'd. Now, madam, ſince 'tis impoſſible to make it happy between us, let us even reſolve to make it as eaſy as we can.

Mrs. Fri. That muſt be my buſineſs now.

Mr. Fri. And mine too, I aſſure you: look you, madam, your own relations ſhall provide for you at pleaſure, out of my eſtate; I only article that I may have a freedom of viſiting you, in the round of my acquaintance.

Mrs. Fri. I muſt be ſtill your wife, and ſtill unhappy.

Love. What alteration this may make in my fortune with her, I don't know; but I'm glad I have parted them.

Mr. Fri. Well, gentlemen, I can't be very much diſpleas'd at the recovery of my liberty, I am only ſorry *Witwoud* was the occaſion of it: for an old blown-upon ſhe-wit, is hardly an intrigue to juſtify the ſeparation on my ſide, or make a man very vain of his fortune.

Love. This you muſt all expect, who marry fools;
Unleſs you form 'em early in your ſchools,
And make 'em, what they were deſign'd for, tools.

[*Exeunt.*

E P I.

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. *Barry*.

MY character, not being much in vogue,
Has drawn me in to speak the Epilogue:
But, pray conceive me right, not to disparage
That ancient, English *perquisite of marriage;*
Which, when the priests first made all pleasure sin,
Faster than they could cheat us, drew us in
With rites and liberties of cuckolding.
That us'd to be the custom, and so common,
No girl but wish'd herself a marry'd woman.
Whether I've done my husband right, or no;
Most women may be in the right, that do:
Our author does not set up for reforming,
Or giving hints to fools who won't take warning:
He's pleas'd, that other people are pleas'd too,
To help to reap that harvest which they sow:
For among all the cuckolds of this town,
Who show themselves, and are as daily shown,
Our poets may make some of 'em their own.
You find in me what may excuse a wife:
Compare at home the picture with the life,
And most of you may find a Friendall *there;*
And most of you more justly us'd than here:
Our author has his ends, if he can show,
The women ne'er want cause for what they do:
For, ladies, all his aim is pleasing you.
Some mettled sparks, who nothing can withstand,
Your velvet-fortune-hunters, may demand,
Why, when the means were in the ladies hand,
The husband civil, and the lover near,
No more was made of the wife's character?
Damn me, cries one, had I been Betterton,
And struts, and cocks, I know what I had done;
She should not ha' got clear of me so soon.
You only fear such plays may spoil your game:
But flesh and frailty always are the same:
And we shall still proceed in our old way,
For all that you can do, or poets say.

THE

MAID's LAST PRAYER;

OR,

ANY, RATHER THAN FAIL.

A

COMEDY.

As it was Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL,

By Their MAJESTIES SERVANTS,

In the YEAR 1693.

——Valeat res ludicra, si me
Palma negata, macrum: donata reducit opimum.

HOR. Epist. 1. lib. 2.

TO THE HONOURABLE

MR. CHARLES BOYL.

SIR,

THERE is no condition can ſubſiſt wholly upon itſelf: and I am bound to depend, as every man, more or leſs, is, upon the favour of the world, to carry him through the troubleſome journey of this life; nor do I think it my misfortune to wait upon a great man's riſing ſometimes, to put him in mind of me. While I can keep myſelf out of the neceſſity of flattering fools, I ſhall not very much repine at my condition. I'm ſure I'm ſafe here, becauſe you are ſafe every where: and when a common conſent encourages an opinion, I ſhall hardly be thought in the wrong, to do as other people do.

Sir, when poetry becomes a man's buſineſs, it will hardly prove another man's diverſion, though a play once a year, looks very like turning into the profeſſion, I am a little better acquainted with the town, than to impoſe myſelf this way upon them; and let it be the defence of my writing, that I have nothing elſe to do.

I know

I know play-writers, like men of other employments, where the honeſt advantages are ſo ſmall, are ſuſpected in their dealings, of indirect, underhand practices, to carry on their trade. For my part, ſir, I propoſe nothing more than an opportunity of declaring myſelf in my turn, that I have grown up by degrees, with the general underſtanding, and judgment of the town, into a reſpect and honour that every body has for you: this, ſir, is the only way I have of publiſhing mine: and writing has always been allowed of, when there was no other way left of diſcovering the paſſion.

Some convenience, and a great deal of pleaſure, firſt carried me into this wanton way of wickedneſs, (thoſe old ſeducers, profit, and pleaſure) that have brought at laſt a great many of both ſexes, into the common entertainment of the town.

I have had my ends of this play, and ſhould have been glad if it had anſwered every bodies: I think it has its beauties, though they did not appear upon the ſtage, and it is not the ſmalleſt commendation, to be able to divert you in private.

If I run into the courſe of a dedication, I ſhall be loſt in the character of Mr. *Boyl*; for when I have ſaid all I can, I ſhall fall ſhort of every man's opinion; and no body, but yourſelf, will think I can ſay enough of you: at home, or abroad; in the camp, or in the court, Mr. *Boyl*'s behaviour, and addreſs, is the pattern of every gallant man's imitation; ſo much, that, from what I have ſeen, and heard of you, I muſt believe that there is no province

of

of humanity, but, at one time or other of your life, you are designed to command. Let it satisfy, sir, your present ambition, to conquer in the fairest field of victory, to triumph in the court, and in spight of the cabals, and whispers of the drawing room, to be universally allowed the fine gentleman: which as it seems the easiest, has always been thought the hardest character of a great man to maintain.

Sir, since the distance of your quality and fortune, has made it impossible to come near you, as a friend, I hope you will allow me to wait upon you as,

SIR,

Your real humble servant,

T. SOUTHERNE.

PROLOGUE:

Spoken by Mrs. BARRY.

THEY who must write (for writing's a disease)
Shou'd make it their whole study how to please:
And that's a thing our author fain wou'd do;
But wiser men than he must tell him how:
For you're so changeable, that every moon,
Some upstart whimsy knocks the old ones down.
Sometimes bluff heroes please by dint of arms;
And sometimes tender nonsense has its charms:
Now love and honour strut in buskin'd verse;
Then, at one leap, you stumble into farce.
Like true fanatics, never long content
With any settled form of government:
Eager in choice, as eager in forsaking;
You first blaspheme the gods of your own making.
Let poets henceforth lay their rules aside;
And take some ruling planet for their guide;
No more frequent their fam'd Parnassus' *tops;*
Unless it be to place their telescopes:
For such as hope to merit your esteem,
Must quit their Horace, *and erect a scheme.*
Thus they may find a way to please the pit,
Provided they insure their plays from wit.
Our author, this way doubtful of success,
(For some men have no stars, as Lilly *says)*
Himself, and play, upon the boxes throws,
From perfect beauties. to imperfect beaux.
To you, fair sirs (for I must call you so,
Since art, in spight of nature, makes a beau)
Who in side box, in seeming judgment sit,
Like barron tell-clocks to attend the pit;
In all humility he does submit.
Not that he needs to doubt you for his play:
We know your courage lies another way.
Nor will he court you, like some servile elves,
Who flatter you as much as you yourselves:

Let

Let them proclaim the conquest of your looks;
That bug-bear word shall never burn his books.
You, ladies, he adores, and owns your charms,
More powerful than the greatest monarch's arms.
Hopes the kind heav'ns will all your wishes grant,
Whether they be for husband, or gallant:
Nay, Bath, *and* Wells, *at once, if both you want.*
Not doubting your good-nature for a man,
Who, to oblige you, does the best he can.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

GRANGER,	Mr. *Powell.*
GAYMAN,	Mr. *Bowman.*
GARNISH,	Mr. *Alexander.*
Lord MALEPERT,	Mr. *Doggett.*
Sir RUFF RANCOUNTER,	Mr. *Bright.*
Sir SYMPHONY,	Mr. *Bowen.*
Captain DRYDRUBB, married to SIAM,	Mr. *Underhill.*
JANO, Page to Lady SUSAN,	*Betty Allinson.*

WOMEN.

Lady MALEPERT,	Mrs. *Barry.*
Lady TRICKITT,	Mrs. *Bracegirdle.*
Lady SUSAN MALEPERT,	Mrs. *Montford.*
MARIA,	Mrs. *Rogers.*
WISHWELL,	Mrs. *Betterton.*
SIAM, an *Indian* Woman,	Mrs. *Leigh.*
FLORENCE, Woman to Lady TRICKITT,	Mrs. *Kent.*
JUDY, Woman to Lady SUSAN,	Mrs. *Rachel Lee.*
CHRISTIAN, Maid to WISHWELL,	Mrs. *Perin.*
BETTY, Maid to SIAM.	
Footmen, Porter to Sir SYMPHONY's Music-meeting.	Mr. *Pinkyman.*

SCENE, *London.*

THE

MAID'S LAST PRAYER;

OR,

ANY, RATHER THAN FAIL,

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, Trickitt's *House.*

Enter Gayman *and* Granger *from Play.*

GRANGER,

A Pox on your baſſet: catch me at that damn'd game this twelvemonth again, and may I live to value myſelf upon the modiſh reputation of a gentile tallieur.

Gay. And that has made a fortune before now.

Grang. It never ſhall make mine: death! I have no patience to be eternally jilted by *Alpieus*——

Gay. But not the ladies *Granger.*

Grang. The ladies? there lies the ſecret: when you deſign a bank, you firſt conſider what beauties you ſhall get to draw in cuſtom: and I cou'd tell you, as a certain lord did, when aſk'd, why he never play'd at my lady *Pamphockett's.*——

Gay. As how, pray?

Grang. Why, ſince you preſs me——I don't like your women.

Gay. Sure you forget my charming lady *Trickitt*; and that's inhoſpitable in her own houſe.

Grang. No, faith, I have her in my thoughts, a freſh idea of her, and her little cheats; her nauſeous toſs, and all thoſe affectations that ought to make a woman odious to men of ſenſe.

Gay. Gad a mercy, St. *George* for *England!* now wou'd your man of travel and true dreſs be tranſported with what your right-born *Britain* finds ſuch fault with; and think theſe little agreements of abſolute neceſſity to make a miſtreſs reliſh.

Grang. To make a miſtreſs reliſh! to make a miſtreſs ſtink of the familiarity of half the town: I muſt own my want of good breeding; the hogo's much too ſtrong for me.

Gay. Thou monſter of ingratitude! I heard this very woman, within this month, ſay, there was not ſo agree-a man in town as Mr. *Granger*; ſo generous a friend, and ſo good-humour'd a gentleman, eſpecially upon a winning hand.——

Grang. Why there's the devil on't: one night, about that time, ſhe loſt her money, and I was lucky; ſhe, to my face, cried up the generoſity of thoſe who make their friends partakers of their good fortune: and I was too well ſatisfied with mine to contradict her: next morning ſhe ſent to ſpeak with me, on earneſt buſineſs, which was to borrow five hundred guineas, promiſing to repay me with ſuch a grace, that no one who had not the honour to know her ladyſhip, cou'd have had the heart to refuſe her.

Gay. And how cou'd you retire like a man of honour?

Grang. I told her mine was a younger brother's fortune; not to be ventur'd but on good ſecurity; ſhe indeed kindly proffer'd me the beſt ſhe had about her——

Gay. And ſo you ſign'd and ſeal'd?

Grang. No, faith; without adviſing with counſel, I knew

knew 'twas ſo incumber'd with fops and blockheads, there was nothing in remainder for a reaſonable man: there's not a rogue ſo nauſeous, but is welcome to her for his money: all that will be loſers, lenders, or givers, have an equal claim to her good graces: from the grinning ſtinking lord, to the fat booby 'ſquire, whoſe unſavoury vapours wou'd offend the ladies noſes, in any ruel but her ladyſhip's.

Gay. But what ſay you to my lovely lady *Malepert*? ſhe's more particular, one man at once ſuffices there.

Grang. Wou'd it were always to be her huſband—— That a woman at eighteen, an age when love and pleaſure us'd to rule, ſhou'd in the midſt of plenty, value herſelf upon the reputation of a publican, and always ſit at the receipt of cuſtom! rot her, ſhe has leſs mercy than a mountebank's bill: no cure, no money, is a moral honeſty in the ſurgeon; but no money, no cure, is only the conſcience of a whore.

Gay. Prejudice of education, *Granger*: her inclinations may be good, and *Wiſhwell*'s influence over-rule 'em: ſhe governs there, and intereſt governs her.

Grang. Nay, Mrs. *Wiſhwell*'s the very flower of modern induſtry, and ſhews a maſter-ſtroke in all ſhe does: firſt, to inſinuate, at her age, into the inclinations of this young lady; then, with her character, to perſuade the family ſhe was a fit inſtructor for her; and, which is more, to make lord *Loſty*, tho' turn'd of fifty, agreeable to almoſt fifteen.

Gay. But above all, to break the league 'twixt her and her lord's aunt, my lady *Suſan*, who tho' a friend to the projection, cou'd not endure to have it brought about by any but the family.

Grang. Yes, that youthful virgin of five and forty, with a ſwelling rump, bow legs, a ſhining face, and colly'd eye-brows (of what breath ſhe pleaſes) ſure ſhe's an original: 'tis the moſt familiar duck, always engag'd a month before-hand: ſhe'd no more miſs a ball, than the curling her little finger when ſhe eats, tho' ſhe hobbles worſe than *Abigail* in the *Scornful Lady* when ſhe has broke her crupper.

Gay. No matter for all that, I am oblig'd to her.

Grang. O yes, by having the honour to be your bawd, ſhe thought to recomend herſelf to be my miſtreſs.

Gay. Deſpiſing her, as you do, why are you ſo often with her? Your viſits are as regular as my young maſter's to the crooked heireſs, whom his prudent parent has pick'd out to be the future bleſſing of the family.

Grang. Why, to confeſs my ſins, and bluſh for all at once—— ſince I refus'd *Trickitt* the five hundred pounds, I don't know what the devil's the matter with her, but ſhe has made me ſome advances, that have put me into a curioſity of knowing the meaning of 'em. But, damn her, while I believe her endeavouring to perſuade me that ſhe is in love with me, I think I am in love with her: I can't ſee to the end on't: but ſhe, and my worthy lady *Suſan*, being as you know, inſeparable, I need explain no farther.

Gay. Speaking of *Trickitt*, as you have always done, I durſt have ſworn of her whole ſex ſhe was the laſt in your opinion.

Grang. And ſo ſhe is,

Gay. And yet you follow her.

Grang. I conſider the principles of a miſtreſs no more than of a good companion, they are both the inſtruments of pleaſure for the time, and to be truſted with nothing beyond that meeting.

Gay. But can you love without eſteem?

Grang. Why, you court lady *Malepert*; you can have no real eſteem for a woman of her mercenary character.

Gay. Cou'd I reclaim her I ſhou'd be happy; at leaſt the trial will be pleaſant.

Grang. How does this agree with your paſſion for *Maria*? can you be falſe to her?

Gay. She won't let me be true to her; I have try'd her every way but one; and that one way, that highway of matrimony, 'twill come to at laſt, I believe.

Grang. I always thought *Wiſhwell* your friend in this buſineſs.

Gay. The lord has got the better of me; yet I will viſit

viſit her again, to get her into my intereſt if I can; if I fail in that, I ſhall at leaſt have the pleaſure of railing at her.

Grang. Nay, never think of curing the mercenary itch in an old woman; 'tis the very tetter of that ſex; and more or leſs breaks out upon 'em all: the young ones are not clear on't.

Gay. Here comes the noble lord *Malepert*, and that mirror of chivalry, Sir *Ruff Rancounter*: their converſation ſhou'd be diverting, let's ſtand back and obſerve 'em.

Enter Sir Ruff, *Lord* Malepert *hanging upon his arm.*

Sir Ruff. *Granger*, methought, us'd your lordſhip a little ſcurvily: I wonder you cou'd bear it; for my part, I always make mince-meat of any fellow that offers but half ſo much to me.

Ld. Mal. Piſh, he loſt his money, and I teaz'd him; theſe things are nothing between us: beſides, I am witty upon him in my turn, I call him waſp.

Sir Ruff. Nay, I muſt allow you are too hard for him at repartee; but a man of honour, my lord, ſhou'd never put up the leaſt indignity: you never ſee him offer the the like to *Gayman*.

Ld. Mal. Who? *Gayman?* Lord! he's the ſervileſt fellow, the miniſters do ſo laugh at him.

Sir Ruff. Why, he'll fight, my lord.

Ld. Mal. O Jeſu! ſir! I never ſaid any thing to the contrary: he's a very worthy perſon; I always reckon him among my beſt friends, whatever I ſay of him. I aſſure you he did all his exerciſes at the academy to a miracle: he and I rid the great horſe together.

Sir Ruff. The great horſe, my lord? Sure you forget yourſelf, your lady's pad went a great way with you.

Ld. Mal. Why, really, Sir *Ruff*, you won't believe me; but I became the manage ſo well, that I verily believe I had been in the army but for one thing.——

Sir Ruff. What was that, pray?

Ld. Mal. Why, they ſaid riding too much wou'd teach me to turn in my toes, and ſpoil my dancing; and

you know a body wou'd not do that for less than a regiment, and they offer'd me but a troop. Was you at the play last night?

Sir Ruff. Yes, what of that?

Ld. Mal. Was *Wishwell* there? Well, she's the best woman.

Sir Ruff. You have cause to say so.

Ld. Mal. Yes, really, she's always so particular to me: I have seen her so play upon my lord *Lofty*, when he was much a greater man than I.

Sir Ruff. Has not she play'd for him too, my lord?

Grang. This blockhead will tell him he's a cuckold to his face. [*Aside.*

Ld. Mal. Well, my wife's mightily oblig'd to her. She's admitted to her toilet, when she's abroad to duchesses; then she gave her the finest present of stuffs on board an *East India* ship; *Lofty* had but just given it her. I am to have a gown and slippers of it myself.

Grang. Yes, and a night-cap too. Can this puppy be so blind, not to know who made his wife that present?

Sir Ruff. When was you at Mrs. *Siam's*?

Ld. Mal. Last night, at ten; we raffled there; lord *Lofty*, *Wishwell*, my wife, and I: my wife sent me home for more money: but before I came back, where do you think they were gone?——Why, even to *Wishwell's*, where we had the prettiest supper: after we arose from table, *Wishwell* took me aside, as she us'd to do, to rail with her, at the vices of the age; I thank her, she knew which way to oblige me——

Grang. And the whole company.

Sir Ruff. Why, after all, this was no compliment to my lady.

Ld. Mal. Why, lord! Sir *Ruff*, you don't think we left her alone: we were better bred, I assure you: my lord and she went into the little room, with the crimson couch, to talk of state affairs: now you must know my wife understands state affairs to a miracle: she picks up all the news of the drawing-room, to inform me of at night; for her whole business, you must know, is to make me rise——

Grang.

Grang. Out of bed from her, I believe you. [*Aſide.*

Gay. Wou'd ſhe had a better employment. [*Aſide.*

Sir Ruff. To make you riſe! 'tis loſt labour very often my lord; for, after all, you don't look much like a man of buſineſs.

Ld. Mal. O Lord, ſir! you're miſtaken in me; I love ſtate affairs mightily; and underſtand 'em, tho' I ſay it, paſſably well: why, I had a politic maſter all the while I was in *France*; without vanity, I got off a ſheriff this winter, in ſpight of the commiſſioners.

Sir Ruff. Was not *Maria* with you at *Wiſhwell*'s?

Ld. Mal. Ay, ay, *Maria*, came in and interrupted us; *Maria* came in——a lady of your acquaintance,——as good a maid, tho' I ſay it——

Sir Ruff. Though you ſay it? What can you ſay of her?

Ld. Mal. Why, thou haſt ſuch an aking tooth after that maidenhead of hers; but ſhe won't marry you: beſides, ſhe has no maidenhead.

Sir Ruff. Has your lordſhip no coxcomb?

Ld. Mal. Why, what do you mean, Sir *Ruff?* I never was aſk'd ſuch an uncivil queſtion in all my life. Jeſu! mayn't a man make a jeſt, or ſo, upon a friend, in a civil way?

Sir Ruff. Not where my honour, or the honour of my miſtreſs is concern'd.

Ld. Mal. Piſh, I honour her as much as you do: I think her virtuous, let the world ſay what they will of her.

Sir Ruff. Will that repair the injury? Damme, I'll have ſatisfaction, or I'll wring your neck off.

Ld. Mal. Help there! treaſon! I am the lord *Malepert*, ſeize him ſomebody——but, dear Sir *Ruff*, I meant no harm in the world; but as I love railing mightily, I can't forbear a witty jeſt ſometimes——

[Granger *and* Gayman *come forward.*

Sir Ruff. Damn your dull jeſt;——this place and company protect you, and ſo adieu, lord *Loggerhead.*

[*Exit.*

Ld. Mal. Mr. *Granger*, Mr. *Gayman*, your ſervant; were you at the Park laſt night?

Gay. Was your lordſhip a hunting with the king?

Ld. Mal. Jeſu! I a hunting? No, God forbid. You have the prettieſt trimming, Mr. *Granger*: did you buy it at the *French* proteſtant's?

Grang. That's a queſtion for my taylor.——Who was he that left you juſt now?

Ld. Mal. Honeſt Sir *Ruff*. Does the queen ſee company?

Grang. He us'd your honour ſomething coarſely, I thought.

Ld. Mal. Piſh, 'tis a pleaſant bluſtering fellow, I allow him all his humours, and he knows mine.

Grang. It ſeems he does.

Ld. Mal. Now you muſt know I am very quiet and good-natur'd 'till I am vex'd, but then I'm the devil.—

Gay. At twelve I'll meet you in the Park.

Grang. Stay, ſtay, we'll go together.

Ld. Mal. Did you loſe to-night, Mr. *Granger*?

Grang. Did your lady ſup at Mrs. *Wiſhwell*'s?

Ld. Mal. Piſh, did you win then?

Grang. Did my lord *Loſty* ſup there too?

Ld. Mal. Very fooliſh; were you a ſaver then?

Grang. Zounds! did you leave 'em alone? That's the way for you to be a winner.

Ld. Mal. Well, my wife does ſo laugh at him when we're alone; ſhe's only civil to him becauſe he's a relation. She ſays his converſation's ſo out of faſhion, and if he ſhou'd pretend to make love——

Gay. She wou'd make very good ſport with him.

Grang. I dare ſwear for her.

Ld. Mal. Yes, I vow now, for I aſſure you ſhe has a world of wit, as my aunt *Suſan* ſays: ſhe'll play upon me ſometimes before company; but that you know is the faſhion——

Grang. What, to play upon your lordſhip?

Ld. Mal. Piſh, no, I mean to uſe a huſband negligently in public; but then ſhe's ſo fond of me in private; nay, faith, our humours jump to a hair, ſhe'll rail

to

a miracle, and you know I love railing mightily—But do you resolve to quit basset?

Grang. Damn it, 'twas invented by the levellers, and suited to all capacities; 'tis the devil and all to lose always to fools.

Ld. Mal. I always lose too; but witty men, you know, are seldom lucky.

Grang. I must to my lodgings; send some rouleaus to the bank, to pay my damn'd debts, and learn to be wiser for the future: shall I have your honour's company?

Ld. Mal. Jesu! Mr. *Granger*, I beg you ten thousand pardons; I covet no man's company so much as yours; but I must go to Sir *Feminine Fanvile's*, drink tea at *Siam's*, and then to the levees of three privy counsellors.

Gay. You're a necessary man to 'em.

Ld. Mal. Why, really, bar Sir *Feminine*, there's not a man in town carry's 'em fresher news.

Grang. Nay, he's a prodigy of intelligence.

Ld. Mal. And very well with the ministry, upon my word: no matter who's in play, he sticks to the offices, and not the men; there's not a word spoken in the play-house, chocolate-house, or drawing room, but he gives 'em an account of.

Grang. You forget the coffee-houses.

Ld. Mal. O filthy! he leaves them to such as can endure the stink of tobacco: no, he's too delicate for that, and I believe nothing less than the betraying the secrets of a bosom friend, cou'd persuade him to speak to a man that came out of one. I went to him from visiting an old aunt, that was taking a pipe: the smoke, I believe, got into my perriwig, but he smelt me out immediately, and made his valet de chambre turn me down stairs, I must say that for him: nay, I vow he's an extraordinary fine gentleman, and knows a fool, as well———

Grang. As your lordship.

Ld. Mal. Yes, I vow now, does he: gad so, 'tis almost eight o'clock, so dear Mr. *Granger*, and Mr. *Gay-*

man, your ſervant: you'll be at my aunt *Suſan*'s this afternoon; 'tis her day you know.

Gran. Gay. Infallibly, my lord.

[*Exit* Ld. Mal. *one way*, Granger, Gayman, *another*.

SCENE *drawn, ſhews La.* Trickitt, Maria *and* Garniſh *making up the bank, cards ſcatter'd about.*

L. Tric. What luck's this child? To win of Sir *Limber Lowly*, and my lady *Sinker*, (both deſperate debts) loſe all our ready money, beſides a ſum to *Granger*.

Maria. Did Mr. *Granger* win? I came in late, you know.

L. Tric. Upon my life, child, we owe him a hundred and fifty pounds.

Maria. I take your word, madam; but indeed I thought he had been a loſer, I am ſure he fretted at the uſual rate.

L. Tric. You miſtake him, child, 'tis his humour; he's as hard to pleaſe as a ſick monkey; and when he is, it ſits as aukwardly upon him as a *French* ſuit on a young *Spaniard*, newly ſet out to travel.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. *Granger*'s man's to wait on your ladyſhip.

L. Tric. Tell him I'm gone to bed, bid him come after dinner, and the money ſhall be ready—[*Exit Serv.* He's ſtrangely preſſing; methinks he might have ſtay'd 'till next baſſet——Now if this fellow be fool enough not to underſtand me, and ſhou'd bring in the money, all will be diſcover'd. [*Aſide.*

Servant returns with three Rouleaus.

Serv. Madam, he ſays, Mr. *Granger* gives his ſervice to your ladyſhip, and has ſent you the hundred and fifty pounds he loſt to the bank.

L. Tric. Well, this ſitting up does ſo prey upon the memory: why, I durſt ha' ſworn he ow'd that ſum: well, child, as't happens, this is no ill night to thee.

Garn. Thanks to the timely meſſage—— [*Aſide.*

Maria.

Maria. They come ſo ſeldom, but Mr. *Granger*'s the moſt punctual man.

Garn. He's every way a man of honour.

L. Tric. So waſpiſh, there's no living with him: of all things he's my averſion.

Garn. I muſt be better ſatisfy'd of that, before I believe you. [*Aſide.*

Maria. He's ſometimes ſplenetic indeed, but 'tis thro' ſo much good ſenſe and breeding, 'tis rarely ſeen, and always diverting.

L. Tric. Dear *Maria*, how can you ſay this? did you ever know him offer at a civil thing? no, 'tis an arrant churl; and for the honour you mention, Mr. *Garniſh*, he talks too much of it, to have more than his ſhare.

Maria. I'll not diſpute his character with you; ſhall we meet anon at my lady *Suſan*'s?

L. Tric. I'll not fail you, child, ſhe's one of the gang.

Maria. I take my leave. [*Exit.*

L. Tric. Adieu, *Maria*, adieu dear child—Why what a credulous creature this is!

Garn. Lord, madam, how can you impoſe ſo upon your friend?

L. Tric. Tell me of friendſhip! no, as my lord ſays, there's no true friend but money——

Garn. How, madam?

L. Tric. And yourſelf. But let us get as much money as we can; 'twill ſecure your friendſhip to me.

Garn. It cannot need ſuch a ſecurity——Well, madam, you have reconcil'd me to ſome things——for your ſervice.

L. Tric. And for your own, good ſir.

Gran. That I cou'd never have thought on, for myſelf.

L. Tric. And you have perſuaded me to another thing.

Gran. For both our ſervices.

L. Tric. That I wou'd ha' done for nobody elſe.

Garn. There's no repenting of any thing I can do, for you, or with you; I am a ſlave to all your intereſts, em-

ploy your cunning, I'll assist your arts; cheat all your friends but me.

L. Tric. Cheat you?

Garn. Has Mr. *Granger* done any thing to make him your aversion? you won't allow him to be a man of honour; have you a mind to put him to the trial? When you refuse a man a commendation that every body gives him, you must pardon me, if I think, 'tis for some private reason of your own: besides, I never knew a woman declare an unreasonable aversion for a man in public, that had not a mind to have a better opinion of him in private.

L. Tric. What, you are jealous of him?

Garn. Not jealous, madam: but 'tis a weakness to be too secure; while I tally'd to the company, I had my eyes about me; and indeed by what you look'd, or did, or said to him, I cou'd not find out your aversion.

L. Tric. A very boyish jealousy indeed! he lost to us, and I was civil to him; nay, civil to his losses, not to him: I can do no more to serve the common cause, so certain to our interest——

Enter Florence.

Garn. I do believe you can do what you please; and I'll watch your pleasure—— [*Aside.*

L. Tric. Is your lord stirring yet, *Florence?*

Flor. He has been in his dressing-room this half hour, madam.

L. Tric. Then 'tis as I wou'd have it; and a fair time for me to go to bed——I come—— [*Exit* Flor.

Garn. Shall we meet this afternoon?

L. Tric. Not this afternoon, I have business; hardly this week I fear: I hope I've satisfy'd your jealousy. You don't know enough of me—— [*Exit.*

Garn. I do know enough, enough to satisfy me; there's no knowing more than she has a mind to;

And all the knowledge our weak search can find,
But proves, there is no knowing womankind. [*Exit.*

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

Wiſhwell *at her Toilet with* Chriſtian.

Wiſh. PR'ythee leave fidling, 'tis well enough.

Chriſt. Madam, you wou'd have your things ſit handſomely.

Wiſh. Decently, I wou'd; what you call handſomely, is a niceneſs, wou'd as ill become me as aſultana does a fat body, or a high commode a lean face; and only ſerve to make my decays more remarkable.

Chriſt. Will you pleaſe to uſe the waſh——

Wiſh. I uſe the waſh! a woman turn'd of fifty was ne'er deſign'd to be look'd upon: I may waſh, and patch, and pleaſe myſelf; cheat my hopes with the daily expence of plaiſter and repairs; nobody will take the tenement off my hands. Men uſe us as we uſe our ſpectacles, to draw the object nearer to the ſenſe: indeed we are the fitteſt means to guide and light their dark deſigns home to their ends on younger women. No matter for the character; I live by them, and they ſhall love by me. While I am miſtreſs of *Malepert*'s beauty, I am not very ſenſible of the loſs of my own: for her ſake I will be courted: I have ſo many how-d'ye's, and invitations in the morning upon her account; ſo many viſits in the afternoon; and ſo many bows in the drawing-room at night.

Chriſt. For her ſake you have ſo many rafflings, and whoever throws moſt, you win the prize: for her ſake, my proud lord *Lofty*, who ſcarce bows to heaven, cringes to you; and for her ſake the whole town calls you bawd. [*Aſide.*

Wiſh. Time has been, when by the merits of my own face —— but——

Chriſt. I had almoſt forgot, madam, Mrs. *Lucy* was here this morning, and deſires you to remember Mr. *Oglewell* of the Temple.

Wiſh. She may reſt herſelf contented, he is not for her turn:

turn: Mrs. *Siam* ſent her maid to his chambers yeſterday in the afternoon too; his man deny'd him at firſt, but afterwards confeſs'd, his maſter was in bed with a fine gentlewoman (one of the common fine things of the town—I ſuppoſe) and wou'd not be diſturb'd.

Chriſt. How, madam! pretend to marry Mrs. *Lucy* for love, and be in bed with another!

Wiſh. Nay, now he'll hardly marry for love, ſince he has found a remedy for love without marrying.

Chriſt. Baſe man! does not he fear a judgment will follow him? had it been a match, I was to have fifty pound of her, for putting your ladyſhip in mind of it.

Wiſh. And did the fool believe I wou'd turn match-maker in my old age?

Chriſt. Why, madam, 'tis no ſuch diſhonourable character.

Wiſh. But 'tis ridiculous, and that's worſe: no, give me an office, where I may have thanks for what I do: go, get the chocolate—and remember I am at home to nobody but lady *Malepert.* [*Exit* Chriſtian.] 'Tis near the time ſhe was to call me for the *India* houſes; ſhe turns to more account, than any of my former acquaintance: ſhe has hitherto been rul'd by me; and I will keep her out of thoſe gentlemen's hands, if I can, who, by engaging her, as deep as they can, into their intereſt, will certainly, as ſoon as they can, take her out of mine. If I may believe her, nobody but lord *Lofty* has yet been happy: he grows weary of preſenting; and muſt give place to gameſters that bid more: Sir *Ruff Rancounter* offers very fair: while I can keep her to men, where ſhe can like nothing but their money, I am ſafe; therefore that brute ſhall have her: but *Gayman* loves her; ſhe likes him too; and when the parties are ſo far agreed, there's but a little work for a third perſon to bring 'em together. I fear *Gayman*, as I ſhou'd a *French* privateer in the Channel without a convoy, and all my fortune on board one veſſel: for he's a maſter of thoſe thriving arts, and little rogueries, that cheat and pleaſe the women: then to his perſon, wit, and induſtry, he has a certain

reſpect-

respectful impudence in his behaviour, few women can find fault with, or resist.

Enter Christian.

Christ. Before I cou'd give your orders to deny you, lord *Lofty* was told you were at home.

Wish. This must be by *Malepert*'s appointment. Wait on him up. [Christian *goes out.*] But now he's out at court, he shall soon be so with her——How! Mr. *Gayman!*

Enter Gayman.

Gay. 'Tis well you nam'd me, madam; by the strangeness of your look, I was afraid you had forgot me.

Wish. I am surpris'd you shou'd use another name to be admitted here; where I command you shall always be welcome.

Gay. I was sure the name I borrow'd wou'd carry me thro' this family.

Wish. Your own can do as much.

Gay. Then 'tis since his disgrace: for, not three days ago, when you deny'd yourself to every body, and to me, among the crowd of your unseasonable visitors, my lord *Lofty* and lady *Malepert* were notoriously above stairs with you; above stairs, in private with you; with you or without you.

Wish. How, Mr. *Gayman!* notoriously at my house?

Gay. Why, yes faith, madam, it was very notorious: and you were so little cautious of concealing it, their pages were at play all the afternoon before the door: it made a jest for every body that went by; and wou'd have been apprehended by the very blind cuckold himself, had he happen'd in the way.

Wish. 'Tis very well, sir; now you show yourself.

Gay. Why, faith, I can't help it; I must show myself upon these occasions; 'tis every honest man's cause and duty to be concern'd to find the best things so abus'd; to see a young lady's pleasures fall so soon into the contempt and scandal of the town, thro' indiscretion or mis-

mismanagement: I don't tax you of either; but the world——

Wish. I defy the world——

Gay. The flesh, and the devil too, good madam: but they'll get the better of us all.

Wish. And you, the worst of devils. What of the world?

Gay. Why people, you know, are apt to prate: and when a woman of experience, as you may be, engages in these affairs, the world expects a conduct suitable to your grave character: all the miscarriages of an intrigue are laid on you; the lovers are call'd fools, and you have a worse name.

Wish. I see you come to rail; I laugh at you.

Gay. I came to make you merry; laugh with me, if you please; we'll laugh at other people——while he was in favour, I grant you, he might be a friend; and there was reason good for serving him——But I know you are truer to the interest of the drawing-room, than to think any man, that's in disgrace, can be a friend——Since my good lord is down, ev'n let him lie; another man may rise out of his fall——You can't want friends: I have a hard-hearted father must die at last; and then I can be what you think a friend, able to come up to your price of thanks: come, not to get a habit of, do a generous thing, and let me once speak well of you.

Wish. Very well.

Gay. Come, come, I'm in the secret, and therefore fittest to be trusted now: the lady's an out-lying deer; I know you have been accessary to some of her 'scapes already; and can help her over the pale upon occasion again, to serve a friend, Mrs. *Wishwell.*

Wish. We are both beholden to you.

Gay. If I am not to be oblig'd to her upon your account, 'tis but staying 'till my betters are serv'd, and then, as you manage matters, every man may hope to have her in his turn.

Enter Christian, *and goes out.*

Christ. Madam, my lady *Malepert*'s coming up.

Gay.

Gay. How, madam!

Wish. To hear how kindly you can speak of her.

Gay. Forgive what I have said; my fortune, interest, life, and all you shall command.

Wish. I would command your tongue. [Wishwell *receiving Lady* Malepert.] Thou charming creature! be for ever thus, thus dear, thus young, thus ever killing fair!

Lady. Dear *Wishwell*, I fear I have tir'd thy patience.

Wish. Doating to this degree, I needs must languish: but now I have you thus——

Gay. Flattering devil! [*Aside.*

Lady. My passionate gallant!

Wish. That title you may allow me, without injuring your lord——

Gay. There the question hangs.

Christian *enters, and whispers* Wishwell.

Lady. How! Mr. *Gayman!* you're a stranger here.

Gay. I'm sorry for that, madam; I am every where an humble servant of your ladyship's.

Wish. Would the devil had her for coming so unseasonably: I can't avoid leaving 'em together: but the opportunity shall do him little good:——your ladyship will allow me a minute, and I'll be with you again—— [*Goes out.*

Gay. That minute must be mine: and let that minute tell you, what all my life can ne'er enough explain, how much I value you. I won't believe 'tis from your own design that I'm thus us'd: I know I've enemies, but will not think you can be one of 'em.

Lady. I ne'er can be your enemy.

Gay. O, no! they're outward all, not near this tender breast, and most unworthy to possess your heart; that heart, which once you said was wholly mine.

Lady. And was not that a fault?

Gay. It was, to break your word.

Lady. Why did I say so?

Gay. Because then it pleas'd you, to speak a truth that

that charm'd me to be yours; and yours I muſt be, uſe me as you will:——but being yours.

Lady. Why did I meet you here?

Gay. To tell me where I next ſhall meet you.

Lady. Why will you preſs me thus to what will ruin me?

Gay. With *Wiſhwell*, I would have it—— [*Aſide*.

Lady. If you can think it fit——

Gay. There's nothing fit without you.

Lady. At *Siam*'s, this afternoon, we raffle there.

Gay. I raffle for a heart——

Wiſhwell *enters with* Siam.

Lady. Mrs. *Siam*, you're in your round of viſitation, I ſee.

Siam. I joy to find your ladyſhip here: I have the ſweeteſt things; I have 'em in the next room to ſhew you. Good lord! Mr. *Gayman!* how come you here? Whoever's the better for your company, I'm ſure I ſhall have no reaſon to thank you for't, at this time.

Wiſh. Nor I neither, pox take him— [*Aſide*.

Gay. Why, what's the matter, pray?

Siam. The matter! why, a jealous, old, coxcombly fellow, (that ought to be a cuckold, if I had womanhood enough about me to make him one) is matter enough for all the misfortunes, that can call upon a woman of my public employment.

Gay. What! my noble captain *Drydrubb*, your huſband?

Siam. Ay, ay, the noble captain, as you call him: would he were a captain now, to be commanded into *Flanders*, that I might hope to be rid of him: but I'm ev'n well enough ſerv'd, I muſt have a ſoldier, with a pox to him: a man of honour, as he calls himſelf, to command me: one that has out-liv'd the memory of being a corporal, in the civil wars; and has borrow'd the title of a captain, only to run in debt with.

Gay. He's man of honour enough, to be jealous it ſeems.

Siam. Yes, yes, he's jealous enough to be a man of honour,

honour, if that will make him one: but he's jealous of himself, I suppose, and his own honour; and that makes him jealous of me, and mine: but I've a plaguy life with him, that's the truth on't; he follows me all over the town, dogs me wherever I go: all this live-long morning he has been at my heels: he says I run a gadding after the fellows, and if he finds out my haunts he swears he'll pepper me: now if he has seen your servants at the door, the whole world shall never persuade him but I came upon an assignation with your worship; and 'twill hardly be in the power of a guinea to make him quiet again.

Lady. Poor *Siam!* I vow she has a dismal time on't.

Siam. A dismal time on't, indeed, if your ladyship knew all; but for God's sake, Mr. *Gayman*, as you tender the reputation and quiet of a poor woman, that have been younger in my time, be so kind now——

Gay. Well, Mrs. *Siam*, I will be so kind.

Siam. Else this overcharg'd blunderbuss will have the impudence to come in, and let fly among the ladies.

Gay. I'll deliver you this time from his jealousy; I am a slave to the interest of your sex:——your servant, ladies—— [*Exit.*

Siam. Well, this Mr. *Gayman* is a civil gentleman in appearance, and that's as much as a lady can desire in a young man: truly I'm oblig'd to him——shall I bring in the stuffs, madam? They are the newest things; I'm sure they'll please your ladyship.

Lady. Some of your stale ware, *Siam.*

Siam. Upon the faith of a christian, madam, they never saw this side of the world yet; they're just out of the *India* house, and never were open'd to any one, but this morning, to my lady *Kill-Chairman*; she indeed is my very good customer, and bought four pieces of 'em for a mantua.

Lady. For her whole family sure, four pieces!

Wish. We'll look upon 'em in the next room, if you please——But, *Siam*, what have you done about our raffle? Are there subscribers enow?

Siam. I want but one, madam; I have got a very ho-

neſt generous gentleman to make one, Sir *Ruff Rancounter*; if he wins, he'll ſcorns to carry any thing out of the company; ſome of the ladies will be the better for him. Leave theſe things to me: the men I provide for you, at my houſe, ſhall be men of honour, I aſſure you, and for the purpoſe you deſign 'em. [*Exit.*

Lady. What purpoſe can ſuch a beaſt, as *Rancounter*, be deſign'd for among the women?

Wiſh. Why, like a beaſt, bear the burden of your expences upon your pleaſures. None but ſuch beaſts will bear 'em: think on that.

Lady. I hate him.

Wiſh. I would not have you love him: love yourſelf, and then you you'll love nothing but your intereſt. Come, come, a thouſand pounds may anſwer for the man: 'tis but ſuffering a little of his company; and why not a little of his, as well as more of your huſband's? They're beaſts alike: only this, in proportion, bids more to be receiv'd by you. Then he can do you no injury, either in your quiet, or your fame: for you can no more be in love with him, (which is a great bleſſing in theſe affairs) than the town can think you ever allow'd him to be in love with you; and is not a thouſand pounds a round ſum, for doing ſo little, and ſuffering nothing?

Lady. But why ſhould I do any thing againſt my inclinations? I don't want the money.

Wiſh. Madam, madam, every woman wants a thouſand pounds: and for your inclinations, if you allow them to get the better of you, you are undone; there are a great many pretty gentlemen to be had; but what will you get by any of 'em in the end? Juſt ſo much experience, and repentance for your pains: you may be in love with a man, that has it in his temper to be in love with half the town; as all the young men are. And how will it agree with the pleaſure of your pride, or the pride of your pleaſure, to be forſaken? No, no, no love: we'll learn that of the men——

For love is nature's appetite diſeas'd;
Where we have no concern, we're always pleas'd. [*Exe.*

SCENE

SCENE *St.* James's Park.

Enter Sir Ruff *meeting* Gayman *and* Garnish.

Sir Ruff. Did you see lord *Malepert?*

Gay. What! must it be a tilt, Sir *Ruff?*

Sir Ruff. No, no, hang fighting among friends: I have other business for him; of another nature, gentlemen; I make love to his wife.

Gay. How? how? pray recollect yourself,

Sir Ruff. Nay, not that I think her any better than her chambermaid: 'tis the woman does my business, and not the lady; I had rather have a prudent practiser of the trade, to use as I think fit; than a gentlewoman (that only does it now and then, for her diversion) to use me as she pleases. But, you know, a man in this town is no-body, without the reputation of a quality-intrigue: and all that I do for it, is to talk of in company; and be better respected by the women: for you know, they generally judge, just as other women have judg'd before 'em.

Garn. But if the intrigue be only on your side?

Sir Ruff. Sir, I would have you to know, 'tis on her side too: *Gayman*, thou art a pretty fellow, and shalt be my confident: there's no living without communicating matters of this kind, to have both parties the better for 'em. But, Mr. *Garnish*, to convince you, the husband's strangely fond of me, and you know, that always proceeds from the good opinion of the wife.

Gay. I may make use of this. [*Aside.*

Sir Ruff. But besides, I have made madam *Wishwell* my friend: it costs me money indeed; but she takes the troublesome part off my hands: she makes love for me; I'm only to stand by what she says: she sends me word, we are to raffle at *Siam*'s in the afternoon.

Gay. But, my lord and you are fall'n out.

Sir Ruff. That's no matter, if I could meet him.

Enter

Enter Lord Malepert.

Garn. Here he comes, ready for your purpoſe.

Sir Ruff. Give me thy hand, dear bully; faith, I'm ſorry you provok'd me to uſe you ſo untowardly.

Ld. Mal. Really, Sir *Ruff*, and ſo am I, with all my heart; I meant no harm, I vow and ſwear: if I had not thought you my friend, I would not have pretended to be witty in your company: but, faith and troth, you were bloody angry.

Sir Ruff. Come, come, ſhall we dine together?

Ld. Mal. With all my heart; upon condition you'll go with me to *Siam*'s in the afternoon.

Gay. Nay, that's but reaſonable—— [*To Sir* Ruff.

Sir Ruff. Then be it ſo; I'll go along with you.

Ld. Mal. Well, *Siam*'s the beſt woman in the world: ſhe's the rareſt company, and has all the news. Then ſhe's ſo fond of me, that I verily believe I ſpend above a thouſand a year at her houſe.

Sir Ruff. Nay, faith, then you have reaſon.

Ld. Mal. I vow, I ſhould be the worſt man in the world if I did not love her, ſhe has done ſo handſomely by my wife.

Gay. As how, pray?

Ld. Mal. Why, ſhe heard a noble lord, and a great man at *Whitehall* ſay, he was in love with her: and what do you think this good creature did?

Gay. Why, pray perhaps, that ſhe might reſiſt the temptation.

Ld. Mal. O fooliſh! pray? no, quite contrary: ſhe came to her next morning, and told her of it; that ſhe might be ſure to avoid him.

Garn. No doubt, that was the reaſon.

Gay. But, my lord, you are not there ſo often as you us'd.

Ld. Mal. Why ſince her marriage, the houſe is turn'd upſide down: what do people marry for, but to live eaſy with every body? when there's no danger of a rival. Methinks a man ſhould think every one his friend: I'm ſure 'tis the maxim of my family.

Gay.

Gay. It ſhould be the maxim of every man, that's born to your fortune, my lord.

Ld. Mal. But the old captain, you muſt know, has got it into his head, to be jealous of me; and is grown ſo troubleſome, he can't endure a witty man ſhould come into his doors.

Garn. You have given him cauſe, my lord.

Ld. Mal. Nay indeed, if Mrs. *Siam* was to be had, I believe I ſtand as fair for her as any body: but I never had the leaſt diſhonourable thought of her; never ſaw any thing bare of her, above her knee: an inviolable friendſhip I muſt own for her: I love her mightily.

Gay. I thought there was ſomething in't.

Sir Ruff. Ay, ay, no doubt on't. But we ſhall loſe our dinner.

Ld. Mal. Nay, I wou'd not loſe my dinner for more than I'll ſpeak of, at this time: my wife is very regular at her meal: if I chance to loſe a meal, ſhe ſays, I an't my own man again in a week after.

Sir Ruff. Nor your wife's neither, my lord; come, let's be gone. [*Exeunt Ld.* Mal. *and Sir* Ruff.

Gay. 'Tis almoſt one: *Granger* ſaid he wou'd be here.

Garn. That friend of yours, is a pleaſant, ſnarling fellow, and a good companion: 'tis pity he's ſo very peeviſh.

Gay. He has a thouſand good qualilies, but they have all a tang of his teſty humour, that ſhows itſelf in all he ſays and does: like a drop of oil left in a flaſk of wine, in every glaſs you taſte it.

Garn. Here the gentleman comes to anſwer for himſelf.

Granger *enters with a footman.*

Foot. Sir, my lord commanded me to tell you company dines with him, and he deſires you'd pleaſe to be there.

Gran. Well, well. [*Exit* Footman.] Zounds! a man had as good be ty'd to a ſtake, and baited like *Tom Dove* on *Eaſter Monday*, as be the neceſſary appurtenance of a great man's table; they make me as much their own, as if I were part of their ſide-board.

Garn. What's the matter, Mr. *Granger?*

Gay. Why in ſuch a paſſion?

Gran. Paſſion! why they uſe me as if I had none about me. They won't let me be my own man twenty-four hours together.

Garn. That's hard indeed; but pray who does encroach upon your liberty?

Gran. Who? why who ſhou'd dare; but they who may do any thing: here's the new favourite ſummons me to dine with him: he ſends me word there will be company; and, I ſuppoſe, deſigns to ſerve me up as part of the entertainment.

Gay. Now wou'd many an honeſt fellow be proud of this invitation, and think his fortune made by it

Gran. Why, I have known many an honeſt fellow proud of the pox; but my ambition does not lye that way, nor my inclination at preſent; but thither I muſt go, tho' I was engag'd to my Lord *Lofty*.

Garn. Will he admit of no excuſe?

Gran. No, plague on it, his meſſages are like ſubpœnas: I may ſtay away, if I think fit; but I ſhall pay a ſwinging fine for my contempt.

Gay. 'Tis not a month ſince he was in your favour, and *Lofty* cou'd not get a word from you.

Gran. And 'tis not yet a fortnight ſince he was mean enough to accept of an employment, and *Lofty* had the ſoul to part with three.

Gay. Sure, *Granger*, thou loveſt a nodding wall, that will bury thee in its ruins, tho' it never gave thee ſhelter while it ſtood: as no one was the better for *Lofty*'s greatneſs, methinks it ſhou'd be difficult to be concern'd for his diſgrace; I'm ſure I'll condole with no man that wou'd never give me cauſe to rejoice with him.

Gran. He mended every day.

Gay. No faith, he kept up his character to the laſt; and had his politics and honeſty been put into the ſcale, the balance had been even.

Gran. This is ungenerous.

Gay. 'Tis what you have ſaid of him within this month, and ſtill the man's the ſame.

Gran.

Gran. If you muſt rail, let the new favourite be the ſubject.

Gay. Why, what's his fault?

Gran. Why, he's a favourite; that will make faults, if it find none.

Gay. You may diſtinguiſh the man from the favourite; he's ne'er the worſe for having it in his power to do good offices: beſides his company's good; his table eaſy; and, *Granger*, he has always been a friend to you.

Gran. A friend to me! a tyrant. Has he not carried me about like *Bajazet*, and made me talk too? Zounds, does he take me for a parrot? the bird deſerves his meat, and cleaning of his cage, that talks for it. You, who love the company and tyranny of courtiers, much good may do you with it: for my part 'tis a hell to me, and I'll keep out on't as long as I can——

Enter captain Drydrubb.

Capt. Do'ſt talk of hell, old boy? there's a parſon in the bottom on't I believe; for there's no hell, no purgatory, no devil, but of the clergy's providing. What, thou haſt married ſome old libidinous gentlewoman?—

Gran. Not I, indeed, ſir; I have occaſion ſufficient to be out of humour, without having a wife, young or old, to provoke me: you muſt gueſs again.

Capt. Not I, ſir, I ſhan't gueſs again; you may have it for the keeping, if you won't tell us what's the matter with you: but you ſay you're a whoremaſter?

Gran. Not I, ſir.

Capt. Not you, ſir! why, may be then you are not ſo honeſt a man; but if you are not a married man, you muſt be a whoremaſter; and why you ſhou'd be out of humour, who carry all the women before you, I can't tell: cuckoldy huſbands indeed, that come after you, have ſomething to provoke 'em: grant us patience, I ſay.

Gay. Why how now, captain?

Capt. Why how now! ha! are you there, ſir? Can't all the town ſuffice you, ſir? but you muſt be running after my domeſtic, ferreting in my borough?

Gay. I, captain?

Capt. Yes, you, no captain: for all your cunning, I have found out your haunt, your meeting-place: will no less a bawd than Mrs. *Wishwell* serve your turn? but I see the ambition of the boy; by *Pompey*, I smoke you: why, what an impudent fellow are you to think of making a cuckold of a captain? Did you ever hear of a captain that was a cuckold, sir? 'twas in the parliament army if you did, that I can tell you. A parliament captain might be a cuckold indeed; but 'twas because he had not the king's commission to protect his wife then.

Gran. There were some cuckolds in that army, I believe, who made use of their horns to toss the cavaliers out of the kingdom.

Capt. But I was always on the king's side——

Gran. Beaten?

Capt. Beaten? ay, sometimes beaten, sir: 'tis no such wonder for a captain to be beaten, I hope. But I'll not be a cuckold, sir, not be beaten by a distaff, a wife: have I brought my honour from *Edghill*, both the *Newburys*, and *Marston-Moor*, nay, and from *Worcester* too, to lose it in an *Indian* house? then fortune is my foe.

Gay. Faith, captain, your honour's safe for me; but I cou'd tell you——

Capt. What can you tell me, sir? I know enough already; and more than I care to know.

Gay. Why, I could tell you who attempts your honour, if you had temper to hear me——

Capt. Temper to hear you! why I'm as temperate a tom-titt; as mild as *May*: pr'ythee tell me, good boy, who?

Garn. Nay, now you're engag'd in honour to tell him.

Gay. I am loath to make a division among friends, but I must acquit myself; and truly I have observ'd some winks, and passing familiarities, between lord *Malepert* and your wife.

Capt. Nay, I thought there was no good towards, in his coming so often to the house; but does that snivel-

ling

ling pea-chick think to make a cuckold of me, who have ſeen all the ſervice of Chriſtendom, from the meeting the *Scotch* army at *Coldſtream*, to the merry meeting at *Hounſlow-Heath?*

Gay. Nay, I have ſeen Mrs. *Wiſhwell* carry whiſpers between 'em.

Capt. I'll demoliſh, by *Pompey!* I'll break her windows, and turn over my old punk to the ſeſſions, to anſwer the battery: but for that beardleſs, ſhambling, whey-fac'd——The are to raffle at our houſe this afternoon: This is *Wiſhwell*'s deſign to bring 'em together; but I ſhall part them with a clap of thunder, by *Pompey*.

Gran. Well ſaid, old Baskethilt.

Capt. Yes, faith, I'll ſwinge 'em: I remember your dammee-boys, your ſwaſhes, your tuquoques, and your titire-tues: have us'd the fleece, and ſpeering's; thrown clunch at a whole table, where half of 'em wore velvet patches: had drank my tun of brandy, before this puleing puppy's father taſted milk. I'll ranſack 'em, by *Pompey*.

Garn. Can we aſſiſt you, captain?

Capt. Not that I care what any man can do with the old jade: But I won't be a cuckold in my old age, gentlemen; I won't be a cuckold: I can make a thruſt ſtill —ſa—ſa—

Gay. All vigour to the ſtump!

Capt. And, by *Pompey*, they ſhall find I am.

Gay. Will you dine with us, captain?

Capt. Dine with you! you muſt lend me a guinea then, one little guinea; or I muſt go home to the old *Jezebel*, and compound for a cuckoldom, by ſtaying abroad as long as ſhe pleaſes.

Gay. Here's that ſhall prevent it. [*Gives him guinea.*

Capt. God-a-mercy, boy! by *Pompey*, now the day's again our own: we'll go, and cheriſh ourſelves with a good dinner, ſome wine, and much *Nants*.

And then reſolv'd for war, we'll boldly try,
Who beats up my wife's quarters, he, or I. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE *lady* Susan's *lodgings.*

Enter lady Susan, Maria, *and Lord* Malepert.

L. Su. COME, dear *Maria*——

Mar. You ladyships's lodgings are so neat!

Ld. Mal. Siam and I fancy'd all the furniture: we ran about to shops three days together; I love running about mightily.

L. Su. True, nephew, you paid coach-hire; but I vow, *Maria*, 'twas every bit of it my own fancy.

Mar. 'Tis very well fancy'd: and every thing in such order!

L. Su. O law! you know 'tis my day; and then Mr. *Granger* and the rest of 'em will certainly be here.

Ld. Mal. Granger's a wit; he and I are very great; and I love a wit mightily.

Mar. Well, madam, you're oblig'd to Mr. *Granger*.

L. Su. O Jesu! but, dear *Maria*, tell me, when, where, and how; I long to know.

Mar. Last night at my lady *Malepert*'s.

Ld. Mal. Yes, I vow, and my wife frump'd all the while, and did not say one word.

L. Su. Well, go on, dear child, I'm impatient——

Mar. He said you were the only lady in the town that understood behaviour and good breeding.

L. Su. O law! and did he?

Ld. Mal. Yes, I vow, our family was always remarkable for good breeding.

L. Su. Dear nephew, don't interrupt her: well, dear child——

Mar. He said experience had ripen'd you to woman——

Ld. Mal. Yes, I vow, my aunt was five and forty last *Lammas*.

L. Su. Nay, nephew, know when to hold your tongue: come, *Maria*——

Mar. But that of all things, he despis'd those unfledg'd creatures,

creatures, the town calls beauties; a company of unexperienc'd girls, without the knowledge of conversation, in which your ladyship excell'd.

Ld. Mal. Nay, my aunt can talk as much as the best of us.

L. Su. O crimine! this was strangely obliging.

Mar. Then he said you had the sweetest page; and he was always dress'd so prettily——

L. Su. Poor dear *Jano!* and did he like the child? he shall see him in his night-gown

Ld. Mal. But you forget, *Maria*, he said happy the man that were in that child's place; and sigh'd so sillily——

Mar. Then looking scornfully at all the ladies——

Ld. Mal. Yes, and upon my wife too; I assure you, she took it bloody ill of him.

Mar. He swore no lady had charms like yours, nor set 'em off so well——

L. Su. He has not seen me in my new mantua yet.

Mar. Then rav'd on your complexion; and for your eye-brows——

L. Su. O law! I hope he knows nothing of them.

Mar. They were the strings of *Cupid*'s bow; your eyes the only arrows.

L. Su. And did he say all this?

Mar. Yes, and laugh'd at you. [*Aside.*

Ld. Mal. Yes, I vow, did he, and really 'twas very foolish——

Mar. To see how out of counteance we were to hear it.

Enter Jano.

Jano. Madam, Mr. *Granger* and Mr. *Gayman* are coming up.

Ld. Mal. Lord! what shall I do?

Mar. What, afraid to be seen with your aunt?

Ld. Mal. No, I vow now, I an't afraid: but I wou'd not have my wife know it for the world tho'.

L. Su. Well, nephew, go into my closet; there's *Quarles* upon the japan table for you.

Ld. Mal. What, the book with pictures! nay then, 'tis well enough; I'll go in, and divert myself. [*Exit.*

L. Su. Divert himself! Jesu! did you ever hear such an unseemly expression before ladies?

Mar. Unseemly, madam!

L. Su. O law! child: but, dear *Maria*, pull down my mantua; they're just a coming.

Enter Granger *and* Gayman.

L. Su. Mr. *Granger*, Mr. *Gayman*, your humble servant.

Gay. I never saw any thing so pretty as your ladyship's sconces.

L. Su. You're so obliging: and how do you like 'em, Mr. *Granger?*

Grang. As they are your ladyship's I must admire 'em.

L. Su. They were made in *France*, I assure you, by madame's own workman——Child, bid my woman set chairs—— [*Mrs.* Judy *sets chairs.*

Grang. Wou'd we might have her company instead of the ladies.

Gay. Your ladyship's woman's very pretty.

L. Su. And has a world of wit, I assure you.

Grang. There's nobody so much set off by a handsome woman as your ladyship.

L. Su. O law! that's particular—— [*Aside.*] But, Mr. *Granger*, do you think her pretty?

Grang. By reflection from your ladyship.

L. Su. Still particular——[*Aside.*] Mr. *Granger*, shall I beg a word with you? [*They all rise*] 'Tis business; I hope the company will pardon me.

Gay. What an affected doating fool's this? How can you bear her?

Mar. I must be civil to her for the sake of her relations.

Gay. You'll be at *Siam*'s about five.

Mar. I'll not fail.

Gay. I'll ask for you—— [*Aside.*

L. Su. Never to be forgiv'n—[*To* Granger *aloud, and laughing.*] But, Mr. *Gayman*, have you seen the stuffs a

Siam's? there are three or four the ſweeteſt pieces: I bought the red and ſilver for a night-goon.

Gay. 'Twill certainly become your ladyſhip.

Grang. Pinks and lilies: exactly her complexion.

L. Su. O law! ſir! well, I wonder *Trickitt* is not come yet; I have not ſeen her almoſt theſe two hours; but, Jeſu! there's a coach ſtopp'd; I hope 'tis her's.

Jano. 'Tis my lady *Trickitt's*; ſhe's juſt landed.

L. Su. Landed! pray mind, Mr. *Granger*, how prettily he expreſſes it; he ſays ſhe's landed.

Grang. Proper, and apt indeed, were it out of a kennel.

[*L.* Trickitt, *aloud from the bottom of the ſtairs, anſwer'd by lady* Suſan, Trickitt *enters.*

L. Tric. Su——

L. Su. Trickitt——dear, dear creature!

L. Tric. Dear, dear *Suky!*

Gay. How the monkies cling together!

L. Su. Well, *Trickitt*, this was barbarouſly done, I vow and ſwear now, neither to ſee me, nor let me hear from thee in two whole hours: as I hope to breathe now, I was juſt going to write thee a ſcolding letter.

L. Tric. Nothing but buſineſs, and my lord's commands could have prevented me.

Enter Garniſh.

L. Su. Mr. *Garniſh*, your ſervant.

L. Tric. O, Mr. *Garniſh!* you can tell us: does Sir *Symphony* bold forth to-night?

Garn. He'll tell you himſelf immediately, madam; I met him at the end of the ſtreet; and he told me he had but five viſits to make in his way hither, and wou'd be with you in an inſtant.

L. Su. Well, I vow, 'tis a civil gentleman.

Grang. You ſpeak of him with ſome concern, madam.

L. Su. Who, I, ſir? No, I vow, a filthy unmannerly fellow, and if he had not the fiddles, now and then, wou'd be good for nothing. I abhor him, I vow I do. O law! what had I like to ha' done? [*Aſide.*

Grang. Your ladyſhip and lady *Trickitt* deſign to be at his muſic I hope, notwithſtanding this averſion?

L. Su. What! on my day? Jesu! Mr. *Granger*, what do you take me for? Yet I love music to an extravagance, I vow now; but the world, Mr. *Granger*, what wou'd the world say?

Grang. You're above their censure, madam: the receiv'd opinion of your good breeding will justify your ladyship in any thing.

L. Su. Jesu! *Trickitt*, how Mr. *Granger* mistakes the matter? 'tis not that I fear to commit an error in good breeding, not I, I assure you; but if I shou'd be so light, to go to public places, when all the world is sensible 'tis my day, they must needs think 'twere an assignation; and that for a lady of my quality——

Enter Sir Symphony.

Sir Sym. Ladies, your most obeysant servant; I'm come to you with an invitation from the Muses; all the world have promis'd me the honour of their company; and yet if I am refus'd your ladyships, I shall think my house a solitude.

L. Su. You can have no company of mine to-night, sir——I must use him scurvily before Mr. *Granger*, else he may be jealous; and I would not have 'em quarrel here for the world. [*Aside.*

Sir Sym. Cruel creature! but is there no hopes, madam?

L. Su. Nay, sir, pray be quiet; lord, can't you let a body alone? Pray what have I to do with your hopes? Really, Mr. *Granger*, this fellow is a forward impertinent fop, so he is.

Grang. I hope, madam, his forwardness does not proceed from any encouragement you have given him?

L. Su. Jesu! sir, I give a man encouragement!

Grang. I only speak my fears, madam.

L. Su. You're so obliging, sir—— [*To* Granger.
Well, this is past dispute. [*To herself.*

Gay. What have you there, Sir *Symphony?*
[*Looking on his Table-book.*

Sir Sym. Why, this is a catalogue of the ladies I visit, ogle, and say soft things to; seven and fifty, widows, wives,

wives, and maids: and if I don't succeed with some of 'em, I have been a civil person to little purpose.

Gay. I'll follow you immediately—— [*To* Maria.

Mar. I'll take my time—— [*Goes off.*

Enter Jano.

Jano. Madam, Mrs. *Prattle* has sent her servant, to desire your ladyship to carry her to the Park to-morrow night.

L. Su. How prettily the child delivers his message? [*Kisses him.*] Pray kiss him, Mr. *Granger*, he has the sweetest breath; this will give an opportunity to take off my kiss. [*Aside.*] You are mightily oblig'd to Mr. *Granger*, child, you should make him a visit now and then; but, child, present my service to her, and beg her to pardon, or rather pity my misfortune: for I han't one day free 'till Tuesday sennight; and then, if she pleases, she may command me——But hold, child——tell her, *Trichitt* and I intend to go to shops, and see sights, all day long on Monday, not one shall 'scape us, from the fat girl in St. *Martin's-lane*, (where we intend to begin at nine exactly) to the embroidered prince of *Gilolo*. If she's for a frolic, child, we shall be glad of her company. [*Ex.* Jano.] This is a hint for Mr. *Granger*, we shall be sure of him——Well, don't you think *Prattle* has a world of wit?

Sir Sym. She's a most exquisite lady, and one——

L. Su. I did not ask your opinion, sir.

Sir Sym. I find I am unfortunate to-day, and will walk off with my disgrace, in hopes of better times—— [*Exit.*

L. Su. But your opinion, gentlemen, you are judges.

Gay. She says a great deal, madam——

L. Su. And very well to, I vow and swear now; but what say you, Mr. *Granger?*

Grang. Faith, I think she's all talk, and no company.

L. Su. O law! why she plays at little games to a miracle.

Grang. The blind horse is fittest for the mill.

Garn. She's a lady of great acquaintance.

Grang. Nay, ſhe's the univerſal crony of the ſex; not a female from thirteen to five and thirty can be a week in town without a viſit from her, which makes her very convenient to her male relations.

L. Su. O law! Mr. *Granger!* I vow I believe her as virtuous as myſelf; but then ſhe ſings, and plays upon the virginals ſo ſweetly, and dances country dances.

Grang. Nay, doubleſs ſhe has all her motions to a miracle; and for *Joan Saunderſon*——

L. Su. O law! Mr. *Granger*, you're ſo ſtrangely s'terical: I believe you laugh at us all behind our backs.

Grang. Fools I laugh at to their faces: but ſuch as your ladyſhip——

L. Su. O Jeſu! Mr. *Granger.*

Grang. Wit, beauty, and good breeding, madam, command reſpect.

L. Su. Well, he's ſtrangely obliging——What, leaving us already, Mr. *Gayman?*

Gay. Buſineſs calls me from my pleaſure, madam. [*Exit.*

Grang. I'm ſure there's ſomething in't——

[*Obſerving* Trickitt *and* Garn.

L. Su. Mr. *Granger*, you are melancholy o'th' ſudden, are you not well? will you have ſome of my milk-water?

Grang. My fever's in the ſpirits, madam.

L. Tric. Nay, there's ſomething extraordinary; we all obſerve a change, ſir.

L. Su. I'll lay my life he's in love, child. [*Aſide.*

L. Tric. I hope he is, to be reveng'd of him.

L. Su. Well, is it ſo, Mr. *Granger?*

Grang. In company, like this, 'tis difficult to live without a paſſion—— [*Applying it to* Trickitt.

L. Su. Well, this is a plain declaration. We muſt not force him to a confeſſion; 'twill preſs his modeſty too far, I vow now. [*Laughs.*

Garn. The confeſſion's but too plain; tho' ſhe miſtakes it. [*Aſide.*

L. Tric. Why ſo ſullen, ſir?

Garn. Have I not cauſe?

Ld.

L. Tric. You mistake it, but I shall find a time.

[*Leaving him.*

Garn. I shall find it for you.

[*L.* Susan *and* Trickitt *whisper.*

Grang. We interrupt the ladies. Let's take the hint, and leave 'em——

[*They go out.*

L. Su. O law! gentlemen, I beg a thousand pardons—What gone! well, I am so glad I have thee to myself: child, if company comes, I have the head-ach, and am laid down——[*Exit Page, and returns.*] I have a secret of prodigious importance to tell thee; well, 'tis some men's misfortune to judge amiss: but what if *Granger* shou'd be in love?

L. Tric. Wou'd that be an error in his judgment?

L. Su. O law! you take me wrong; but what if he shou'd love a friend of yours? Well, I'll keep thee no longer in suspense; he has a good estate, besides his place, and I'm confident you wou'd not be against it.

L. Tric. What! a good estate?

L. Su. O crimine! I see I must be plain with thee: but did you observe how civil he was to me?

L. Tric. 'Twas his good breeding.

L. Su. But from a man that's thought morose——

L. Tric. 'Tis a sign of a clear sky; no clouds to raise the spleen.

L. Su. In short he loves me, and has e'en as good as told me so: and I vow and swear I design to let him know his passion is not unsuccessful: I have a plot upon him: my pretty little *Jano* shall visit him, as of himself, the child shall give him my song, and tell him, all the servants say, he's in love with me, and that you know will force a declaration.

L. Tric. No doubt, child.

L. Su. Well, we shall so laugh: and then you come to visit my lady *Susan Granger*——and then I return thy visit, and your servant tells you, my lady *Susan Granger*'s page has sent up word his lady's just a landing from her chair——and then say, your ladyship's, my dear, is the prettiest equipage in town——and then I say——well

I shall

I ſhall be ſo happy: for Mr. *Granger* reſolves to eat in plate.

L. Tric. Has he told you ſo?

L. Su. Jeſu! no; but then he laughs at all the fools; and will bring me home the lampoons: but I muſt inſtruct the child; come hither *Jano*; pr'ythee, my dear, pardon me a little.

L. Tric. That my very good friend ſhou'd be ſo blind! ſhe'll be ſomething long in her inſtructions; I'll into the cloſet—how! *Suky!* [*Looks in, and ſtarts.*] A man aſleep in the cloſet? [*Page goes out.*

L. Su. O law! I vow and ſwear now, 'tis my nephew—He was here before the company came, and you know ſince our quarrel, his wife won't give him leave to come to me. Well, I wonder at her irregular fancy in love, and friendſhip: how can ſhe endure an antiquated *Loſty*, while there's a youthful *Gayman* to be had? or make a confidence with ſuch a creature as *Wiſhwell*, that's paſt the taſte of a partie quarre?

L. Tric. Why, my lord, lord *Malpert*.

Enter Lord Malepert *frighted, and rubbing his eyes.*

Ld. Mal. O law! aunt! what's the matter? Why did you leave the door unlock'd? I'm ſure I made the back-door ſo faſt, that Mrs. *Judy* cou'd not get in, for all ſhe had a key: and I thought you had been old enough to look to your fore-door yourſelf. I'll ſwear, if I had thought you wou'd ſerve me ſo, I wou'd ha' gone down the back ſtairs, let the footmen have ſaid what they pleaſe, ſo I wou'd. But, good madam, not a word of ſeeing me here.

L. Tric. Well, truſt you to my diſcretion.

Ld. Mal. Nay, as for your diſcretion, madam, I know you: you have diſcretion enough to win all our money, I'll take your word for any thing but an alpieu.

[*Exit Lord. Mal.*

L. Tric. Well, dear *Suky*, adieu—nay no ceremony—

L. Su. O Jeſu! can you be my friend, and deſire I ſhou'd be ſo unbred——

L. Tric.

L. Tric. You disoblige me eternally, if you stir a step farther.

L. Su. To obey you my dear——[*L.* Trickitt *goes out.* Well for all 'tis my day, *Judy* and I will go masqued to Sir *Symphony*'s—*Trickitt, Trickitt*—Gads me, I have forgot half my business with her—I must go in, and write her a letter, before the child comes back—— [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to* Granger's *lodgings.*

Enter Granger *and* Garnish.

Garn. This is but an ill return, Mr. *Granger*, for she's a great admirer of your's.

Gran. Pox on her, she's so obliging: and takes such pains to inform me of what I don't care to know.

Garn. She calls you her dull *Amintor*, and says, for a well-bred person, you are certainly the most modest creature breathing: She knows you're in love with her, and has given you a thousand opportunities to declare your passion, which your respectful bashfulness has still prevented you from laying hold of.

Gran. From laying hold of! I am for laying hold of nothing he has about her, unless it be pretty Mrs. *Judy*; no, no, she speaks too plain to be understood: She may be in earnest, upon this subject, to herself; but she will always be a jest to me. Not but I shall put her to the right use.

Garn. Not the use you think of, if I can help it. [*Aside.*

Gran. What's the business?

Enter servant.

Serv. Sir, my lady *Susan Malepert*'s little page, is below, and says he comes to make your honour a visit.

Gran. Bring him up: does she send her embassador already? she has scarce had time to draw up his credentials: pr'ythee step into my dressing-room, while I give audience: [Garnish *goes in.*

Enter

Enter page.

My little *Ganymede!* thou'rt welcome; this was kindly done.

Jano. But if you ſhou'd tell my lady, ſhe'd never forgive me.

Gran. How do you know, child?

Jano. She told me ſo; for ſhe knows nothing of my coming.

Gran. Indeed, child?

Jano. No indeed now: nay, and if you ſhou'd tell her, I ſay ſhe talks kindly of you; ſhe'd kill me, ſo ſhe wou'd.

Gran. No ſure, child, ſhe cou'd not have the heart.

Jano. Yes indeed, ſhe bad me ſay ſo: and then I muſt not give you this ſong, unleſs you promiſe to give't me again; for ſhe ſaid a fine lady of quality writ it, upon a very good friend of yours.

Gran. But I may take a copy?

Jano. She ſaid nothing of that, I believe you may.

Gran. When will lady *Trickitt* be with your lady, child? [Granger *writes and talks.*

Jano. She's with her two or three times every day: and then the ſervants ſay your honour loves my lady, and intend to marry her, and be our maſter.

Gran. That were too great an honour for me, child: does not lady *Trickitt* ſend for thee ſometimes to ſing to her?

Jano. I go there by-and-by: but my lady will be ſo impatient to know what your honour ſays; for indeed ſhe does not a know a word of my being here.

Gran. That's a good child: but thy lady's a fine accompliſh'd lady; I dare not preſume to think of her. But here's the ſong again; my friend ſhall write an anſwer.

Jano. And ſhall I tell my lady ſo from your honour?

Gran. She knows nothing of the matter, child; but here's a guinea to buy cherries, and be ſure you call on my lady *Trickitt*, in your way home, and give her this: and if you bring me an anſwer, I have another guinea in

in my pocket for you: so, that's my good child, thy lady will want thee. [*Exit page.*

Garn. Well, sir, what news from the lady?

Gran. Nothing extraordinary; she has play'd the fool, and writ a song, as most people do, that are in love; pray read it, 'tis all her own, I assure you.

SONG.

PR'ythee, my dear, do not be so peevish
To her, that takes thy part:
Altho' thy eyes, and thy tongue so thievish,
Have stole away her heart.

For know my dear, it is I that love thee,
Most passionately:
And if thou't do as it doth behove thee,
I'll thank thee heartily,

Then, pr'ythee dear, let me know the morning,
When thou and I shall wed:
For I, by that, shall guess the evening
When we shall go to bed.

Garn. Tender and passionate! a very just conclusion!

Gran. Shall we look into the play?

Garn. I'll wait on you——'Till I know the success of your letter. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to* Siam's *house.* *Captain* Drydrubb *playing on his cittern, singing.*

Once I lay with another man's wife,
And I lay in a great deal of danger:
But now I have gotten a wife of my own——

And so I have, by *Pompey!* and here must I, to get a solitary guinea, now and then, to keep up loyalty, with a cup of cordial *Nants*, be forced to see a parcel of ague-fac'd puppies come perking and pruning after my damn'd jade: pox on her, can't she sell off all her foolish trumpery at once, and set up an honest sociable cellar, where

where a gang of generous, old, crimson-gilled, grumblin cavaliers, may take a pipe and a quartern, and my honour never to be concern'd? [Siam *comes forward.*

Siam. Nay, pr'ythee, good captain, the company will be here in a wink, as a body may say: can't you go take a civil walk in our fields, and leave me to carry on my occupation?

Capt. Occupation, with a pox to you! what, must I be turn'd out from under my own roof, to make room for a company of strutting cocking coxcombs? to help to carry on your occupation! ounds! I'll not stir a foot: I'll see who dares command, where I am master, I will, by *Pompey*.

Siam. But pray consider, captain——

Capt. That's good I'gad, talk of consideration to a captain: why dost not thou know that I have been undone for three kings, without any consideration? why I han't one single tester left to purchase a civil quartern; and how should I consider, with a pox to you?

Siam. Consider this then, captain——

[*Gives him a guinea.*

Capt. Ay, this is sense now; this I can consider: and pr'ythee, *Dolly*, do thou consider too; for honour, thou know'st, is the nearest and dearest thing to a soldier: so pr'ythee carry thyself like the wife of my bosom: for, look thee, child, 'tis not any concern for thy carcase that makes me speak——

Siam. Thank you, good captain.

Capt. No, by *Pompey*, 'tis my honour; and look to't, you had best, for I may return most rouzy bouzy, and if I find you have injur'd me, I swinge you all, by *Hercules*. [*Exit.*

Siam. So, get thee gone——*Betty*, is the china carry'd to my lady *Trickitt*'s?

Betty. The fellow's come back, madam.

Siam. Has he brought the money?

Betty. No, she bid him call next week.

Siam. Gods bodikins! had not she promis'd me ready money, I had never parted with my goods: well, there's no

no faith in these upstart great ladies: now must I make forty jaunts to t'other end o'th' town, and then I shall be paid in crack't money; and pay poundage into the bargain.

Betty. She said you were oblig'd to her for the custom of the court, and owed her a good turn.

Siam. And she thinks to put me off with the court-custom; that's good, i'faith: and I must afford her my ware for nothing: where's the heart set with diamonds I mist this morning?

Betty. We have search'd high and low, but to no purpose.

Siam. Then I suspect my lady *Sinker* took it.

Betty. Suspect! why, she's famous for it all the town over.

Siam. Nay, that may very well be: for, to my knowledge, greater ladies have been taken in the manner: but she shan't carry it off so.

Enter Lady Malepert *and* Wishwell.

I did not expect your ladyship this half hour: *Betty*, set on the tea-water. [*Exit* Betty.

Wish. We had a mind to chat by ourselves; pr'ythee shut the door, that we may be private.

[Siam *goes out, the scene shuts upon her.*

L. Mal. I swear I'm in mortal apprehensions: my lord *Lofty* has my secret, and I know him capable of any thing, to be reveng'd of me.

Wish. What can he do? he's disgrac'd at court: and if he rails now, no body will believe him.

L. Mal. Ay, but he knows——

Wish. What does he know? he knows you're a woman.

L. Mal. Lord! you know where I have a mulberry spot——

Wish. Is that all: he brib'd it from your woman.

L. Mal. Well, I'll do what I can to prevent his being believ'd; carry it civilly to him, and speak better of him than ever.

Wish.

Wish. So will the town believe you but an honest jilt at worst.

L. Mal. But this sir *Ruff* is such a blustering half-witted coxcomb!

Wish. If he had less wit, he were ne'er the worse for us; but a thousand pound, my dear!

Enter Betty.

Betty. My mistress bid me to tell your ladyship, Mr. *Gayman*'s within, and has made up the number of the raffle.

L. Mal. We're a little busy yet, but shall be glad of his company. [*Exit* Betty.

Wish. She's not displeas'd at his being here——This *Gayman* is not for our turn, child; he's an observer; besides, tho' he loves his pleasure, he swears he won't pay for't, 'till past forty——Here's *Maria*.

Enter Maria.

Mar. The chair must wait——

L. Mal. Send away thy chair, child; thou shalt go home with us: we have basset this evening.

Betty *to* Maria.] *Mar.* I'll but pay it off, and return in a moment.

Wish. That's a pretence: 'twas *Gayman* sent for her. He has so great a friendship for her, that, contrary to the principles of a well-bred man, he has ventur'd to give her good advice, and, I believe, warn'd her of our company.

L. Mal. I tax'd her of it, but she deny'd it.

Wish. She's discreet, and has but one weakness, immoderate love of play——

L. Mal. And love of me; I can make her do any thing——

Wish. But one, my dear: she's virtuous.

L. Mal. For that I keep her company——

Wish. And for her money: for, to my knowledge, you have won above 600 l. of her at comet.

L. Mal. Not so much at comet; but more at all games.

Enter

Enter Maria.

Mar. The company is all within, my lord, Mr. *Gayman*, and Sir *Ruff*——they're but looking on ſome ſtuffs, if you're at leiſure——

Enter lord Malepert, Gayman, *and ſir* Ruff.

L. Mal. My lord, ſhan't we have you company?

Ld. Mal. Indeed, my dear, I did but ſtay to chuſe ſome white peeling for a pair of breeches——

L. Mal. Drawers, my lord, you mean.

Ld. Mal. Jeſu! no; you know, I never wear linings.

L. Mal. Shall we raffle?

Ld. Mal, I muſt drink ſome tea firſt——*Siam*, is the tea ready?

Enter Siam.

Siam. 'Tis juſt put in——Good lord! I wonder you'll go ſo, like a ſloven: here's a periwig well comb'd; and a cravat ſits finely, to appear in ladies company.

Ld. Mal. Very well, Mrs. *Siam*; but had not you twins ſix months after you were marry'd, tho'?

Siam. No, Limberham: nor will you get half a one, in ſix years after you are marry'd.

Ld. Mal. I wonder, ladies, any body will buy of Mrs. *Siam.* Mrs. *Bantam*'s things are ten times better.

Siam. Ten times dearer, and ten times worſe, I faith——What! lord Tattletale, you told her, I ſaid, ſhe was a papiſt.

Ld. Mal. And ſhe ſaid you were an atheiſt, and believ'd in nothing but *Scotch* divinity.

Siam. And what do you believe in? nothing but a favourite, or ſir *Fœminine*, that old woman in man's cloaths——

Ld. Mal. He ſwears you're a bawd, Mrs. *Siam*——

Siam. Not to him, nor his neices, in good faith.

Ld. Mal. Why, why, pray?

Siam. Why, he has no uſe for one; and they need none: Lord help your head come drink your tea.

Gay. Already in council!

[*Sir* Ruff *with* Wiſhwell *and Lady* Malepert.

Sir Ruff. What madam *Wiſhwell* has told your lady-ſhip,

ſhip, you may depend upon: I am a man of honour, and your humble ſervant, madam.

Wiſh. My lady believes you, ſir *Ruff:* to night at twelve; you know the garden-door.

Sir Ruff. My happineſs is ſo amazing!

Wiſh. Contain yourſelf: we are obſerv'd. What! drinking tea, my lord?

Ld. Mal. Yes, if *Siam* wou'd give me a little ſugar; I love ſweet things mightily.

Siam. Yes, too much for a wit; there; 'tis ſyrup for you—— [*Giving him ſugar.*

L. Mal. Pr'ythee, *Siam*, fill me ſome tea.

[*Sir* Ruff *goes aukwardly to help my lady, and ſpils my lord's diſh upon him.*

Ld. Mal. O law! he has ſcalded me to death.

Sir Ruff. Pough! 'twas almoſt cold: and tea, you know, never burns.

Ld. Mal. Jeſu! and what a pickle am I in!

Siam. Here's a do with a drop of water! come, let me rub you down, Tom-dingle. ——

Enter Captain.

Capt Ounds! what's this? Kiſſing your Cockrill before my face! by *Pompey* who am I? I'll pepper you, you and your young urchin too; I will, by *Pompey*.

Ld. Mal. O law! captain, but hear reaſon: new as I hope for marſſy, there was no harm.

Capt. Ounds! that's a good one: no harm to kiſs my *Dolly?*

L. Mal. Nay, take my word for't, captain, you need not fear when I am by.

Capt. Why, look you, you may be as little concern'd for your puppy, as you pleaſe, madam; but for my damn'd——

Siam. Nay, pr'ythee, Numpee, don't diſturb the company; they were going to raffle.

Capt. Yes, by *Pompey*, you were a raffling: I caught you at it, a raffling for my honour, with a pox to you.

Gay. No, faith, captain, we ſhall raffle for a better thing.

Capt.

Capt Ounds! sir, what's that you say?

Gay. Why, I say, what we raffle for, is of threescore pound value: say nothing, and you go to twelve with me.

Capt. Say'st thou so, old boy? 'tis so like *Speering*'s, that for once I am contented.

L. Mal. Come then, shall we raffle?

Siam. Here's the box, ladies.

[*The company about the table,* Maria *throws.*

Mar. Two cinques, and a quater!

Ld. Mal. That's fifteen.

Gay. Exactly, my lord; four and ten.

Ld. Mal. O law! no; fourteen.

Mar. And thirteen, is seven and twenty, [*Throws.*
And eighteen. [*Throws.*

Ld. Mal. No, two sixes, and an ace.

Mar. Well, that's forty——

[*They throw round, all but L.* Mal. *and* Gayman.

Gay. Confederacy! did not you observe *Wishwell* turn over one of your dice?

Mar. 'Twas by chance, playing with her fan.

Gay. You're sincere yourself, and believe every body so, but me.

Sir Ruff Damn these dice—— [*Throws down the box.*

Gay. Before the ladies, sir *Ruff?*

Sir Ruff. But I always lose, when I play fair.

L. Mal. Come, now for my fortune——

[*Going to throw.*

Sir Ruff. Madam, I have some doctors in my pocket, if you please to use 'em.

L. Mal. What doctors, sir?

Sir Ruff. Why, dou't you know the doctors? the dice that only run the high chances. I'll put 'em into your box, and nobody the wiser.

L. Mal. You shou'd ha' don't without telling me.

Sir Ruff. So I can still, madam——[*Lady throws.*] I stand cross legg'd for you, madam——Vigorously done, madam——

L. Mal. I have lost it.

Gay. I despair of winning——'tis yours——[*To* Mar.

Capt.

Capt. Ounds! I go to twelve with you—— [*To* Gay.

Mar. Come, throw, ſir—— [Gayman *wins it.*

Gay. 'Tis mine with much ado.

Enter Betty *to the Captain.*

Capt. A hard world, faith and troth; but I brought luck along with me.

Gay. I remember you, captain.

Betty. Sir, ſir *Symphony*, and his inſtruments, are at the door, in half a dozen coaches, and ſtay for you.

Capt. Adſo, where's my gittern?

Siam. Why, Numpee, you broke your gittern, you know.

Capt. My gittern! mouldy chops! where were you bred I trow? but my neighbour *Twingle* the barber has one, I'll borrow it ſo long from his cuſtomers. [*Exit.*

Ld. Mal, Did you hear of the fooliſh accident befell Sir *Symphony?*

L. Mal. What was't, my lord?

Ld. Mal. Why, ſerenading, t'other night, his guittar and he fell into a cellar, and like to break both their necks.

L. Mal. What ſay you to a pooile at comet, at my houſe? [*To* Wiſhwell.

Wiſh. Sir *Ruff*, will you make one?

Sir Ruff. I am always devoted.

Gay. Ladies, ſhan't I be troubleſome?

Wiſh. The devil take him. [*Aſide.*

L. Mal. We ſhall be glad of your company.

Ld. Mal. Well, I'll go before in a hackney, and get things ready for you: I find, I muſt ſhew you the way—

Gay. Well ſaid, my lord, you in the front appear:
And I may help you to bring up the rear. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE *Lord* Malepert's *dining-room.*

Enter Lord Malepert, *and* Wiſhwell.

Ld. Mal. WELL, how do you like Sir *Ruff?* he's a little mutinous at my wit ſometimes; but he's good-natur'd; and then has the ſenſe and courage of a lion: but the baronet's worſhip may paſs for a 'ſquire at comet tho'.

Wiſh. One wou'd almoſt ſwear he loſes on purpoſe to my lady.

Ld. Mal. Why ſo one wou'd, I vow now, if one did not know the company. Well, I ſwear now, Mrs. *Wiſhwell*, you look ſo young, you are not above five-and-twenty, are you?

Wiſh. Nay, if you're witty upon your friends, I have done with you.

Ld. Mal. Pr'ythee now, I won't be witty again theſe two hours.

Wiſh. For once I'll take your word. Well, my lord, you're happy in a good lady; ſhe's as diſcreet as ſhe's handſome.

Ld. Mal. You know a well-bred man muſt not think too well of his own wife: but I vow now, before I was marry'd, I thought her as handſome as an angel.

Wiſh. My lord *Loſty* has not been here of late.

Ld. Mal. He wou'd hardly bow to me at the play, laſt night; but I thought he was out of humour for being turn'd out; and yet I vow I had no hand in't.

Wiſh. For being turn'd out of this houſe I believe.

Ld. Mal. O law! why I carry'd it the civileſt to him in the world.

Wiſh. But he deſir'd your lady ſhould be civil to him.

Ld. Mal. And ſo ſhe was, I hope: why, I have known her alone with him, in her cloſet, when ſhe was deny'd to every body elſe.

Wish. While ſhe thought him a man of honour, for your ſake ſhe ſuffer'd him.

Ld. Mal. Have a care what you ſay; I'm told, he's likely to be greater than ever.

Wish. But muſt not with your lady.

Ld. Mal. Ay, but he muſt tho': I han't got the patent he promiſed me.

Wish. And he is to give you a new creſt to your new coronet?

Ld. Mal. No, really, I like mine very well: the golden calf has been the creſt of our family, ever ſince the Conqueſt.

Wish. The horns will grow in time. [*Aſide.*] Dull man! he has made love to your lady.

Ld. Mal. Jeſu! that's pleaſant! a ſtateſman make love! why, he can no more deal with a miſtreſs than with a houſe of commons.

Wish. Come, leave your fooling; and promiſe me not to quarrel with him; you ſhall promiſe me, for you are ſo nice in points of honour I know.

Ld. Mal. Honour! lord help your head (as *Siam* ſays) I have as much honour as I care for; I am a lord; and ſhall hardly quarrel to get more.

Wish. But you muſt promiſe me then, to take no notice of it to my lady: ſhe'd never forgive what I tell you; out of the reſpect I have for you both.

Ld. Mal. Nay, I vow I'm mightily oblig'd to you; and ſo is my wife; tho' the jeſters in the dancing-room are apt to laugh at me, when I tell 'em ſo. But had he the impudence to make love to her?

Wish. Ay, more than ſo, he ſurpriz'd her one day, in her cloſet, and wou'd ha' raviſh'd her.

Ld. Mal. O law! I did not think a man of fifty cou'd raviſh——

Wish. Had not her virtue, and my ſeaſonable aſſiſtance prevented him: but I found her juſt fall'n into a ſwoon.

Ld. Mal. How! fall'n into a ſwoon! nay, then he might raviſh her: but, tho' I ſay it, that ſhou'd not ſay it, there are ſome of our family (tho' they can't raviſh as well as he)

he) ſhou'd they know this, were he ten times my lord *Lofty*——I'll do't myſelf——

Wiſh. Nay, remember what you promis'd me.

Ld. Mal. No matter for that, I'll about it inſtantly.

Wiſh. For heav'n's ſake, you won't murder him.

Ld. Mal. No, that's the way to hang'd for't; I'll complain to the king——

Wiſh. And make yourſelf and family ridiculous: 'tis enough your lady's virtuous, and you know it. But what if this baſe man ſhould brag of favours?

Ld. Mal. Ay, but what ſignifies our wives virtue, if they are ſo liable to fall into a ſwoon? any woman may be taken napping, you know.

Wiſh. But if this baſe man ſhould brag of favours?

Ld. Mal. Why, let him brag, he's out of favour at court; and whatever he ſays now goes for nothing in the drawing-room; and I care not this, what he can ſay any where elſe; for I wou'd not be known by my good will out of the verge of *Whiteball*.

Wiſh. Or if ſome of your pretended friends, ſhou'd go about to make you ſuſpect me.

Ld. Mal. Tho' I ſhou'd ſurprize 'em in the manner, and you ſtanding centry——

Enter lady Malepert *to 'em.*

Wiſh. My lady's here——

L. Mal. How! *Wiſhwell!* I proteſt I don't underſtand this: indeed my lord I ſhall be jealous of you.

Ld. Mal. But I ſhall never be jealous of you, my lady.

L. Mal. You need not, dear, knowing yourſelf ſo well: if I were wantonly inclin'd, where cou'd I mend myſelf?

Ld. Mal. Where am I? ſure paradiſe is round me: to touch thee's heav'n, but to enjoy thee! oh——

L. Mal. Have my lord and you been at the cordial waters?

Wiſh. We have been gravely talking of the deceit and wickedneſs of the age, madam.

L. Mal. I underſtand you—— [*Aſide to her.* My lord, when ſhall we into thecountry? I'm quite

weary of this town; the company and public diverſions carry you ſo much abroad, I languiſh days without you: there I ſhou'd be oftener bleſt.

Ld. Mal. Well, dear, I vow now, I won't be a moment from you, but when I'm in other company: but that 'tis not the faſhion to be fond of one's wife, I verily believe I cou'd ſay a great many ſoft things to her.

L. Mal. Pray, my dear, let's go to *Monkey-Hill.*

Ld. Mal. O law! what ſhou'd I do in the country? there's no levées, no mall, no plays, no opera, no tea at *Siam*'s, no *Hyde-Park*, no muſic-meeting, no baſſet, no drawing-room, no maſquerades, nor no hackney-coaches to run about in; and you know I love running about mightily.

Wiſh. Nor no body that underſtands good breeding.

Ld. Mal. There the juſtice's lady comes to viſit, and aſk queſtions after the faſhion: and how do they wear their hair? do they carry their heads as high as they did laſt *Eaſter* term?

Wiſh. And, lord! is ſuch a one as wicked as ſhe was in the laſt lampoon? we have no ſuch creatures in the country, I aſſure you.

Ld. Mal. And then if I talk wit, to banter Mr. *Juſtice* about ſtate affairs, he ſtares at me, and does not underſtand me: unleſs one laugh one's ſelf, the jeſts are loſt upon 'em.

L. Mal. Well, well, there are a thouſand innocent diverſions——

Ld. Mal. What! angling for gudgeons, bowls and ninepins?

L. Mal. More wholeſome and diverting than always the duſty mill-horſe driving in *Hyde-Park.*

Ld. Mal. O law! don't prophane *Hyde-Park:* is there any thing ſo pleaſant as to go there alone, and find fault with the company? why there can't a horſe, or a livery, 'ſcape a man, that has a mind to be witty: and then I ſell bargains to the orange-women.

L. Mal. If you lov'd, as I do, you wou'd like the country; there I ſhou'd have you weeks together; you might ſit by, and ſee me work; or read a play or a novel to me.

Ld. Mal.

Ld. Mal. Lord! you know, if I read three minutes together, I fall asleep: and then if I shou'd chance to be alone, what wou'd become of me? I never think, but it puts me into the spleen, I'm read to cry.

Wish. Now if you have over-acted your part, and he shou'd go into the country. [*Footman to my lord.*

L. Mal. I know him too well for that.

Ld. Mal. Well, madam, adieu——

Wish. Jesu! whether now?

Ld. Mal. I'll be at home time enough to go to bed with you: but Sir *Barnaby Banter*, Captain *Tilter*, and Sir *Cantavar Bawwaw* stay in the side-box for me.

L. Mal. I wonder you'll leave me for such coxcombs.

Ld. Mal. O law! coxcombs! have a care what you say: *Banter* has a world of wit: he drove my chariot a whole evening at *Hyde-Park*, in my coachman's perriwig, and livery: I swear he drives as well as any gentleman in *England*; I wonder where he learnt it?

Wish. It may be natural to him; his father kept a coachman.

Ld. Mal. Then Sir *Cantaver Bawwaw*——I wish you had been with us t'other night——we had a country cudden with us; he play'd about him all night; I warrant you, he dumfounded him a hundred times.

Wish. Indeed!

Ld. Mal. Aye, and once, when I was bantering the 'squire, what do you think? he put some gun powder under his chair, and blew him up.

L. Mal. And did the 'squire take it?

Ld. Mal. At the first he was a little angry; but we all swore 'twas a squibb thrown into the window: then captain *Tilter* came souse upon him indeed, and threw a whole glass of claret in his face.

L. Mal. And cou'd you swear off that too?

Ld. Mal. No truly, the put pluckt up a spirit, struck *Tilter*, and challeng'd him to go down with him; now the captain begg'd his pardon, because he wou'd not spoil company; but wink'd, and laugh'd upon us all the while, for we were in the secret you know——but I must go to 'em, or they'll laugh at me; and swear I'm under cor-

rection; and that a body wou'd not have every one know neither, you know. [*Exit.*

Wish. So, he's safe for this night.

L. Mal. How can we trust to that?

Wish. Pray trust to me; I had him sent for; and will pretend to lie with you: shou'd my lord come home, we're gone to bed; besides, you have bred him up to lie in his dressing-room, upon these occasions.

L. Mal. Well, if it must be so: for your sake I can do any thing.

Wish. And something for you own: there's money, that's certain: and for any other disappointment, you may bear it the better from a man you don't like: we must not always please ourselves, child. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *the going into Sir* Symphony's.

Sir Ruff *going hastily before* Gayman.

Gay. Sir *Ruff*, Sir *Ruff!* you overlook your friends.

Sir Ruff. It must be a very good friend, I don't overlook at this time.

Gay. Why, what's the matter?

Sir Ruff. Why, I'm an emperor, and this the night of my coronation; know, friend, for thou art the only confident of my pleasure, that this night, at twelve, the incomparable madam *Wishwell* receives me at my lady's garden-door; this being told, I must be gone: for nothing but the pleasure of imparting to my bosom-friend, cou'd detain me a moment.

Gay. But where's the haste now?

Sir Ruff. The haste! why they may be at the music, for ought I know: and if I shou'd not be there to receive 'em; where's the haste now? [*Exit.*

Gay. Be crown'd to night, do you say? no, no, I'll spoil his holiday.

Enter Granger.

Gran. What, *Gayman*, thoughtful?

Gay. I have it in my head, but you must help me out with it.

Enter

Enter Jano.

Jano. Mr. *Granger*——

Gran. Well ſaid, my *Mercury!*

Jano. Here's an anſwer to your letter, ſir. But I muſt not be ſeen here, leſt my lady ſhou'd be known to be within in a maſque; and that ſhe wou'd not for any thing: ſhe ſays, ſir, you muſt not know her.

Gran. But what ſaid my lady *Trickitt?*

Jano. Indeed, ſir, I dare not ſtay any longer.

Gran. There's thy guinea, child. [*Exit* Jano.

Enter Garniſh.

Garn. A lady's trophy, Mr. *Granger.*

Gran. A fore-runner of dark deeds; you ſhall hear it.

Reads the note.] *I'm glad you're converted; and won't fail to be at* Roſamond'*s-pond, at ten exactly, where I will uſe my beſt endeavours to confirm you.*

Gay. A very pious gentlewoman, this!

Garn. She'd make an admirable miſſionary for *China*, or the *Mogul*'s country.

Gran. Mine's a tender conſcience, and requires extraordinary helps.

Garn. Methinks you're ſomething frank of the lady's ſecrets.

Gran. O ſir, they allow all freedoms to us, who are able to diſcover their good qualities, as well as their intrigues.

Gay. There's no man hindered from telling, but he that enters no further into the ſecret. Beſides ours are ſworn miſtreſſes; and the more we ſet out their perfections, the more their renown.

Gran. Nay, mine's a very ſun-flower; whene'er the golden god but ſhows his head, ſhe opens preſently.

Garn. Fie, fie, I ſhall loſe my reputation with you.

Gran. You! why with all your prudence, of never bowing to your miſtreſs in a public place, ſtealing glances under your hat, and following her at a ſly diſtance in

the Mall, you are found out as well as we, who make no myſtery of the matter.

Gay. Nay, ſooner; for your gravity is ſuſpected of a deſign, while the franker fellows have not credit enough with the town to eſtabliſh a ſcandal.

Garn. But a little diſcretion does no harm.

Gran. Diſcretion! why that's enough to ruin a man with the whole ſex: he that has liv'd to twenty, without the reputation of a wicked fellow, will never be allow'd to be wicked in a faſhionable company as long as he lives.

Garn. You're only for the brutal part, gentlemen.

Gran. I don't know what you mean by the brutal part: mine's a healthy conſtitution; it ebbs, and flows, like the ſea, and needs nothing but itſelf to cauſe its motion.

Gay. There's part of Sir *Symphony*'s equipage, 'tis time to follow —— [*Inſtruments carry'd over the ſtage.*

Garn. At ten o'clock! I ſhall watch you, Mr. *Granger*. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *drawn, ſhews a table, with inſtruments, chairs ſet, Sir* Ruff, Gayman, Granger, Garniſh, *women in maſk, captain, bullies, Sir* Symphony *tuning inſtruments,* Drydrubb *tuning his citttern; knocking at the door, the porter buſy in his employment.*

Port. Who's there? what wou'd you have? [*Knocking.*

Without.] Is Mr. *Scrapewell* within?

Port. No; you may find him at the *Bear*. [*Knocking.*

Without.] Tell Sir *Symphony* here are ſome gentlemen deſire the favour to come in.

Port. Lord, ſir, I can't let you in: here's ſcarce room already for the gentlemen performers to ſtir their elbows——[*Knocking*.] Well, what's the matter now?

Without.] Sir, here's Mr. *Humdrum*'s baſe-viol——

Port. Give it me. [*Shuts the door.*

Without.] Here are ladies. [*Knocking again.*

Port. The ladies muſt come in.

Enter

Enter lady Susan *and Mrs.* Judy, *masqu'd.*

L. Su. O law! yonder he's talking to other ladies. But that's because I was not here: yet he is not to know I'm here; tho' I hope my little *Jano* has told him.

Gran. 'Tis so—— [*To* Gayman.

Thus by the hobble in her pace,
Æneas knew his mother's grace.

Now will I be a very obedient lover, and not know her.

Capt. Ounds! this may be my—No, no, it is not she. [*The captain peers about the masks.*

Sir Sym. Ladies, you're very welcome: chairs there. Wou'd you wou'd unmask, and join the arms of your beauty to the force of the music, that not a heart might 'scape.

L. Su. I know, sir, you are too well bred, not to give us our liberty.

Sir Sym. This place is sacred to the fair, you must command, ladies.

Sir Ruff. Knight, is your nocturnal here? are they good goods, I must examine. [*Offers at L.* Susan.

L. Su. O Jesu! this rude fellow!

Sir Sym. Sir, you may talk 'till the music plays, but here you must excuse me, I suffer no ruffling—— [*Goes to the table.*

Sir Ruff. Zounds! sir, I'll excuse neither them, nor you, for all your scraping.

Gay. This must be improv'd to a quarrel. [*To* Granger. Hark you, Sir *Ruff*——

Sir Ruff. Zounds! sir, I'll protect the damsels, as much as any man.

Gran. Ay, Sir *Ruff*, get the rude fool beaten, that wou'd affront 'em, do.

L. Su. O Jesu! Mr. *Granger*, protect me, I'm ready to die.

Gran. There's no danger, madam.

L. Su. Pray lead me to a chair, I tremble every joint of me; I shall fall into a fit.

Gran. 'Twou'd break Sir *Symphony*'s heart, madam.

L. Su. O law! I hope you don't know me; I proteſt I wou'd not be known for the world.

Gran. I only gueſs your quality; by your air.

L. Su. But why do you tax me for Sir *Symphony?* I ſwear, ſir, I value no body more that yourſelf: but, I vow, you have oblig'd me extremely——

Sir Sym. All diſcords! fourths, and ſevenths! gentlemen. Wou'd that ear of your's were reform'd once ——

Gran. In a pillory?

Sir Sym. Come, come, let's tune, we make the ladies ſtay.

[*He takes a baſe-viol, and while he is tuning, one of the bullies unwinds the pegs over his head: then he lays down the bow, which the bully draws through the candle; when Sir* Symphony *tries to play, he can't make it ſound.*

Sir Sym. Lord! gentlemen, 'tis impoſſible to play at this rate: ſtanding ſo near me, as you do, your breath has ſo moiſten'd my ſtrings, they won't ſound.

[*Tries again.*

1 *Bully.* Damn me, *Tom*, the knight crowds moſt ſplendidly: I'll banter him: pray, ſir, when you lengthen a crotchet into quavers, and divide it by minums, does not your cravat-ſtring deaden the ſound of your fiddle?

Sir Sym. Mine's a Cremona, and coſt me fifty pounds, gentlemen; pray ſuſpend your curioſity, and come to my chamber, and I'll reſolve you any queſtion in muſic.

Sir Ruff. But, ſir, if the volatile parts of muſic ſhould juſtle with the effluviums of the air; for *Tycho Brache* holds, all ſounds go in a right line by undulation: can common time be conſiſtent with a jigg?

Sir Sym. Lord, ſir, you make ſuch a noiſe——I make all my jiggs in common time; are you ſatisfy'd?

Sir Ruff. But if harmony was firſt diſcover'd by the beating of hammers upon an anvil; why ſhou'd not your head make the moſt melodious inſtrument? for *Ariſtotle* holds that your hollow veſſels——

Sir Sym. If you're for a cockpit, ſo——come, pray let's begin—— [*All the while the ſymphony plays, he beats time and ſpeaks in admiration of it.*

Sir Sym. O Gad! there's a flat note! there's art! how ſur-

ſurprizingly the key changes! O law! there's a double reliſh! I ſwear, ſir, you have the ſweeteſt little finger in *England!* ha! that ſtroke's new; I tremble every inch of me: now ladies look to your hearts——Softly, gentlemen——remember the echo——captain, you play the wrong tune——O law! my teeth! my teeth! for God's ſake, captain, mind your cittern——Now the fuga, baſes! again, again! lord! Mr. *Humdrum*, you come in three bars too ſoon. Come, now the ſong——

A SONG, ſet by *H. Purcell*, and ſung by Mrs. *Hodgſon*.

I.

THO' you make no return to my paſſion,
Still I preſume to adore;
'Tis in love but an odd reputation,
Faintly repuls'd to give o'er:
When you talk of your duty,
I gaze on your beauty,
Nor mind the dull maxim at all;
Let it reign in Cheapſide,
With the citizen's bride,
It will ne'er be receiv'd in Whitehall.

II.

What apocryphal tales are you told?
By one, who wou'd make you believe,
That, becauſe of to have and to hold,
You ſtill muſt be pinn'd to his ſleeve;
'Tis apparent high treaſon,
Againſt love, and reaſon,
Shou'd one ſuch a treaſure engroſs;
He that knows not the joys,
That attend ſuch a choice,
Shou'd reſign to another who does.

A SONG, written by *Anthony Henly*, esquire, set by Mr. *Purcell*, and sung by Mrs. *Ayliff*, and Mrs. *Hodgson*.

NO, no, no, no, resistance is but vain,
And only adds new weight to Cupid'*s chain*;
A thousand ways, a thousand arts,
The tyrant knows to captivate our hearts;
Sometimes he sighs employs, and sometimes tries
The universal language of the eyes;
The fierce, with fierceness he destroys;
The weak with tenderness decoys;
He kills the strong with joy, the weak with pain,
No, no, no, no, resistance is but vain.

Gran. This is admirable: but if you wou'd oblige the ladies, you must play your solo.

Sir Sym. With all my heart, if the captain will accompany.

1 *Bully.* Pox a' this scraping, and tooting: shall we eclipse, *Tom*, and make it a rankum?

2 *Bully.* No, no, we'll dumfound the baronet.

[*They dumfound him, on each side, as he turns.*

Sir Sym. Who's that? What do you mean? [*Turning quick, one hits him in the eye*]——This is not to be borne: is't you, take that, sir.

[*Strikes him with a bass-viol, and leaves it upon his head.*

Gay. This is a common cause.

[*They draw, drive the bullies out, the women run out at the other door, Sir* Ruff *retires to a corner of the stage, and draws, the others return*——

Gran. These brutes have almost destroy'd all the public diversions of the town.

Gay. Stand you by Sir *Symphony*, [*To* Granger.] I'll bring him a challenge—— I've always thought you brave, Sir *Ruff*.

Sir Ruff. Why, who dares think otherwise?

Gay. I believe Sir *Symphony* will meet you.

Sir Ruff. Or I'll post him: but what has he done?

Gay.

Gay. (*Softly*)—You design'd it, I suppose; and your best way is to be beforehand with him, I'll stand by you—— [*Whispers.*

Gran. Why I saw him; he encourag'd 'em; besides, fidler's but a scurvy title for a knight?

Sir Sym. Why, did he call me fidler?

Gran. He said you were a wretched scraper, only fit to play to a garland upon a *May*-day: my lady *Susan* heard him, as well as I.

Sir Sym. Nay if one were sure of that, if she heard him: one wou'd not do a foolish thing, hand over head, without reason, you know.

Gran. If you bring it to any thing, let me serve you; you shall find me at my lodgings—— [*Exit.*

Sir Ruff. Well then, desire him to meet me, with his sword in his hand, to-morrow morning.

Gay. If he finds you so backward, he'll never ask your pardon.

Sir Ruff. But to-night I have business, you know.

Gay. Greater than your honour?

Sir Ruff. 'Tis very unfortunate—But use your pleasure.

Gay. Sir, I hope you'll pardon my message. Sir *Ruff* desires you wou'd meet him, with your second, in *Moorfields.*

Sir Sym. I was just designing to send to him, to meet me, to-morrow morning.

Gay. He desires it may be to-night, sir.

Sir Sym. To-night?

Gay. At twelve: the moon shines very clear; at *Bedlam*-gate, at twelve, sir——

Sir Sym. I must send to Mr. *Granger*; I shan't fail, sir—— [*Exit.*

Gay. Come, sir, I have business for an hour; but get you ready, you need not make your will, I believe; I'll meet you at the *Sun* tavern behind the *'Change*, and not fail—to disappoint you of your seconds. [*Aside. Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE Rosamond's *Pond.*

Granger *alone.*

Let the woman deserve as little as her man, she seldom fails of a favourable opinion of her own charms; and, in the intrigue, if it be possible, will be the greater fool of the two. Because I like *Trickitt*, she thinks I'm in love with her: why, how has she the impudence to think so! but she does think so; for in this note, she has promis'd to meet me here: if she has honesty enough to be as good as her word, she needs no greater curse: there was no occasion of my knowing that she can make her husband a cuckold, to make me have an ill opinion of her: I always thought so ill of her, that 'tis now necessary to think a little while well, to think worse of her than I did: that must be my reason of liking her; a malicious pleasure of revenging the quarrel of those fools (not forgetting her dear lord) who have trusted, and been deceiv'd by her. She can't deceive me.

Enter Lady Susan *in a mask.*

Whom we have here? a sister in affliction! if my nymph, and her shepherd have stray'd together: 'twere a gentle charity, of my side, to propose a club of inconstancy for a revenge.

L. Su. Mr. *Granger!* is't you?

Gran. The best part of him, madam.

L. Su. O law; Mr. *Granger!* I fear I have tir'd your patience: an impertinent kinswoman popt in upon me, and kept me above half an hour, I vow now.

Gran. A trick upon me! but I'll fit her. [*Aside.*] I thought the minutes ages, till you came.

L. Su. O Jesu! and did you, dear Mr. *Granger?*

Gran. By her, O Jesu, I guess the party—— [*Aside.*] madam, this happiness atones for all.

L. Su. O Jesu! but can you love me dearly?

Gran. More than heav'n.

L. Su. And you'll be constant?

Gran. As *Penelope.*

L. Su.

L. Su. And you'll love me for ever and ever?

Grang. Amen, to the end of the chapter.

L. Su. You'll ſwear all this?

Grang. The Bible through, madam: by your fair ſelf, by all——

L. Su. Hold, hold, good ſir, enough: well, we ſhall be ſo happy; but when? for now you may command me.

Grang. Now, madam, this inſtant——[*Embracing her.*

L. Su. O Jeſu! what do you mean?

Grang. To let you know how well I love you.

L. Su. No, I vow, I wou'd not for all the world: as I hope for maſſy, you muſt hate me, to offer this.

Grang. Rather if I ſhou'd not offer it, madam; the opportunity, and you are kind——

L. Su. O law! ſir! if you'll be honourable——

Grang. Theſe ſhades are honourable: you are not the firſt woman has truſted her honour with 'em: keep your own counſel, and they'll tell no tales to your relations, to put you out of countenance, as you walk barefac'd this way with 'em.

L. Su. But this to a lady of my quality.

Grang. Why, 'twere a downright ſlight upon you not to offer to be civil to you: and a woman of quality can bear any thing better than a ſlight, you know: beſides, the place, and hour take all diſtinction off: come, come, you have made as decent a reſiſtance as is neceſſary to excuſe you to your quality.

L. Su. Well, Mr. *Granger*, I thought you had more reſpect for me, elſe I ſhou'd never have truſted myſelf with you alone; in the honourable way of marriage, I own I cou'd receive you.

Grang. Why, you are marry'd already.

L. Su. O crimine! no; who do you take me for?

Grang. Nay, if you're not marry'd you muſt tell me.

L. Su. Pray, who did you viſit this afternoon?

Grang. A worthy, grave lady, lady *Suſan Malepert.*

L. Su. Suppoſe it her you talk to.

Grang. Suppoſe you her! ſuppoſe my lady *Suſan* with a man, alone, at ten at night, and in this place too! no, no, that is not to be ſuppos'd; and you are no better than

yo

you ſhou'd be, to offer it: if you were not in petticoats, you ſhou'd know how I reſent a wrong ſo great to her I ſo much honour.

L. Su. Why then, I vow now——

Grang. Nay, never load your crime with perjury.

L. Su. Why, dear ſir, did not you appoint this place?

Grang. But that lady does not uſe to anſwer appointments.

L. Su. And wou'd you make my generous pity appear a crime?

Grang. For the generous pity you ſpeak of, I wou'd have you to know, that lady has none for any man, at *Roſamond*'s pond.

L. Su. O Jeſu! ſir! why ſure 'tis no crime, in an honourable way, to ſee the man one loves.

Grang. Love! why that's a folly lady *Suſan* has renounc'd theſe twenty years: her pulſe beats even, and her ſober blood runs quiet in her veins: and as for matrimony, I know the very name wou'd frighten her; beſides, I dare not aim ſo high.

L. Su. O Jeſu! your merit equals you to all things; and were I ten times what I am——

Grang. Thou art a thing I muſt deſpiſe; a midnight ſtroller; nay worſe, ſome miſchief-making fiend, who woud'ſt aſſume the title of an angel, to be the more a devil. Bleſs me! methinks I ſee the cloven foot peep under her petticoat! defend me! I ſay, and deliver me from ſuch company. [*Exit.*

L. Su. Jeſu! what can this mean? Either he did not, or he wou'd not know me: if he did not hope to meet me here, why did he write to me? He had my letter, elſe why came he hither? but then he ſaid I was marry'd: O law! may he be ſuſpected, Sir *Symphony*: well, I muſt forbid him my lodgings, I ſee that, to convince him. O law! but then he wou'd have been ſo rude! but that might be to try my virtue; for I muſt needs ſay, he ſpoke all the while of me with the greateſt reſpect in the world. Well, I love him, that's certain, and muſt not loſe him; I'll be plain with him the firſt time I ſee him; for marry him I muſt, and wear my weding ring upon my thumb too, that I'm reſolv'd on. [*Exit.*

Enter Trickitt.

L. Tric. This is ſome ſort of revenge upon the rogue for refuſing me his money: how cou'd he imagine I wou'd allow him a favour, when he had given me ſuch a reaſon to believe he did not think it worth paying for? I wou'd carry my malice farther, to puniſh his impudence in writing to me; but ſince his note has contributed to the cheating him with the perſon of lady *Suſan*, I am at the end my deſign; and am contented only to laugh at him—— [Garniſh *to her.*

Garn. Reſt you merry, madam.

L. Tric. They may laugh that win, they ſay, Mr. *Garniſh.*

Garn. And ladies ſeldom loſe in ſuch a town as this is, where there are ſo many civil perſons to play at your own game too.

L. Tric. But how came you here at ſuch a time?

Garn. Madam, I can't be ſo indifferent a lover not to watch the motions of your inclinations; finding your pleaſure lie this evening in the Park, I came to find it out.

L. Tric. Indeed if you had come a little ſooner, you might have found it: I have been very well pleas'd ſince I came here.

Garn. I believe ſo.

L. Tric. But you come a little too late to be a witneſs of it; the buſineſs is over.

Garn. O madam, I wou'd not diſturb you, if the buſineſs had not been over. I met Mr. *Granger*, madam, and knew by him the buſineſs was over.

L. Tric. And what ſaid he to you? Did not he look like an aſs?

Garn. As men generally do upon ſuch occaſions: but I thought it unreaſonable to tell him he look'd like an aſs, becauſe I knew he was not the firſt of your making.

L. Tric. Mr. *Garniſh!*

Garn. I'm ſure you have made an aſs of me: but my jealouſy has reſtor'd my eyes; and now I plainly ſee you wou'd

wou'd abuſe me. When *Granger* ſent you the note of aſſignation, I was with him.

L. Tric. Well, I receiv'd one from him——

Garn. O! did you ſo?

L. Tric. By lady *Suſan*'s page.

Garn. By the ſame token he gave the boy a guinea to encourage ſo hopeful a beginning; and told him, if he brought him an anſwer, he had another to ſet him up in his trade: you were not wanting on your part, I know.

L. Tric. Why, truly, no; when I read it, I put it into another cover, and gave it the page to carry his lady: ſhe was glad of the appointment, I ſuppoſe, ſent him an anſwer, and came according to the invitation.

Garn. And what did you come for?

L. Tric. To laugh at the miſtake——

Garn. And ſet him right. O, very probable!

L. Tric. 'Tis very true.

Garn. That you are very falſe. [*Turning from her.*

L. Tric. I ne'er was falſe to you.

Garn. Away, away, it is not to be excus'd.

L. Tric. I don't excuſe it.

Garn. No, no, it never can.

L. Tric. Why then it never ſhall; and I am ſorry I attempted it: if you don't think it worth your while to be ſatisfy'd, I'm ſure I was in the wrong to endeavour it. Sir, as I remember, matters between you and me are entirely depending upon our good liking and pleaſure; 'tis not in the nature of an amour to make one another uneaſy: when once we begin to find faults, 'tis high time to find out freſh friends that have none: the moſt deſperate jealouſy of this kind lies within the remedy of parting.

Garn. It need not come to that neither, madam.

L. Tric. Sir, I won't be ſuſpected, I won't be enquir'd into: a huſband can do no more; and I have enough of one huſband and his ill-humours at home, I thank you, ever to allow of a huſband abroad to torment me. Perhaps you think I can't break with you; I wou'd have you to know, ſir, I can, and will break with you and fifty more, rather than break one hour's reſt for any of you.

you. I'll change as often as I ſhift my cloaths, but I'll light upon a man that has ſenſe enough to value his own pleaſure, without invading mine. If I depended upon you indeed, and there were nobody elſe to be had, you might tie me to your own terms; but, make us thankful, there's roving room enough in this dear town: I can provide myſelf, I warrant you.

A miſtreſs is a name implies command:
Nor ſhall the ſcepter fail within my hand:
But if you wou'd take back that pow'r you gave,
Marry the woman you wou'd make a ſlave. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Lord* Malepert's *Houſe.*

Gayman *enters dreſſing, and repeating,*

O what a night was that! how ſoft the bed,
When on her panting boſom I was laid!
Warm in enjoyment, we together grew,
And as one mind, were but one body too.——

HOW, how? one mind! no, there I'm out: now can't I help thinking of Sir *Ruff*, and deſtroying the memory of this night's pleaſures, by calling to mind they were all deſign'd for another. Can't I be contented with the enjoyment of a delicious woman, without reflecting, that any body elſe might have had her as well as I? 'Tis an impertinent curioſity in our natures, that when we have diſcover'd as much as we can to pleaſe us, will always drive us upon ſomething to find fault with: curioſity did I call it? nay, gad, there's ingratitude in the bottom on't, I believe; for 'tis the way of the world, in other favours too, to leſſen thoſe obligations as much as we can, which we han't in our honeſty to return

turn. Pox, I hate to be ungrateful: but I can't be ungrateful here, if I wou'd; for there was nothing design'd to me of the benefits I receiv'd; *Wishwell* let me in at the hour appointed for Sir *Ruff*: the lady receiv'd me for Sir *Ruff*; but when I think of the pleasures that came after, that she shou'd still mistake me for that bargaining booby of her bawd's providing, I don't forgive her; the furious riot, the expense of charms, the prodigality of life, and love (too vast for nature's bounty to support another hour) might have inform'd her better. 'Tis not yet day: *Wishwell*'s my convoy; I can't get off without her. No matter now if she knows me. Who's this follows me?

Enter Lady Malepert.

L. Mal. I have slept away my life, my better part of it, my life of love: he's gone from me: was this an hour of rest, sleep had been welcome in a husband's bed; but in a lover's arms! he stole away, fearful of waking me, and fearful to be seen, he stole away, in every thing shewing his care of me: how cou'd Sir *Ruff* do this? O love! what can'st thou not do in a woman's heart! that brutal thing, whom, as I thought, I loath'd, thy gentle fires hath soften'd by degrees, and melted into *Gayman*: night be still my friend, let me not see him, and I will think it was my *Gayman* still.

Gay. O this woman! I love her for herself, but hate her too.

L. Mal. Who's there?

Gay. Your lover.

L. Mal. O! be but ever so: can you forget? can you forgive me? can you excuse my being to be sold? Let *Wishwell* bear the mercenary blame——Her basenes wrought me to her sordid ends: but I'll return your bills——

Gay. Return my love; my fortune is but yours.

L. Mal. You are my better fortune.

Gay. O this happy night! but to remember it, a locket, or your picture——

L.

L. Mal. Take this ring, to make a better marriage. Have you forgiv'n me?

Gay. How ſhall I convince you?

L. Mal. Why, only ſay you have.

Gay. Saying is too little: doing's the living proof, that never lies; within you will believe me——

[*Going out*, Wiſhwell *to 'em with a candle.*

Wiſh. Madam, madam, where are you? Bleſs my eye-ſight!

L. Mal. Bleſs the woman: what's the matter?

Wiſh. Are you the happy man, Mr. *Gayman?*

L. Mal. Gayman!

Gay. Thank you for making me ſo, Mrs. *Wiſhwell.*

L. Mal. Gayman! then I am ruin'd: baſe woman! have I deſerv'd this from you?

Wiſh. No, but you deſerve it from yourſelf, for putting this trick upon me——

L. Mal. I put a trick upon you!

Wiſh. And you will find the benefit of it in a little time; my lord and his drunken companions are coming up ſtairs to viſit you: as you have manag'd the buſineſs without me, ev'n get off on't as well as you can; I waſh my hands of it, and will retire without being ſeen. [*Exit.*

L. Mal. O every way undone! follow her down the back-ſtairs——

Gay. Pox take her, ſhe has double-lock'd the door.

L. Mal. What ſhall I do? what will become of me?

Gay. Nay, madam, let the worſt come to the worſt, Sir *Ruff* is oblig'd to take care of you——but I'll bring you off this time I warrant you.

Enter Lord Malepert, Granger, *and two Bullies.*

Gran. *Singing.*] *And he that is giv'n to doat*
On woman's inconſtancy,
I wou'd not be in his coat
For a great deal of ready money.

What!

What! my lady, [and *Gayman!* are you too up together early, or late? Here's my lord and I are in conjunction too: why faith, madam, we thought of nothing but the ſpirit of clary: we did not expect ſuch good company, my lord——

Ld. Mal. No, really, I did not expect to find a man with my wife.

Grang. But ſee how oddly things will happen ſometimes.

Ld. Mal. Ay, ſo they will, very oddly indeed ſometimes.

Gay. Oddly, Mr. *Granger!*——what the devil do you mean? [*Aſide.*

Grang. I'll bring you off, I warrant you, madam; *Gayman*'s an honeſt, well-condition'd fellow; but ſomewhat ſleepy towards morning: how did your ladyſhip get him up ſo ſoon?

Gay. Pr'ythee recollect thyſelf: all's ruin'd elſe.

Grang. I muſt go ſnacks, *Gayman.*

L. Mal. He's muſt'ring all his little malice, 'twill end in miſchief certainly.

Ld. Mal. Nick, go you and fetch the conſtable: but before he comes, madam, I command you, in the king's name, to tell me what you two have been doing together in my abſence, againſt the peace of my bed and boſom?

Gay. Doing, my lord! why 'tis plain enough what we have been doing! any body may ſee what we have been doing——

Grang. Very plainly, my lord.

Gay. Or if they can't ſee, 'tis but hearing you talk as you do, and they may eaſily find what you have been doing: did not we ſup together?

Ld. Mal. The devil's always very powerful at this time of the morning, gentlemen; but bear witneſs, he ſays they ſupp'd together.

Gay. They ſupp'd together! we, I ſay we; *Granger*, your lordſhip and I, and theſe two honeſt gentlemen. Gentlemen, I ſhall be proud to be better known to you: pox, do you think I dont know what I ſay? They remember me, tho' you won't, my lord.

1 *Bully*. What! not remember Mr. *Gayman?*

2 *Bully*. O! perfectly, my lord.

Gay. Why, my noble lord, you are farther gone than I thought you were: if you drink your friends down with your bottle, I have done with you: why, gentlemen, I don't believe you drank very hard after I left you?

1 *Bully*. Not very hard, sir.

2 *Bully*. Not above a bottle a piece after you left us.

Grang. Well, a clear conscience is a great matter I see.

Ld. Mal. After he left us! why, then I am drunk, and did not know it before: to my own thinking now I remember every thing in the company as perfectly—— Why how can a man tell, at this rate, whether he's sober or no?

Gay. Nay, I had been in the same pickle if I had staid with you: but when I saw you began to be maukish, you may remember, you sent me home before you, to knock up Mrs. *Darkas*, for the cordial waters, and you were to follow me.

Ld. Mal. Not that I know of.

Grang. Nay, my lord, there you must excuse me; truth is truth; you did send him home, for how cou'd we else have found him him here?

Ld. Mal. Why that's true: why, well, if I have forgot it, I beg all your pardons.

L. Mal. Is it not enough, my lord, that you come home at these unseasonable hours, but you must send up your drunken companions before you?

Enter Wishwell.

Wishwell and I were asleep, when this unmannerly royster came into the dining-room; we thought there had been thieves, and poor *Wishwell* was almost frighted out of her senses.

Wish. I must close with her for my own sake. [*Aside*.

L. Mal. Was this well done, my lord? Yet I won't think you cou'd be so ill a man to design it as a plot upon my honour, I won't think you cou'd.

Wish

Wish. My lord, my lord, is this the use you make of what I told you? Do you deserve so good a lady? And Mr. *Gayman*, was it like your character, to be confederate in so base an undertaking? And all of you to make a combination——

Ld. Mal. Nay, *Wishwell*, as I hope to be sav'd now, 'twas altogether an accident; nobody had the least design upon my wife, or her honour, that I know of: there has happen'd some little mistakes, I must needs say; but I am always so deaf with drinking, you know——Gad so! here's music: see who 'tis that serenades, I love serenading mightily.

Enter Sir Ruff, *and Sir* Symphony *with music.*

Sir Ruff. I have out-staid my assignation; but this serenade will make her amends. What's here? *Gayman!* damme, sir, a man's well help'd up that trusts to you for a second: I waited for you above two hours.

Gay. I was all that while serving you elsewhere.

Sir Ruff. What do you mean?

Gay. Why, do you think yourself a fit man for a back-door? You might as well have trusted 'em again to let you in at the window: the ladies 'design'd to laugh at you, and being your friend, I made the quarrel, to send you out of their power.

Sir Ruff. Nay, gad, I thought there was something in't: for when Sir *Symphony* and I came face to face, we were presently friends, and agreed upon the fiddles. But since they design'd to make an ass of me, I'll have satisfaction, or my money again.

Gay. Experience can never be bought too dear, sir.

Sir Ruff. Zounds, sir, I'll go to her, and tell her she lies.

Gay. I'm glad I know your principles.

Grang. Sir *Symphony*, why do you look so angry? I hate blood-shed; then Sir *Ruff* and you are old friends; besides, *Gayman* and I had business, as you see, sir; but how went the tilt? Ha! I'm sorry, for both your sakes, I can see thro' neither of you. I love a visto, as my lord says, mightily.

Enter Servant.

Serv. There are ſome maſkers below deſire to be admitted.

Ld. Mal. O gemini! wife, let'em come up. [*Ex. Serv.* Hark you, gentlemen, let's even make a night on't; I have ſome maſking habits within; captain *Tilter*, Sir *Ruff*, Sir *Symphony*, we'll all be in diſguiſe. I love diſguiſe when every body knows one mightily.

Sir Sym. Hang your maſquerades, I begin to be tir'd of 'em: 'tis loſing one's labour always upon other men's miſtreſſes; when you have waited upon a gentlewoman thro' the ceremonies of the night, and think of going home with her, tho' you have cram'd her pockets as full of ſweetmeats as they can hold, her own ſpark appears in the morning; beats you, perhaps, for offering to lead her to her coach, and forces you to walk home, ankle deep, in your *Turkiſh* habit.

Ld. Mal. O very fooliſh! leave Sir *Symphony* to his own face, he'll make nothing of that, I dare ſay for him: come, gentlemen, we ſhall be pure and merry, when we don't know one another.

[*Exeunt Ld.* Mal. *Sir* Ruff, *and Bullies.*

Gay. I'm as good as my word you ſee, madam; I've brought you off: I have been oblig'd to you, and have return'd you your favour: but you muſt own, madam, mine carries ſomething the better air along with it, becauſe I generouſly deſign'd it for your ladyſhip.

L. Mal. What ſhall I ſay? What can I ſay?

Gay. I won't upbraid you, madam, you have done me the ſecond good turn you had in your power to beſtow: and ſince 'twas impoſſible to have you to myſelf, it goes a great way in my cure, to know that any fool may engage you for the time.

Enter L. Trickitt, *L.* Suſan, Maria, *and* Garniſh.

L. Mal. O very fortunate! and kind in you, and all the good company: how came I by this favour?

Mar. Why, truly, madam, being up at cards at lady

Trickitt's, over the way, we cou'd not resist the temptation of the fiddles.

L. Su. But came in our masks, for fear we shou'd not be welcome.

L. Mal. So near a relation can't doubt that, madam.

Sir Sym. Ladies, I esteem myself very luckily here, for the entertainment of so much good company: I have some gentlemen in my consort, whom I can prevail upon to treat you in their way with a song or a dance.

A SONG written by Mr. *Congreve*, set by Mr. *Purcell*, and sung by Mrs. *Ayliff*.

I.

TELL me no more I am deceiv'd,
That Chloe's *false and common:*
By heav'n, I all along believ'd
She was a very woman:
As such I lik'd, as such caress'd,
She still was constant, when possess'd;
She cou'd do more for no man.

II.

But oh! her thoughts on others ran;
And that you think a hard thing:
Perhaps she fancy'd you the man;
Why what care I one farthing.
You think she's false, I'm sure she's kind:
I'll take her body, you her mind;
Who has the better bargain?

Grang. Dear madam, I beg you a thousand pardons.

L. Su. O Jesu! for what, Mr. *Granger?*

Grang. 'Till you pull'd off your mask, I took you for a scandalous creature I met in St. *James*'s Park last night, she was dress'd so like you.

L. Su. That lady was no ill friend of yours, I assure you.

Grang. You have no cause to speak well of her; for

ſhe would ha' made me believe you were as bad as herſelf——Pox on her, how ſhe haunts me——[*Goes from her.*] What has lady *Suſan* done, Sir *Symphony*, you don't make your court to her?

L. Su. I find he does not think it for his reputation, to marry a woman that would meet him in private. I'll mention it no farther.

Sir Sym. May I preſume, madam, that this opportunity may be more favourable to my hopes——

L. Su. Lord, ſir, I know nothing of an opportunity; pray be quiet, you would not talk of an opportunity before people, would you? why I never ſaw the like of you—— [*Leaves him.*

Sir Sym. She always uſes me ill before company.

L. Tric. Was it fine walking laſt night, Mr. *Granger?* Was there good company at *Roſamond*'s Pond?

Grang. I did not ſee your ladyſhip there.

L. Tric. Me! fie, fie, a married woman there, Mr. *Granger!*

Grang. What, you were more houſewiſely employ'd?

[Garniſh *hears what paſſes between* Trickitt *and* Granger.

L. Tric. More to my mind a great deal.

Grang. In private, madam?

L. Tric. In laughing at you. Lord! Mr. *Granger*, I thought you had been off the vanity of thinking women in love with you: 'tis paſt time a day for you to ſend love-letters about the neighbourhood, to corrupt the civil families: how had you the conſcience to think a woman would have any buſineſs with you, but to laugh at you? I vow I thought you had been wiſer.

Grang. Faith I thought ſo myſelf, madam.

L. Tric. And why would you put yourſelf into any woman's power to diſappoint you? I thought the young fellows only, the beaux of a year's ſtanding in the ſide-box, could be diſappointed; who, by the extraordinary opinion of themſelves, from their firſt ſummons, imagine it impoſſible for any woman to ſtay away from 'em. But you are ſatisfied at laſt, I ſee.

Grang. Indeed I am, that I was always in the wrong, when I had the leaſt good opinion of you. I was in hopes of having it in my power to uſe you as you deſerve (which you ſhould have been ſure of;) but ſince you have gone before me in this, I promiſe you, you ſhall never get the better of me in any other buſineſs, as long as I know you: and till you are older, I can't like you worſe than I do. [*Going from her.*

Garn. You have convinc'd and oblig'd me; and I thank you for the ſatisfaction.

L. Tric. Pray thank me when you are oblig'd, Mr. *Garniſh*; I have done nothing to convince you: 'twas neceſſary to clear myſelf, and I have done it without a regard to your jealous thoughts upon the matter.

Garn. I promiſe you, I'll ne'er be jealous more.

L. Tric. Then here I promiſe you, I'll never give you cauſe to be jealous.

Enter Ld. Malepert, *Sir* Ruff, *and Bullies, in maſquerade.*

Grang. Who have we here?

Ld. Mal. The ladies ſhall know us if they pleaſe.

Sir Ruff. We're men for their turn; ſons of darkneſs, and fit for the buſineſs of the night.

Gay. To beat up a bawdy-houſe, you ſcoundrels, how came you here?

[*They draw upon the maſqueraders, drive them off, and return.*

Ld. Mal. Why, don't you know us? you're the ſtrangeſt people in the world! murder a man in his own houſe!

Sir Sym. I'm for defending the ladies.

Grang. How could'ſt thou be ſo barbarous to the cuckold of thy boſom to frighten him ſo terribly?

Gay. He began to be troubleſome: beſides, I have at preſent a quarrel to the family.

[*Goes to* Wiſhwell *and Lady* Malepert.

L. Su. I hope you are not hurt, Mr. *Granger*, I would not for the world, I vow now, have ſuch a thing happen in my company: what will the world ſay?

Grang. Why e'en nothing at all: the world does not care if we were hang'd, I aſſure you.

Gay.

Gay. This ring, madam, I valu'd only as an evidence of my good fortune, which, ſince the caſe is ſo plain, I return to your ladyſhip again. [*To lady* Malepert.] I don't obſerve that dearneſs between you and Mrs. *Wiſhwell*, that us'd to be; don't let me make a breach in that friendſhip which may be ſo ſerviceable to you both: you're both in a miſtake, neither has betray'd t'other: indeed Sir *Ruff* made me his confidant, and qualify'd me for the welcome I have found. Mrs. *Wiſhwell*, now I'm ſure you'll be my friend, ſince you know I have it in my power to be your enemy. And for you, madam, I am oblig'd to juſtify you to every body but myſelf. [*Leaves 'em and goes to* Maria.

L. Mal. 'Tis more than I deſerve. O, I muſt hate you, you have undone me with the only man I ever lov'd or ſhall—— [*Turns from her.*

Wiſh. Then I am ſure to keep her in my own power.

Enter Lord Malepert *in his own cloaths.*

Ld. Mal. Lord! this is the oddeſt thing in the world, turn a man out of his own doors for coming to divert you: 'twas as much as I could do, I vow now, to perſuade the footman to let me in again.

Gay. Why, were you one of 'em, my lord?

Ld. Mal. One of 'em, yes I think I was.

Grang. Who would ha' thought you kept ſuch company?

Garn. We did not know you, my lord.

Ld. Mal. Sir *Ruff*, I aſſure you, takes it bloody ill of you; if it had not been in my houſe, he ſwears he would have maul'd ſome of you. I don't know but he may ſend you a challenge.

Grang. I hope not ſo, my lord.

Ld. Mal. Nay, I'll make it up if I can.

Gay. My lord, you come very ſeaſonably for the clearing of ſome difficulties that have happen'd to-night, in relation to your lady.

L. Mal. Lord! what does he mean?

Gay. I would vindicate her virtue as much as I can, from any unreaſonable ſuſpicions you may have of it upon my

account; and therefore declare, in the presence of all this good company, that I have no design upon any body in't but this lady; and here I offer to marry her.

[*To* Maria.

L. Mal. Nay then he does revenge himself indeed—

[*Aside.*

Gay. What say you, madam?

L. Mal. Why, nothing, nothing in the world; poor rogue! silence gives consent all the town over.

Gay. Madam, your ladyship's interest would go a great way in persuading her. [*To L.* Mal.

Ld. Mal. Nay, my wife will be for it, I'm sure.

L. Mal. Mr. *Gayman*, you may be sure of me——to persuade her against it if I could. Would I might never see his face again. [*Aside.*

Ld. Mal. Well, we shall live so pure and merry at one another's houses: would you were all married, gentlemen; there's no making a friend throughly welcome, I can tell you, without having a wife of one's own to receive them.

L. Su. O law! Mr. *Granger*, what if you and I should make it the double marriage? [*To* Granger, *who leaves her.*

Grang. 'Tis an old play, madam, and will never take.

L. Su. The devil take him, I don't know what to make of him. [*She applies herself to Sir* Symphony.

L. Mal. I know your thoughts, *Maria.*

Gay. Come, madam, give me your hand.

Mar. Well, sir, you may repent this rashness.

[*Gives her hand.*

Gay. I may repent of some things that are past; but I can never do any thing with you to repent of.

L. Mal. How the tyrant triumphs! [*Aside.*

Sir Sym. You see, madam, how happy you might make your humble servant.

L. Su. O law! sir! you don't think so.

Ld. Mal. Hey day! here's my aunt upon the prick of preferment too: Sir *Symphony* and she are agreeing to go to bed together.

L. Su.

L. Su. Well, if it muſt be ſo——

[*Gives Sir* Symphony *her hand.*

Ld. Mal. Ay, ay, uncle *Symphony*, wiſh you joy of my aunt *Suſan.*

Sir Sym. You do me the greateſt honour in the world, madam.

Enter Siam.

Ld. Mal. Gad ſo! here's *Siam* too; the more the merrier; we ſhall want company to dance at all theſe weddings: you ſhall be my partner, *Siam.*

Siam. Wou'd I were unmarried, upon the condition I never danc'd at a wedding again.

L. Mal. What's the matter now, *Siam?*

Siam. Why the captain has been drunkening with my lord all night, and coming home in one of his damn'd old humours, has beaten me black and blue, and turn'd me out of doors.

Enter Captain.

Gay. How's this, captain?

L. Tric. and all. We'll pull the old rogue to pieces; beat his wife!

Capt. Why *Dolly*, *Dolly*, you ſhould bear with the failings of your lord and maſter——

Siam. I do bear with your failings, you know I do, you old fumbling fool you.

Capt. And not betray the ſecrets of my dukedom, the myſteries of our bed and board, *Dolly.*

Siam. I'll be plagu'd with you no longer: I'll give you a ſeparate maintenance, and be rid of you.

Capt. I'll come in for my thirds, *Dolly*, that you know the law will allow me: but let's ſee your ſeparate maintenance: I marry'd you only to maintain me; who marries an old woman for any thing elſe? and if I can make you maintain me, d'ye ſee, I don't much care whether I'm marry'd to you or no: but I know your grievance; you would have me begin to propagate, like a patriarch, at threeſcore, and try to do good in my generation: but who the devil can do good upon you? you are paſt it as

well as I; and ſo faith let's have a dance, and agree upon parting in the morning.

A DANCE.

Gay. Well, *Granger*, you are ſtill to continue a bachelor it ſeems.

Grang. Why, faith, ſir, 'tis as much as a man can do to ſecure a reputation in his own keeping; he need not venture it in a woman's, eſpecially when ſhe ſtakes ſo little againſt it: for in miſcarriages of marriage, we favour ſtill the weaker ſex's faults:

So when the wife's abus'd, or huſband horn'd,
The woman's pity'd, but the cuckold ſcorn'd.

EPILOGUE:

Spoken by Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE.

SEE the effects of a poor maid's last pray'r,
Driv'n by mere want of husband to despair.
And, ladies, in a barren age as this is,
'Tis hard for all of us to have our wishes.
She, for a time pretended to a wit;
And yet you see her project would not hit:
Let her example teach you, there's no urging
These sparks, to take an antiquated virgin:
They fear the growing cares of marry'd lives,
And venture——only on their neighbours wives.
Be wise in time; set not too great a value
On your fine selves, and still stand, shall I, shall I?
For while the dreams of coach and six deceive you,
The honest 'squire, despis'd, may chance to leave you:
And when poor maids are driven to petition,
We seldom find they better their condition:
Yet thus with some of you it daily happens;
You lose the beast, in hopes to get the trappings.
You scorn to stoop below a top gallant;
And all pretend to ride the elephant:
As if you had forgot the thing you want.
Tho' each lost hour you pass a fiery trial,
And ne'er refuse without a self-denial.
Led by the custom of the sex, you strive
To blind the world, while you yourselves deceive:
You may pretend a nice indifference;
But truth must still be truth, while sense is sense:
Disguise your inclinations as you can;
Yet every woman's business is a man.

THE

FATAL MARRIAGE;

OR, THE

INNOCENT ADULTERY.

A PLAY.

As it was Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL,

By Their MAJESTIES SERVANTS,

In the YEAR 1694.

Pellex ego facta mariti—— OVID.

I 6

TO

ANT. HAMMOND, Esq.

OF

SOMERSHAM-PLACE.

SIR,

I Have so many obligations upon me, that to bring in a fair account of my debts, is all that lies in the present power of my honesty: in the first place, I thankfully confess myself indebted to the good-nature of the town in general; then, in the deepest sense of my gratitude, I acknowledge the indulgence and patronage of particular men of quality, who were all most industrious and contriving for the fortune of this play; to make it considerable to the world in its reputation, and to me in the profit of the third day. I think it becomes every man's character to be pleased with pleasing others; and I know, that to be pleased, is full as much as I ought to be, upon the success of any thing that I can attempt in this kind;

kind; my poetry will never run away with me; but the good fortune of finding ſo many honourable patrons, I muſt confeſs, has tranſported me; and if I am a little vain now, it is from their good opinion of me, and not from what I think of myſelf. I took the hint of the tragical part of this play from a novel of Mrs. *Behn*'s, called *The Fair Vow-breaker*; you will forgive me for calling it a hint, when you find I have little more than borrowed the queſtion, how far ſuch a diſtreſs was to be carried, upon the misfortune of a woman's having innocently two huſbands at the ſame time? I have given you a little taſte of comedy with it, not from my own opinion, but the preſent humour of the town: I never contend that, becauſe I think every reaſonable man will, and ought to govern in the pleaſures he pays for. I had no occaſion for the comedy, but in the three firſt acts, which Mrs. *Bracegirdle* particularly diverted, by the beauty and gaiety of her action; and though I was fond of coming to the ſerious part, I ſhould have been very well pleaſed (if it had been poſſible to have woven her into that intereſt) to have had her company to the end of my journey. I could not, if would, conceal what I owe Mrs. *Barry*; and I ſhould deſpair of ever being able to pay her, if I did not imagine that I have been a little acceſſary to the great applauſe that every body gives her, in ſaying ſhe out-plays herſelf; if ſhe does that, I think we may all agree never to expect, or deſire any actor to go beyond that commendation. I made the play for her part, and her part has made the play for me; it was a helpleſs infant in the arms of the father, but has

grown

grown under her care; I gave it juſt motion enough to crawl into the world, but by her power and ſpirit of playing, ſhe has breathed a ſoul into it, that may keep it alive. I hope I have, in ſome meaſure, diſcharged myſelf to the public; but for fear of the worſt, ſir, I have brought you for my ſecurity, becauſe I always found you in nature inclining to be reſponſible for your friends: you have allowed me that title, and I thank you for it; but I value myſelf upon your being as heartily diſpoſed to give it, as I was deſirous to receive it. I cannot but remember ſome paſſages, that would become your character, and this dedication of my friendſhip to you; but I muſt be ſilent; and it is the hard part of your favours, that you will not allow them to be acknowledged; I can never ſpeak enough to my obligation, and never little enough to your modeſty; when I would be grateful, I ſhall be troubleſome; and I know you too well, to think you will be pleaſed with what I can publicly ſay of you. Every man who knows you, will think I ſay very little; and they who are to know you, will find I have ſaid nothing. You are riſing upon the world, and every creature is the better for you that is near you; and as *Juvenal* ſays of his emperor, *Sat.* 7.

Materiamque tibi veſtra indulgentia quærit:

I may ſpeak of your virtues, and good qualities, though you will not allow me to be a witneſs to the world of the frequent occaſions you have found out to employ them. If generoſity with friendſhip, learning with ſound ſenſe, true wit, and humour, with good nature, be accom-

pliſhments

pliſhments to qualify a gentleman for a patron, I am ſure I have lit right in Mr. *Hammond*. I have reaſon to think I have made you my friend; and you ſhall have reaſon to believe that you have ſecured me to be,

SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

T. SOUTHERNE.

PROLOGUE:

Spoken by Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE.

WHEN once a poet settles an ill name,
Let him write well, or ill, 'tis all the same:
For critics now-a-days, like flocks of sheep,
All follow, when the first has made the leap.
And, do you justice, most are well inclin'd
To censure faults you know not how to find:
Some cavil at the style, and some the actors;
For, right or wrong, we pass for malefactors.
Some well-bred persons carp at the decorum,
As if they bore the drawing-room before 'em.
Sometimes your soft respectful spark discovers,
Our ladies are too coming to their lovers;
For they who still pursue, but ne'er enjoy,
In ev'ry case expect a siege of Troy.
There are some others too who offer battle,
And with their time and place, maul Aristotle.
Ask what they mean, and, after some grimace,
They tell you, twelve's the time; and for the place,
The chocolate-house, at the looking-glass.
To please such judges, some have tir'd their brains,
And almost had their labour for their pains:
After a twelvemonth vainly spent in plotting,
These mettled critics cry 'tis good for nothing:
But wiser authors turn their plots upon you,
And plot to purpose when they get your money.

DRA-

Fred. O, you muſt expect to be diſinherited twice or thrice, to try your obedience, before you're the better for him. But it happens unluckily at this time: what will become of the ladies?

Fab. 'Tis that troubles me: to be turn'd out of doors, when I had honeſtly undertaken the making my mother-in-law's and ſiſter's fortune, as well as my own. I have promoted the deſign as far as I could: I hope you and *Carlos* will carry it on. There's a letter from my ſiſter [*Gives him a letter*] to deſire your aſſiſtance: I think ſhe wants nothing but an opportunity of running away with you.

Fred. That I have ſettled in a letter to her. [*Feeling for his letter*] I have contriv'd her eſcape, but how to ſend it now——

Jaq. That, ſir, I think, falls under my employment: let me alone for the letter.

Fab. There's an old gentleman coming this way will certainly deliver it.

Jaq. Gad, and ſo he ſhall: 'tis very well thought upon: ſir, your moſt humble ſervant. The letter, the letter, ſir; [*To* Frederick.] I'll do your buſineſs, I warrant you.

Fred. I have left it unfortunately behind me upon my table: *Jaqueline*, make haſte and bring it me.

[Jaqueline *runs out.*

Fab. I have it in my head to be reveng'd of this old fellow: run away with my ſiſter, be ſure, whatever you you do: rely upon the old man's conſcience to give her a portion: all that I can do for you——is to pray (tho' I think there will be no great need of my prayers) that he will never give you a ſhilling [*Aſide.*] *Carlos*, I ſuppoſe, knows how to behave himſelf between a handſome young lady, my mother-in-law, and a coxcombly old fellow, my father. When we are all in rebellion, a general pardon muſt follow. [*Exit.*

Fernando *enters to* Frederick.

Fern. Sure I ſaw juſt now a glimpſe of my rakely ſon ſhoot by the corner there: hark you, friend, was not one *Fabian* with you before I came? *Fred.*

Fred. Your ſon *Fabian*, ſir? he was here but juſt now.

Fern. My ſon! hum! he may be your ſon, if you like him; for I diſown him.

Fred. Ay, ſo I hear indeed: 'tis a thouſand pities, a pretty gentleman, as he is——

Fern. A pretty gentleman! yes, truly, he's a very pretty gentleman: when you can find nothing that a coxcomb is good for, but to ſpend money, you cry, he's a pretty gentleman. What, I ſuppoſe you were with him laſt night, a ſerenading (as you pretty gentlemen call it;) but in my language, 'tis catterwawling; good for nothing but to diſturb a civil neighbourhood, waken our wives into wicked wiſhes, and put 'em in mind of younger fellows than their huſbands.

Fred. You miſtake me, ſir——

Fern. I don't know whether I miſtake you: but I'm ſure, among other his enormities of laſt night, had not a leſs raſcal of the company interpos'd, that *Fabian* you ſpeak of would have carry'd me bodily away with him, in the caſe of a baſe-viol.

Fred. Nay, then he is to blame indeed.

Fern. To blame, do you call it!

Fred. I hope I ſhall make you a better ſon, ſir, if you pleaſe to accept of me: I have made my applications to you a great while.

Fern. Hold, hold, ſir; I have plague enough with thoſe children I have already; I want no more, I thank you. What, I warrant you, you'll ſay I have a handſome daughter; why, very well: and every body will ſay I have a handſome wife.

Fred. Yes, indeed ſir, every body muſt ſay your wife is a very fine lady.

Fern. O, muſt they ſo? why how do I know then, that you han't as great a mind to my wife, as you have to my daughter? you look as if you would rather help to bring ſome more children into my family, than take any out of it: but I ſhall watch you for ſpoiling my wife's ſhape, I promiſe you. 'Tis very hard upon marry'd men, that's the truth on't: 'tis a ſin, and a ſhame, there ſhould be ſo many ways of making a cuckold; when

when there are ſo few, or none to prevent it. Now are you going to put in a long anſwer to every particular, but I ſhall ſave you the trouble. [*Going.*

Fred. Sir, I ſhan't think it a trouble——

Fern. To make me a cuckold? no, no, I believe.

Fred. You won't underſtand me.

Fern. I do underſtand you.

Fred. Then, ſir, I leave the buſineſs entirely to your prudence to manage according to your diſcretion.

Fern. Is the devil in the fellow? becauſe I underſtand that he has a deſign upon my wife, he ſays, he leaves me to manage it according to my diſcretion. Why perhaps you expect I ſhould pimp for you: are not you a very impudent fellow? or is this your way of proceeding with the huſband? from this time forward you ſhall not ſo much as ſee my wife through a double-barr'd window; and to put you out of all other hopes, I will marry my daughter very ſhortly to a friend of my own that will deſerve her. [*Going.*

Fred. Will you reſolve without hearing me?

Jaqueline *enters to 'em.*

Fern. Reſolve! why I do reſolve to have nothing to ſay to you; to you, nor your rogue there, that follows you. Odd! that fellow looks very ſuſpiciouſly.

Jaq. Sir, ſir, ſay your pleaſure of my maſter, or to my maſter; but don't diſparage my countenance; what have you to ſay to my face?

Fern. Why, I don't like it.

Jaq. Nay, nay, if that be all——

Fern. But that is not all; I ſay moreover that you muſt be a very impudent fellow, that can keep ſuch a face in countenance.

Jaq. Sir, I would have you to know, what it ſeems you are ignorant of, that whatever you take me to be, ſir, I am a gentleman, ſir.

Fern. Nay, keep your diſtance, friend, however. A gentleman, ſay you! like enough: take a pick-pocket into cuſtody, and upon the firſt queſtion of his roguery, he ſhall anſwer, I'm a gentleman. You never hear of a fellow to be hang'd, tho' for ſtealing a clean ſhirt, but he's

he's a gentleman; and ſuch a gentleman I could allow you to be, if you were going to the gallows.

[Fernando *going.*

Jaq. What the devil ſhall I do with my letter? ſir, ſir, under you favour one word; I beg your pardon, ſir; if my maſter has ſaid any thing to diſoblige you—— lord, ſir, you lovers have bad memories —— [*To* Frederick.] My maſter has forgot his main buſineſs with you, ſir [*To* Fernando.] You have forgot the money you came about, ſir. [*To* Frederick.

Fern. Money, friend! if you come about money, I can hear you.

Fred. What money do'ſt talk of? I want no money.

Jaq. Pray, ſir, pardon me? I am your ſteward, and know your wants; you do want——and I want—— [*Shews the letter, and makes ſigns.*] Pox on him, he won't apprehend me.

Fred. There's ſomething to be done with that letter: I don't underſtand him, but I'll give into't if I can—[*Applying to* Fernando.] I was loth to diſcover it, but the beſt eſtates may want money ſometimes: you ſhall have what ſecurity——

[Jaqueline *pins a letter to* Fernando's *coat behind.*

Fern. I am for a mortgage, or nothing——what a pox do you mean, gathering about me ſo? Have you a deſign upon my perſon?

Fred. Fie, fie, ſir; well, you minded what I ſaid?

Fern. Minded what you ſaid! I thank you, I had more occaſion to mind what you did; for ought I know I may be robb'd—— [Fernando *ſearching his pockets.*

Jaq. Of your daughter, in good time. [*Aſide.*

Fern. My pockets may be pick'd.

Jaq. Of a ſhort pipe, and iron tobacco-box.

Fern. Very well, ſir, this trick won't take.

Jaq. Yes, but it will, ſir.

Fern. What then, you deſign'd to abuſe me, to make me your property, your go-between? ha? what ſhall I do for you? have you no commendation-token of your affectation, or ſo, to my wife, nor daughter? what, you have a letter; I know. I ſhall certainly deliver it.

Jaq.

Jaq. That will be kind, indeed, when my maſter ſends one along with you.

Fern. At any time, at any time.

Fred. I'm glad I know the way.

Fern. O, you can't miſs it by me: you can't find ſuch another for that purpoſe.

Jaq. By my troth, I think not, ſir; ha, ha, ha.

Fern. Do you laugh at your good fortune already?

Jaq. I beg your pardon, ſir, but I muſt laugh.

Fern. Do, do, try with the ſilly gentleman, your maſter, whether you can laugh me out of my daughter, or no. [*Exit.*

Jaq. I think I have bid fair for't.

Fred. 'Twas pretty well towards it, to make him carry the letter himſelf.

Jaq. There's no danger of its miſcarrying; the whole family is in a conſpiracy againſt him; and whoever gets it, will deliver it to *Victoria*.

Fred. I know *Fabian* will do any thing that's miſchievous to aſſiſt me: go home, and deſire him to ſtay for me: behave yourſelf handſomely in this buſineſs, and you ſhall be a gentleman in earneſt. Who's here? *Villeroy* and *Carlos*; here, here, *Jaqueline*. [*Whiſpers.*

Enter Villeroy *and* Carlos.

Car. This conſtancy of yours will eſtabliſh an immortal reputation among the women.

Vil. If it wou'd eſtabliſh me with *Iſabella*——

Car. Follow her, follow her: *Troy* town was won at laſt.

Vil. I have follow'd her theſe ſeven years, and now but live in hopes.

Car. But live in hopes! why, hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting-place, and, for ought you know, but one ſtage ſhort of the poſſeſſion of your miſtreſs.

Vil. But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making than hers: and proceed rather from my wiſhes, than any encouragement ſhe has giv'n me.

Car. That I can't tell: the ſex is very various: there are no certain meaſures to be preſcrib'd, or follow'd, in

in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt 'em in the weakeſt part; preſs 'em but hard, and they will all fall under the neceſſity of a ſurrender at laſt. That favour comes at once; and ſometimes when we leaſt expect it.

Vil. I ſhall be glad to find it ſo.

Car. You will find it ſo. Every place is to be taken, that is not to be reliev'd: ſhe muſt comply.

Vil. I'm going to viſit her.

Car. What intereſt a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

Vil. I know your intereſt, and I thank you. [*Exit.*

Car. Be ſure of me to help the marriage forward. Why ſo, *Frederick*, am not I a very honeſt fellow, to endeavour to provide a good huſband for my elder brother's widow?

Fred. A very kind relation indeed: you'll give your conſent to the match, where you are to have the benefit of the bargain.

Car. Tho' I have taken care to root her out of our family, I wou'd tranſplant her into *Villeroy*'s

Fred. That has a face of good nature; but it ſquints with both eyes upon your own intereſt.

Car. That trick I learn'd in the ſchools, in your company, when I was a younger brother, and deſigned for the church.

Fred. The church is a very good ſchool: there are wiſe men and fools of every foundation: but there are leſſons for every learner; doctrines for all diſciples, and calculated to all capacities, to thrive or ſtarve by, as they are able to digeſt 'em. The church will teach us to riſe in this world as well as in the next, if we have but grace to follow her example.

Car. I think I have taken care to improve the principles I receiv'd from her. What did they turn me into a trade for, but to thrive by the myſtery? and cheating is the myſtery in all the profeſſions I know of.

Fred. I have a great deal of news for you, about *Fernando* and his family; the wife and daughter are in diſ-

tress, we must have mercy on 'em. When you have secur'd the main matter of *Villeroy* and *Isabella*, *Julia* desires to fall under your consideration.

Car. I'm something busy at present; but I'll take care of her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE Fernando's *house*.

Enter Julia *and* Victoria.

Jul. Here's your father behind us.

Vict. I hope the old eves-dropper has not over-heard me.

Enter Fernando, *with the note pinn'd to his coat.*

Fern. Who's that dare talk of love in my house? it shall be treason to mention it.

Jul. Your own jealous suspicion; here's nothing of love in this house to be talk'd of.

Fern. My own jealous suspicion! it may be so; however, I shall take an occasion to search my house, from the garret to the cellar; and if I do find any love in it, or any thing towards, to encourage it——

Vict. In the cellar, sir! what shou'd you find there? cold meat, and small beer are no great provocatives: won't you allow us to eat and drink, father?

Fern. To eat and drink, father! thou art always cramming, by thy good will: that jade's gut wou'd ruin a little fortune; wou'd any, but I, were obliged to provide for it. Let me see, I don't know but, in my absence, you may have let in some rascal or another, and hid him——

Jul. Why don't you look under the table?

Fern. There's something going forward against me, I know, gentlewomen, by your always being together: come, come, what's the contrivance? let me know your design, I'll tell you whether 'twill prosper, or no.

Jul. In short husband, I must tell you, your jealousy has quite tir'd me, and I can live no longer under your tyrannical government.

Fern.

Fern. Very well; mine is a tyrannical government! and why, I pray? becauſe it refuſes you the privilege of making me a cuckold: a pretty privilege truly! and you will plead it as often you can, no doubt on't: but I ſhall watch you. [Victoria *ſpies the letter.*

Vict Hey day! what merry company has my father been in?

Fern. Why, do you find me in ſo merry an humour, miſtreſs?

Vict. In a humour to entertain us, I ſee, ſir. Some body has play'd the rogue with him. [*Aſide.*] I'll try to read it ——

Fern. The ſpirit of rebellion has been among you in my abſence, to perſuade you to reſiſt my lawful authority: but whether that ſpirit appear'd in the ſimple ſhape of a letter only, or in the more lewd limbs of a lover, you know beſt ——

Jul. I know nothing. [*Turning from him.*

Fern. Look you, wife, if there is a neceſſity for doing it, do it the cheapeſt way: your expreſſes, your letter-carriers, will coſt money: ah! wou'd I cou'd light upon one of thoſe letter-carriers, I wou'd ſo pay 'em.

Vict. 'Tis directed to me —— I had almoſt ſpoil'd all. [*Takes the letter off.*

Fern. What is that wench doing behind me there? no good I warrant her.

Vict. Nothing, ſir, but ſome fool or other has been chalking you upon the back. [*Rubs him.*

Fern. O! 'twas that rogue *Frederick*'s man: I felt him indeed fumbling about me when his maſter whiſper'd me: but I ſhall take an occaſion to ſcore him over the coxcomb, when I ſee him again.

Vict. Did he ſend it, father?

Fern. Send what, daughter! wou'd you have had him ſent any thing? I cou'd do no more than offer my ſervice: he did not like the conveyance, I ſuppoſe; and ſo you are diſappointed.

Vict. Not I indeed, father, I'm not diſappointed; I have as much as I expected, or deſir'd.

Fern. As much as you expected, or deſir'd!

Vict. What have I to do with him?

Fern. Ah! gypsy! you don't know what you have to do with him? nor you don't desire to be instructed? but if you are ignorant, here's a woman of experience; your mother can inform you, she has something to do with him, if you han't. Get you gone to your several chambers, go. I'll bring you news from your fellows; rely upon me for your intelligence; I'll do your business, I warrant you. [*Thursts 'em in before him.*

SCENE *the street.*

Villeroy, *with* Isabella *and her little Son.*

Isa. Why do you follow me? you know, I am
A bankrupt every way; too far engag'd
Ever to make return; I own you'ave been
More than a brother to me, been my friend;
And at a time, when friends are found no more;
A friend to my misfortunes.

Vil. I must be
Always your friend.

Isa. I have known, and found you
Truly my friend; and wou'd I cou'd be yours:
But the unfortunate cannot be friends:
Fate watches the first motion of the soul,
To disappoint our wishes; if we pray
For blessings, they prove curses in the end,
To ruin all about us. Pray be gone,
Take warning, and be happy.

Vil. Happiness!
There's none for me, without you: riches, name,
Health, fame, distinction, place, and quality,
As the incumbrances of groaning life,
To make it but more tedious, without you;
What serve the goods of fortune for; to raise
My hopes, that you at last will share 'em with me.
Long life itself, the universal prayer,
And heav'n's reward of well-deservers here,
Wou'd prove a plague to me; to see you always,

And

And never ſee you mine! ſtill to deſire,
And never to enjoy!

Iſa. I muſt not hear you.

Vil. Thus, at this awful diſtance, I have ſerv'd
A ſeven years bondage——Do I call it bondage,
When I can never wiſh to be redeem'd?
No, let me rather linger out a life
Of expectation, that you may be mine,
Than be reſtor'd to the indifference
Of ſeeing you without this pleaſing pain.
I've loſt myſelf, and never wou'd be found,
But in theſe arms.

Iſa. O, I have heard all this!
——But muſt no more——the charmer is no more.
My bury'd huſband riſes in the face
Of my dear boy, and chides me for my ſtay:
Can'ſt thou forgive me, child?

Child. Why, have you done a fault? you cry as if you had: indeed now, I have done nothing to offend you: but if you kiſs me, and look ſo very ſad upon me, I ſhall cry too.

Iſa. My little angel, no, you muſt not cry;
Sorrow will overtake thy ſteps too ſoon;
I ſhou'd not haſten it.

Vil. What can I ſay!
The arguments that make againſt my hopes
Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more;
Thoſe pious tears you hourly throw away
Upon the grave, have all their quick'ning charms,
And more engage my love, to make you mine.
When yet a virgin, free, and indiſpos'd,
I lov'd, but ſaw you only with my eyes;
I could not reach the beauties of your ſoul:
I have ſince liv'd in contemplation,
And long experience of your growing goodneſs:
What then was paſſion, is my judgment now,
Thro' all the ſeveral changes of your life,
Confirm'd, and ſettled in adoring you.

Iſa. Nay, then I muſt be gone; if you're my friend,

If you regard my little intereſt,
No more of this; you ſee, I grant you all
That friendſhip will allow: be ſtill my friend;
That's all I can receive, or have to give.
I'm going to my father: he needs not an excuſe
To uſe me ill; pray leave me to the trial.

Vil. I'm only born to be what you wou'd have me;
The creature of your power, and muſt obey,
In every thing obey you. I am going:
But all good fortune go along with you. [*Exit.*

Iſa. I ſhall need all your wiſhes—— [*Knocks.*
Lo k'd! and faſt!
Where is the charity that us'd to ſtand,
In our forefathers hoſpitable days,
At great men's doors, ready for our wants,
Like the good angel of the family,
With open arms taking the needy in,
To feed and clothe, to comfort, and relieve 'em?
Now ev'n their gates are ſhut againſt the poor.
[*She knocks again.*

Enter Sampſon *to her.*

Sam. Well, what's to do now, I trow? you knock as houd, as if you were invited; and that's more than I year of: but I can tell you, you may look twice about you for a welcome in a great man's family, before you and it; unleſs you bring it along with you.

Iſa. I hope I bring my welcome along with me. Is your lord at home?

Sam. My lord at home?

Iſa. Count *Baldwin* lives here ſtill?

Sam. Ay, ay, count *Baldwin* does live here: and I am his porter. but what's that to the purpoſe, good woman, of my lord's being at home? if you had enquir'd for Mrs. *Comfit*, the houſe-keeper, or had the good fortune to be acquainted with the butler, you might have what you came for; and I cou'd make you an anſwer: but for my lord's being at home to every idle body that enquires for him——

Iſa. Why, don't you know me, friend?

Sam.

Sam. Not I, not I, miſtreſs; I may have ſeen you before, or ſo; but men of employment muſt forget their acquaintances; eſpecially ſuch as we are never to be the better for.

Going to ſhut the Door, Nurſe enters, having overheard him.

Nurſe. Handſomer words would become you, and mend your manners, *Sampſon:* do you know who you prate to?

Iſa. I'm glad you know me, Nurſe.

Nurſe. Marry, Heav'n forbid, madam, that I ſhould ever forget you, or my little Jewel——[Iſabella *goes in with her Child.*] Now my bleſſing go along with you wherever you go, or whatever you are about. Fie, *Sampſon*, how could'ſt thou be ſuch a *Saracen?* A *Turk* would have been a better Chriſtian, than to have done ſo barbarouſly by ſo good a lady.

Sam. Why look you, Nurſe, I know you of old: by your good will you would have a finger in every bodies pie; but mark the end on't; if I am called to account about it, I know what I have to ſay.

Nurſe. Marry come up here! ſay your pleaſure, and ſpare not. Refuſe his eldeſt ſon's widow, and poor child, the comfort of ſeeing him! ſhe does not trouble him ſo often.

Sam. Not that I am againſt it, Nurſe; but we are but ſervants you know: we muſt have no likings, but our lord's; and muſt do as we are ordered.

Nurſe. Nay, that's true, *Sampſon.*

Sam. Beſides, what I did was all for the beſt: I have no ill will to the young lady, as a body may ſay, upon my own account; only that I hear ſhe it poor; and indeed, I naturally hate your decay'd gentry: they expect as much waiting upon as when they had money in their pockets, and were able to conſider us for the trouble.

Nurſe. Why, that is a grievance, indeed, in great families; where the gifts at good times are better than the wages: it would do well to be reform'd.

Sam. But what is the buſineſs, Nurſe? you have been in the family, before I came into the world: what's

the reaſon, pray, that this daughter-in-law, who has ſo good a report in every body's mouth, is ſo little ſet by, by my lord?

Nurſe. Why, I'll tell you, *Sampſon*; more nor leſs, I'll tell the truth; that's my way, you know, without adding or diminiſhing.

Sam. Ay, marry, Nurſe.

Nurſe My lord's eldeſt ſon, *Biron* by name, the ſon of his boſom, and the ſon that he would have lov'd beſt, if he had as many as king *Pyramus* of *Troy*.

Sam. How! king *Pyramus* of *Troy!* why how many had he?

Nurſe. Why the ballad ſings he had fifty ſons: but no matter for that. This *Biron*, as I was ſaying, was a lovely ſweet gentleman, and indeed, nobody could blame his father for loving him: he was a ſon for the king of *Spain*, God bleſs him; for I was his Nurſe. But now I come to the point, *Sampſon*; this *Biron*, without aſking the advice of his friends, hand over head, as young men will have their vagaries, not having the fear of his father before his eyes, as I may ſay, wilfully marries this *Iſabella*.

Sam. How wilfully! he ſhould have had her conſent, methinks.

Nurſe. No, wilfully marries her; and, which was worſe, after ſhe had ſettled all her fortune upon a nunnery, which ſhe broke out of to run away with him. They ſay they had the church's forgiveneſs, but I had rather it had been his father's.

Sam. Why in good troth, theſe nunneries, I ſee no good they do. I think the young lady was in the right to run away from a nunnery: and I think our young maſter was not in the wrong, but in marrying without a portion.

Nurſe. That was the quarrel, I believe, *Sampſon:* upon this, my old lord would never ſee him; diſinherited him; took his younger brother *Carlos* into favour, whom he never car'd for before; and at laſt forc'd *Biron* to go to the ſiege of *Candy*, where he was kill'd.

Sam. A-lack-a-day, poor gentleman.

Nurſe.

Nurse. For which my old lord hates her, as if she had been the cause of his going thither.

Sam. Alas, alas, poor lady, she has suffer'd for't: she has liv'd a great while a widow.

Nurse. A great while indeed for a young woman, *Sampson.*

Sam. Gad so, here they come, I won't venture to be seen.

Enter Count Baldwin, *followed by* Isabella *and her Child.*

C. Bald. Whoever of your friends directed you,
Misguided, and abus'd you, there's your way——
I can afford to shew you out again.
What could you expect from me?

Isa. O, I have nothing to expect on earth!
But misery is very apt to talk:
I thought I might be heard.

C. Bald. What can you say?
Is there in eloquence, can there be in words
A recompensing pow'r, a remedy,
A reparation of the injuries,
The great calamities, that you have brought
On me, and mine? You have destroy'd those hopes
I fondly rais'd, through my declining life,
To rest my age upon; and most undone me.

Isa. I have undone myself too.

C. Bald. Speak again:
Say still you are undone, and I will hear you:
With pleasure hear you.

Isa. Would my ruin please you?

C. Bald. Beyond all other pleasures.

Isa. Then you are pleas'd——for I am most undone.

C. Bald. I pray'd but for revenge, and Heav'n has heard,
And sent it to my wishes: these grey hairs
Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave,
Which you have dug for me, without the thought,
The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

Isa. Indeed I am most wretched——When I lost
My husband——

C. Bald. Would he had never been;
Or never had been yours.
Isa. I then believ'd
The measure of my sorrow then was full:
But every moment of my growing days
Makes room for woes, and adds 'em to the sum.
I lost with *Biron* all the joys of life:
But now its last supporting means are gone:
All the kind helps that Heav'n in pity rais'd,
In charitable pity to our wants,
At last have left us: now bereft of all,
But this last trial of a cruel father,
To save us both from sinking. O my child!
Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart:
Let the resemblance of a once-lov'd son
Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you,
And plead the fatherless and widow's cause.
O, if you ever hope to be forgiven,
As you will need to be forgiven too,
Forget our faults, that Heav'n may pardon yours.
C. Bald. How dare you mention Heav'n! call to mind
Your perjur'd vows; your plighted, broken faith
To Heav'n, and all things holy; were you not
Devoted, wedded to a life reclose,
The sacred habit on, profest and sworn
A votary for ever? Can you think
The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine,
Is thunder proof?
Isa. There, there began my woes.
Let women all take warning of my fate,
Never resolve, or think they can be safe
Within the reach and tongues of tempting men.
O! had I never seen my *Biron*'s face;
Had he not tempted me, I had not fall'n,
But still continu'd innocent, and free
Of a bad world, which only he had pow'r
To reconcile, and make me try again.
C. Bald. Your own inconstancy, your graceless thoughts
Debauch'd and reconcil'd you to the world:
He had no hand to bring you back again,

But

But what you gave him. *Circe*, you prevail'd
Upon his honeſt mind, transforming him
From virtue, and himſelf, into what ſhapes
You had occaſion for; and what he did
Was firſt inſpir'd by you. A cloyſter was
Too narrow for the work you had in hand:
Your buſineſs was more general; the whole world
To be the ſcene: therefore you ſpread your charms
To catch his ſoul, to be the inſtrument,
The wicked inſtrument of your curſed flight.
Not that you valu'd him; for any one,
Who could have ſerv'd that turn, had been as welcome.

Iſa. O! I have ſins to Heav'n, but none to him.

C. Bald. Had my wretched ſon
Marry'd a beggar's baſtard; taken her
Out of her rags, and made her of my blood;
The miſchief might have ceas'd, and ended there.
But bringing you into a family,
Entails a curſe upon the name, and houſe,
That takes you in: the only part of me
That did receive you, periſh'd for his crime:
'Tis a defiance to offended Heav'n,
Barely to pity you: your ſins purſue you;
The heavieſt judgments that can fall upon you,
Are your juſt lot, and but prepare your doom:
Expect 'em, and deſpair——ſirrah, rogue,
How durſt thou diſobey me! [*To the Porter.*

Iſa. Not for myſelf——for I am paſt the hopes
Of being heard——but for this innocent——
And then I never will diſturb you more.

C. Bald. I almoſt pity the unhappy child:
But being yours——

Iſa. Look on him as your ſon's;
And let his part in him anſwer for mine.
O ſave, defend him, ſave him from the wrongs
That fall upon the poor.

C. Bald. It touches me——
And I will ſave him——But to keep him ſafe;
Never come near him more.

Isa. What! take him from me!
No, we muſt never part: 'tis the laſt hold
Of comfort I have left, and when he fails,
All goes along with him: O! could you be
The tyrant to divorce life from my life?
I live but in my child.
No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread
From door to door, to feed his daily wants,
Rather than always loſe him.

C. Bald. Then have your child, and feed him with your prayer.
You, raſcal, ſlave; what do I keep you for?
How came this woman in?

Sam. Why indeed, my lord, I did as good as tell her before, my thoughts upon the matter——

C. Bald. Did you ſo, ſir? now then tell her mine:
Tell her I ſent you to her. [*Thruſts him towards her.*
There's one more to provide her.

Sam. Good my Lord, what I did was in perfect obedience to the old Nurſe there; I told her what it would come to.

C. Bald. What! this was a plot upon me. Mumper, you, were you in the conſpiracy? be gone, go all together; I have provided you an equipage, now ſet up when you pleaſe. She's old enough to do you ſervice: I have none for her. The wide world lies before you: be gone, take any road, but this, to beg or ſtarve in: I ſhall be glad to hear of you: but never ſee me more.

[*He drives 'em off before him.*

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Villeroy *and* Carlos.

Car. THE part I act in your interest, goes against the grain of my good nature and conscience: but since 'tis necessary to your service, and will be my sister's advantage in the end, I'm better reconcil'd to it.

Vil. My interest!
O never think I can intend to raise
An interest from *Isabella*'s wrongs.
You father may have interested ends,
In her undoing; but my heart has none.
Her happiness must be my interest,
And that I would restore.

Car. Why so I mean.
These hardships that my father lays upon her,
I'm sorry for; and wish I could prevent:
But he will have his way.
Since there was nothing to be hop'd from her prosperity, the change of her fortune may alter the condition of her thoughts, and make at last for you.

Vil. She is above her fortune.

Car. Try her again. Women commonly love according to the circumstances they are in.

Vil. Common women may.

Car. Since you are not accessary to the injustice, you may be persuaded to take the advantage of other people's crimes.

Vil. I must despise all those advantages,
That indirectly can advance my love.
No, tho' I live but in the hopes of her,
And languish for th' enjoyment of those hopes;
I'd rather pine in a consuming want
Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,
From any reason, but consenting love.
O! let me never have it to remember;

I could

I cou'd betray her, coldly to comply:
When a clear, generous choice beſtows her on me,
I know to value the unequal'd giſt:
I would not have it, but to value it.

Car. Take your own way; remember, what I offer'd came from a friend.

Vil. I underſtand it ſo. I'll ſerve her for herſelf, without the thought of a reward. [*Exit.*

Car. Agree that point between you. If you marry her any way, you do my buſineſs.

Enter Frederick *and* Jaqueline *to him.*

Fred. Well, all goes well, I hope.

Car. As I cou'd wiſh. I can't ſtay with you: I muſt be near, if occaſion be, to lend a helping hand: when this marriage is over, I deſign to come in for a ſnack of *Fernando*'s family. [*Exit.*

Fred. The more the merrier, his wife ſays. I hope to diſpoſe of the daughter myſelf.

Jaq. You men of intrigue are commonly look'd upon to be the idle part of mankind, that have nothing to do; now I am of a contrary opinion——

Fred. Why ſo, *Jaqueline?*

Jaq. Becauſe a right good whoremaſter is never at the end of his buſineſs.

Enter Fabian *in a friar's habit.*

Fred How! *Fabian* turn'd friar!

Fab. As you ſee, *Frederick*; you will all come to a ſerious ſenſe of your ſins one time or another, as I have done. I have had a good father, and I have been an ungracious boy to him; that's the truth on't. Therefore to make him what ſatisfaction I can for my paſt faults, I have taken this habit, with an intention to pray for him——

Fred. Why thou art not mad, *Fabian?*

Fab. Not mad of a monaſtery, I aſſure you. I am never the nearer being a ſaint, for putting on the habit of piety! the profeſſion and the practice of it are two things in the ſchools; and wiſe men diſtinguiſh 'em into ſeveral intereſts.

interests. In short, I have told our honest abbot the whole history of my father's jealousy, covetousness, and hard-heartedness to his wife and children; he, good man, making it a point of conscience to contribute as much as he can to a work of charity, has given me leave to put on this habit, for the carrying on the method of his cure.

Fred. But what do you propose by this?

Fab. Why, I propose that every body shall be the better for it but my father. For, upon the credit of this my reformation, believing, from my cloathing, that I shall have no more occasion for the transitory things of this world, his pocket will plead for me, and the old fellow take me into favour again.

Fred. That's something indeed.

Fab. Then, in the first place, if you miscarry to-night in your design upon my sister, I shall be able to deliver a letter, and bring it about another time.

Fred. Very well.

Fab. Secondly, I intend to put the means honestly into my mother's hands, to make my father a cuckold if she pleases.

Jaq. These are very good reasons indeed, sir.

Fab. Besides these advantages to the public, I have a private reason of my own, to be reveng'd upon the person of the old gentleman. I must not discover too much of my contrivance, for fear of lessening the pleasure in bringing it about——I shall have occasion of some witty rogue, that can be mischievous, when there's no danger: I think that's pretty near your character, *Jaquelin*.

Jaq. O, sir, you do me too much honour.

Fab. Can't you spare him a little?

Fred. Not well to-night: to morrow——

Fab. Will do my business. I have one part of my farce the friars will scruple a little: *Jaqueline* must act that: the whole fraternity are concern'd in my plot, I assure you.

Jaq. I'm glad to hear that, sir; I love a plot where the clergy's concern'd: they will always be sure of the benefit,

benefit, without the danger of the beating: I am mainly of their principles.

Fab. I am ſomething in haſte at preſent:
To-morrow you ſhall know more. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, Iſabella's *Houſe.*

Enter Iſabella *and Nurſe,* Iſabella's *little Son at play upon the floor.*

Iſa. Sooner or later all things paſs away,
And are no more: the beggar and the king,
With equal ſteps, tread forward to their end:
Tho' they appear of different natures now;
Not of the ſame day's work of Providence;
They meet at laſt; the reconciling grave
Swallows diſtinction firſt, that made us foes,
Then all alike lie down in peace together.
When will that hour of peace arrive for me!
In heav'n I ſhall find it——not in heav'n,
If my old tyrant father can diſpoſe
Of things above——but, there, his intereſt
May be as poor as mine, and want a friend
As much as I do here. [*Weeping.*

Nurſe. Good madam, be comforted.

Iſa. Do I deſerve to be this outcaſt wretch?
Abandon'd thus, and loſt? But 'tis my lot,
The will of heav'n, and I muſt not complain:
I will not for myſelf: let me bear all
The violence of your wrath; but ſpare my child:
Let not my ſins be viſited on him:
They are; they muſt; a general ruin falls
On every thing about me: thou art loſt,
Poor Nurſe, by being near me.

Nurſe. I can work, or beg, to do you ſervice.

Iſa. Cou'd I forget
What I have been, I might the better bear
What I am deſtin'd to: I'm not the firſt
That have been wretched: but to think how much
I have been happier!——wild hurrying thoughts

Start

Start every way from my diſtracted ſoul,
To find out hope, and only meet deſpair.
What anſwer have I?

Enter Sampſon.

Sam. Why truly very little to the purpoſe: like a *Jew* as he is, he ſays you have had more already than the jewels are worth: he wiſhes you wou'd rather think of redeeming 'em, than expect any more money upon 'em.

Iſa. 'Tis very well—— [*Exit* Sampſon.
So: poverty at home, and debts abroad!
My preſent fortune bad; my hopes yet worſe!
What will become of me!——
This ring is all I've left of value now:
'Twas given me by my huſband; his firſt gift
Upon our marriage: I have always kept it,
With my beſt care, the treaſure next my life;
And now but part with it to ſupport life:
Which only can be dearer. Take it nurſe,
'Twill ſtop the cries of hunger for a time;
Provide us bread; and bring a ſhort reprieve,
To put off the bad day of beggary,
That will come on too ſoon. Take care of it;
Manage it, as the laſt remaining friend,
That would relieve us. [*Exit Nurſe.*] Heav'n can only tell
Where we ſhall find another——My dear boy!
The labour of his birth was lighter to me
Than of my fondneſs now; my fears for him
Are more, than in that hour of hovering death,
They cou'd be for myſelf——He minds me not.
His little ſports have taken up his thoughts:
O may they never feel the pangs of mine.
Thinking will make me mad: why muſt I think,
When no thought brings me comfort?

Nurſe returns.

Nurſe. O madam! you are utterly ruin'd, and undone, your creditors of all kinds are come in upon you; they have muſter'd up a regiment of rogues, that are come to plunder

plunder your houſe, and ſeize upon all you have in the world, they are below, what will you do, madam?

Iſa. Do! nothing, no, for I am born to ſuffer.

Enter Carlos *to her.*

Car. O ſiſter! can I call you by that name,
And be the ſon of this inhuman man,
Inveterate to your ruin? Do not think
I am a-kin to his barbarity?
I muſt abhor my father's uſage of you:
And from my bleeding honeſt heart, muſt pity,
Pity your loſt condition. Can you think
Of any way that I may ſerve you in?
But what enrages moſt my ſenſe of grief,
My ſorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,
Fore-knowing well the ſtorm that was to fall,
Has order'd me not to appear for you.

Iſa. I thank your pity; my poor huſband fell
For diſobeying him: do not you ſtay
To venture his diſpleaſure too for me.

Car. You muſt reſolve on ſomething—— [*Exit.*

Iſa. Let my fate
Determine for me; I ſhall be prepar'd.
The worſt that can befall me, is to die:
When once it comes to that, it matters not
Which way 'tis brought about: whether I ſtarve,
Or hang, or drown, the end is ſtill the ſame;
Plagues, poiſon, famine, are but ſeveral names
Of the ſame thing, and all conclude in death.
——But ſudden death! O for a ſudden death,
To cheat my perſecutors of their hopes,
Th' expected pleaſure of beholding me
Long in my pains, ling'ring in miſery.
It will not be; that is deny'd me too.
Hark, they are coming; let the torrent roar,
It can but overwhelm me in its fall;
And life and death are now alike to me.

[*Exeunt, the Nurſe leading the Child.*

SCENE

SCENE *opens, and shews* Carlos *and* Villeroy *with the Officers.*

Vil. No farther violence ——
The debt in all is but four thousand crowns;
Were it ten times the sum, I think you know
My fortune very well can answer it.
You have my word for this: I'll see you paid.
Off. That's as much as we can desire: so we have the money, no matter whence it comes.
Vil. To morrow you shall have it.
Car. Thus far all's well.——

Enter Isabella, *and Nurse with the Child.*

And now my sister comes to crown the work. [*Aside.*
Isa. Where are these rav'ning blood-hounds, that pursue
In a full cry, gaping to swallow me?
I meet your rage, and come to be devour'd:
Say, which way are you to dispose of me?
To dungeons, darkness, death!
Car. Have patience.
Isa. Patience!
Off. You'll excuse us, we are but in our office; debts must be paid.
Isa. My death will pay you all. [*Distractedly.*
Off. While there is law to be had, people will have their own.
Vil. 'Tis very fit they should; but pray begone.
To-morrow certainly—— [*Exeunt Officers.*
Isa. What of to-morrow?
Am I then the sport,
The game of fortune, and her laughing fools?
The common spectacle, to be expos'd
From day to day, and baited for the mirth
Of the lewd rabble? Must I be reserv'd
For fresh afflictions?
Vil. For long happiness
Of life, I hope.

Isa.

Isa. There is no hope for me.
The load grows light, when we resolve to bear:
I'm ready for my trial.
Car. Pray be calm,
And know your friends.
Isa. My friends! have I a friend?
Car. A faithful friend; in your extremest need
Villeroy came in to save you.——
Isa. Save me! how?
Car. By satisfying all your creditors.
Isa. Which way? for what?
Vil. Let me be understood,
And then condemn me: you have giv'n me leave
To be your friend; and in that only name,
I now appear before you. I could wish,
There had been no occasion of a friend,
Because I know you shy to be oblig'd;
And still more loth to be oblig'd by me.
Isa. 'Twas that I would avoid—— [*Aside.*
Vil. I'm most unhappy, that my services
Can be suspected to design upon you;
I have no farther ends than to redeem you
From fortune's wrongs; to shew myself at last,
What I have long profess'd to be, your friend:
Allow me that; and to convince you more,
That I intend only your interest,
Forgive what I have done, and in amends
(If that can make you any that can please you)
I'll tear myself for ever from my hopes;
Stifle this flaming passion in my soul,
That has so long broke out to trouble you,
And mention my unlucky love no more.
Isa. This generosity will ruin me—— [*Aside.*
Vil. Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you
Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can
To keep away, and never see you more.
Car. You must not go.
Vil. Could *Isabella* speak
These few short words, I should be rooted here;
And never move but upon her commands.

Car.

Car. Speak to him, ſiſter; do not throw away
A fortune that invites you to be happy.
In your extremity he begs your love;
And has deſerv'd it nobly. Think upon
Your loſt condition, helpleſs and alone.
'Tho' now you have a friend, the time muſt come
That you will want one; him you may ſecure
To be a friend, a father, huſband to you.

Iſa. A huſband!

Car. You have diſcharg'd your duty to the dead,
And to the living; 'tis a wilfulneſs
Not to give way to your neceſſities,
That force you to this marriage.

Nurſe. What muſt become of this poor innocence?
[*To the child.*

Car. He wants a father to protect his youth,
And rear him up to virtue. You muſt bear
The future blame, and anſwer to the world,
When you refuſe the eaſy honeſt means
Of taking care of him.

Nurſe. Of him, and me,
And every one, that muſt depend upon you:
Unleſs you pleaſe now to provide for us,
We muſt all periſh.

Car. Nor would I preſs you——

Iſa. Do not think I need
Your reaſons, to confirm my gratitude.
I have a ſoul that's throughly ſenſible, [*To* Vil.
Of your great worth, and buſy to contrive,
If poſſible, to make you a return.

Vil. O! eaſily poſſible!

Iſa. It cannot be your way; my pleaſures are
Bury'd, and cold in my dead huſband's grave.
And I ſhould wrong the truth, myſelf, and you,
To ſay that I can ever love again.
I owe this declaration to myſelf;
But as a proof that I owe all to you,
If after what I've ſaid, you can reſolve
To think me worth your love——where am I going?
You cannot think it; 'tis impoſſible.

Vil.

Vil. Impoſſible!

Iſa. You ſhould not aſk me now, nor ſhould I grant.
I am ſo much oblig'd, that to conſent
Wou'd want a name to recommend the gift.
'Twould ſhew me poor, indebted, and compell'd,
Deſigning, mercenary; and I know
You would not wiſh to think I could be bought.

Vil. Be bought! where is the price that can pretend
To bargain for you? Not in fortune's power.
The joys of heav'n, and love, muſt be beſtow'd:
They are not to be ſold, and cannot be deſerv'd.

Iſa. Some other time I'll hear you on this ſubject.

Vil. Nay, then there is no time ſo fit for me.
[*Following her.*
Since you conſent to hear me, hear me now;
That you may grant: you are above
The little forms, which circumſcribe your ſex:
We differ but in time, let that be mine.

Iſa. You think fit
To get the better of me, and you ſhall;
Since you will have it ſo——I will be yours.

Vil. I take you at your word.

Iſa. I give you all,
My hand; and would I had a heart to give:
But if it ever can return again,
'Tis wholly yours.

Vil. O extaſy of joy!
Leave that to me. If all my ſervices,
If proſperous days, and kind indulging nights,
If all that man can fondly ſay, or do,
Can beget love, love ſhall be born again.
O *Carlos!* now my friend, and brother too:
And Nurſe, I have eternal thanks for thee.
Send for the prieſt—— [*Nurſe goes in haſte.*
This night you muſt be mine.
Let me command in this, and all my life
Shall be devoted to you.

Iſa. On your word
Never to preſs me to put off theſe weeds,

Which

Which beſt become my melancholy thoughts,
You ſhall command me.

Vil. Witneſs heav'n and earth
Againſt my ſoul, when I do any thing
To give you a diſquiet

Car. I long to wiſh you joy.

Vil. You'll be a witneſs of my happineſs?

Car. For once I'll be my ſiſter's father,
And give her to you.

Vil. Next my *Iſabella*,
Be near my heart: I am for ever yours. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *the Street before* Fernando's *Houſe.*

Enter Frederick *and* Jaqueline, *with a dark-lanthorn, and a ladder of ropes.*

Fred. Well! this is the time, and that's the window.

Jaq. And here is a ladder to put her in mind of her fortune.

Fred. How's that, ſirrah?

Jaq. Why, lord ſir, if the gentlewoman be mad enough to run away from her father upon your account, ſhe'll carry the frolick a little farther, in a fortnight, and hang herſelf upon her own.

Fred. Why, you rogue, I'm in love with her.

Jaq. I am but your poor ſervant, ſir, and if you command me to believe you, 'tis another thing. But I know what your love commonly ends in——

Fred. In what, ſir?

Jaq. In a week, ſir; but that's her buſineſs, and not mine; unleſs the ſpirit of your revenge riſes upon the folly of her pride, and frightens her into the conſideration of your humble ſervant *Jaqueline.*

Fred. O! you are witty, ſir!—The window opens.

[Victoria *above, a night-gown over her man's cloaths.*

Vict. I heard a noiſe! I'll liſten.

Fred. Victoria!——

Vict. Here am I, expecting the good hour, boy or girl, chuſe you whether, ſo we once but come together.

Jaq.

Jaq. Here's your deliverence in a halter, madam, a ladder of ropes for you. [*Thrown up to her.*

Vict I had rather have it in a halter, than ſtay where I am: give it me.

Fred. Be ſure you faſten it above.

Vict. Any thing to get looſe below.

Jaq. O the diſcretion of a girl! ſhe will be a ſlave to any thing that has not a title to make her one. If my maſter does commit matrimony, which he is not much addicted to, 'tis but changing a father for a huſband; removing from one priſon to another; but that has appearance of liberty for the time, tho' it ends in a worſe confinement at laſt.

Vict. Well! the ladder that is to convey me is ready; but before I part with this world 'twould be but reaſonable to have a little conſolation to encourage my journey to the next. What am I to truſt to when I come there?

Jaq. My maſter, madam, my maſter; what ſhould you truſt to? You can't truſt an honeſter gentleman,—— who, to my knowledge, will moſt infallibly break his word with you. [*Aſide.*

Fred. What ſhould you truſt to but yourſelf, child? Rely upon your beauty: 'twere a diſparagement of that, to talk of conditions, when you are certain of making your own terms.

Vict. Nay, now is my time indeed, and 'twill be my own fault if I don't: I ſhall ſhift, as my neighbours daughters have done before me, if I am left to the wide world. But *Frederick*, as to your particular.

Fred. Why, my particular is at your ſervice, and pray come down and be ſatisfied; lord here's ſuch ado to perſuade a woman to her liberty.

Vict. I'm anſwer'd, I'm anſwer'd, and coming down as faſt as I can: any thing to get rid of this father.

Fernando *enters to her armed, and turns her away from the window.*

Fern. Say you ſo, gentlewoman?

Vict. Undone, and ruin'd! what ſhall I do?

Fern.

Fern. I'll tell you what you ſhall do; get you in huſſy, go.——Now will I perſonate this hopeful young jade; and by that means diſcover the whole intrigue.

Jaq. What's that?

Fred. What's what? where?

Jaq. There's certainly a noiſe at the window above. I'll turn the blind ſide of my lanthorn, for fear of being diſcovered.

Fred. You blockhead, the noiſe was in the ſtreet—— *Victoria.*—— [*Calling her.*

Fern. Ay, ay.

Fred. Where are you, my dear?

Fern. I am here, my dear.

Jaq. Are you ſure you are there, madam? For my heart miſgives me moſt plaguily about this father of yours.

Fern. Does it ſo, rogue enough? [*Aſide.*

Jaq. You had beſt make haſte: old *Argus* will have an eye upon you, and then——

Fred. You'll ſlip your opportunity.

Fern. I'll lay a hold on't——and your ears, when I come within reach of 'em. [*Aſide.*

Fred. Are you coming?

Fern. Now, ſpeak ſoftly. [Fernando *goes down the ladder.*

Fred. Look you to the ladder: I'll call the chair to carry her off. [*Exit.*

Jaq. I'll lead you to my maſter, madam: pray give me you hand.

Fern. There 'tis for you —— [*Strikes him.*

Jaq. By my troth, and ſo 'tis; but not quite ſo ſoft as might be expected from a lady: ſure you, or I, are miſtaken, madam. [*Looks upon him with his lanthorn.* Mercy upon me! what do I ſee?

Fern. Why, what do you ſee? you ſee the party you expected to ſee; don't you, ſirrah?

Jaq. The devil, the devil the devil.

[*Crying out, and running about.*

Fern. You lye, you lye like a rogue; I am none of the devil, but I will make a devil of you before I have done

with you: I'll disappoint you of a halter, and send you a nearer way than you thought of. Have at you.

[*Presenting a Blunderbuss at him,* Jaqueline *falls,* Frederick *runs and disarms* Fernando.

Fred. Deliver us from a blunderbuss

Jaq. O lord, sir, a thousand thanks to you: I am not perfectly satisfied whether he has kill'd me or no; but if I am dead, I shall be glad to hear the old rogue was hang'd for me.

Fred. Who are you that wou'd murder my servant?

Fern. One that wou'd do as much for his master.

Jaq. Oh! he's the devil of a fellow; take care of him.

Fred. *Fernando!* how came you here?

Fern. Why, your mistress, and my damn'd daughter, not being quite ready to run away with you, desir'd me to make her excuse, and come down in her room to receive you.

Jaq. My reception was a little extraordinary: pox take you.

Fern. I beg your pardon, gentlemen, I am a little unprovided at present to entertain you; but my servants are up in the house, I'll get them together as fast as I can, and then you shall be sure of a welcome.

Fred. Unlucky disappointment!

Fern. No, no, no disappointment in the world: stay but a little, I'll bring my daughter myself to you; you shan't be disappointed. [Victoria *in man's cloaths opens the door, comes forward and meets* Fernando] How's this! my door open! and a man come out of my house! who are you? what wou'd you have? Thieves! thieves! lay hold upon him: I charge you in the king's name to secure him——Thieves, thieves—— [*Calling out.*

Vict. As you are gentlemen protect me; I am no thief.

Fred. How do we know that, friend? 'tis very suspicious.——

Fern. Ay, ay, they are your accomplices——I shall be with you——Thieves, thieves. [*Goes in.*

Vict.

Vict. If you don't find me worth your protection, when you know me, do what you pleaſe with me.

Jaq. That's fair enough, ſir; we had beſt draw off in time, the houſe will riſe upon us.

Fred. A pox on this unlucky adventure. Poor *Victoria* ſhe muſt pay for all. [*Exeunt.*

Fernando *returns.*

Fern. Fire! fire! you'll be burnt in your beds; will nobody come to me?——Thieves, thieves!

[*Several Servants run in.*

Serv. Where, where?

Fern. How came my doors open? where's my wife? Bid my daughter come down. I have loſt——I don't know what I have loſt. They may be plotters againſt the government for ought I know; run every way to apprehend 'em. [*Servants run about the ſtage.*

Serv. This way, this way. [*Exeunt.*

The SCENE *changes.*

Enter Frederick, Victoria, *and* Jaqueline.

Jaq. A little of the old rogue's broad gold would have purchas'd your pardon if you had robb'd him: I was in hopes of a ſnack of the plunder.

Vict. My deſign lay another way, I aſſure you.

Fred. But that we muſt not enquire into.

Vict. Why, faith, yes, if you pleaſe. I am ſo much oblig'd to you for my deliverance, I'll make nothing a ſecret to you.

Fred. Nay, ſir, if it be a ſecret——

Jaq. 'Twere not worth telling, ſir, if it were not a ſecret.

Vict. It is a ſecret, as indeed every thing ought to be, when there's a woman in the caſe.

Fred. Is there a woman in the caſe then?

Vict. A very pretty woman; but you are a man of honour.

Jaq. That he is upon my word, ſir; my maſter is as

good at a lady's ſecret as you can be, and will betray it to nobody—before he has diſcover'd it himſelf. [*Aſide.*

Vict. And therefore I will honeſtly own to you, that my buſineſs was with *Victoria*, *Fernando*'s daughter.

Fred. With *Victoria!*

Jaq. This fool will diſcover himſelf to his rival. [*Aſide.*

Fred. Does *Victoria* know of your buſineſs?

Vict. Know of my buſineſs! why, I make love to her. I have had an intrigue with her theſe three months; I am almoſt tir'd of her. I lye with her every night in her father's houſe, and the devil's in't if ſhe is not acquainted with my buſineſs.

Jaq. It muſt be your fault, if ſhe is not, that's certain.

Vict. Now you muſt know her father is jealous of every body for her, but me; there's one *Frederick* has a deſign upon her; ſhe has given him ſome encouragement of late, for the ſake of her liberty. I thank her, ſhe has thought him fitter for the fortune of her huſband than I ſhould be; ſhe deſigns to marry him, good man, for her convenience; and I am to continue upon all occaſions of pleaſure, as I tell you, ſir, her ladyſhip's humble ſervant.

Fred. You will have a rare time on't with this fool of a huſband.

Vict. I ſhall manage him, I warrant you; do you know him?

Fred. I have ſeen him.

Jaq. I have the honour to know him a little too. [*Pulling his maſter by the ſleeve.*

Vict. And what do you think of him? Does he promiſe to be a cuckold by his countenance?

Fred. Why, faith, no, I thought not.

Jaq. But there's no faith in faces, you know, ſir.

Fred. It ſeems ſo indeed by what this gentleman has told us; but ſir, do you know your cuckold? this *Frederick*.

Vict. Ay, ſir, I know him.

Fred. Hold up your lanthorn, *Jaqueline*. [*The lanthorn held up to* Frederick'*s face.*

Vict. Bleſs me! who are you?

Fred. That very man, the *Frederick* you ſpeak of, your cuckold that is to be.

Vict.

Vict. Say you ſo, ſir, why then you are oblig'd to me for telling your fortune beforehand; you may avoid if it you pleaſe; I have given you warning.

Fred. But I muſt reward you for your care of me.

Jaq. 'Tis a pretty impudent fellow, and I'm ſorry for him. [*Aſide.*

Fred. Look you, ſir, if I believ'd any thing that you have ſaid of *Victoria*; I wou'd not think you worth a beating upon her account: I wou'd leave you to your vanity, and her to the folly of throwing herſelf away upon ſuch a raſcal; but I know you lye; yet I'll uſe you better than you deſerve——draw—— [*draws.*

Vict. Not in the dark; beſides you are two to one. I ſcorn to recant what I ſaid; and to-morrow as ſoon as you pleaſe——

Fred. I ſhan't part with you ſo, you ſhall go home with me to-night, that I may be ſure of you in the morning.

Vict. With all my heart; you know me well enough, and when you ſee my face——

Fred. Pray let us ſee it——

[Jaqueline *holds the lanthorn to her face.*

Vict. You will believe that I am more——a——woman of honour, than to refuſe a gentleman any reaſonable ſatisfaction [*In a ſoft voice.*

Fred. May I believe my eyes! *Victoria!*

Vict. Now I won't part with you, ſir; what ſay you? ſhall I go home with you to-night, that you may be ſure of me in the morning?

Fred. I will be ſure of thee to-night, child.

Vict. No, not to-night; nothing in the dark, as I told you before.

Fred. I am confounded at your eſcape; your manner of making it; your father's coming down upon us; your man's cloaths; and a——

Vict. Never wonder at a woman's invention: we have wit enough for our own affairs, I warrant you. In a deſign of pleaſing ourſelves, you find, one way or other we bring it about.

Fred. You have play'd the rogue with me, *Victoria*, but I shall be reveng'd of you.

Vict. Why, you won't offer to marry sure, after the character you have had of me?

Fred I have had fair warning indeed, but he must have more grace than I, who can take warning of any thing he has a mind to.

Vict. Marriage is a bold venture at the best.

Fred. But where we please ourselves we venture least.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE Fernando's *House.*

Fernando *meeting* Fabian *in a Friar's Habit.*

Fern. HOW now, son, what news with you? bless you, bless you——tho' I am but in an indifferent humour of blessing at present.

Fab. Sir, I come out of my duty to see you.

Fern. Why, that's well: I am lusty, as to that matter still; but your sister, like a vagrant, a vagabond jade, is run away from me: let her alone, see who'll have the worst on't; thy estate will be the better for it by some thousands.

Fab. Alas! my estate, sir! I have done with the things of this world.

Fern. Nay, I don't persuade you; I wou'd not go about to alter your holy resolution——but a scurvy jade! if I had known of her disobedience a little sooner, I cou'd have the better afforded to have been kinder to thee——

Fab. You have been kinder than I deserv'd, in forgiving me.

Fern. For I am afraid I was not so kind as I shou'd have been to thee——ha?

Fab. O dear sir.

Fern. Indeed I am; there might be faults on my side; if

if truth wou'd out, I believe I lov'd money a little too well, did I not? ha?

Fab. I did not deſerve it, ſir.

Fern. But I'll make thee amends. We old fellows ſeldom think of doing good for our children, 'till they are out of the way of receiving it. Well, and how doſt thou like a religious life? ha?

Fab. Very well, ſir.

Fern. Why, very well, 'tis better than rambling up and down the town, ſpending thy time and money with the prophane. When I die, I ſhall leave a ſwinging legacy to the monaſtery upon thy account.

Fab. Upon your own, ſir, we ſhall pray for you.

Fern. No, no, I'll not put you to the trouble.

Fab. And help you out of purgatory.

Fern. Ah! my purgatory is in this world; and a young wife my tormenter. Good ſon call her to me [*Ex.* Fab. Let me ſee, I have loſt my daughter, but then I have ſav'd my money; all daughters are loſt to their parents, one time or other; why then the cheapeſt way of getting rid of 'em, is always the beſt for the family. If *Frederick* has got her, and will play the honourable fool to marry her for love, that is, without a penny of portion; he is in the way of repenting his bargain, and not I, I take it; but then I ſhou'd have marry'd her to my old friend *Franciſco*—why, my old friend *Franciſco* is luckily rid of a damn'd young wife, that wou'd as certainly have made him a ——

Enter Julia *and* Fabian.

Jul. A what, huſband? as who? you are always bringing your filthy compariſons into the family: you put this buſineſs ſo often into my head, it may fall upon your own, one day.

Fern. Fie, fie, wife, I did not mean thee; that undutiful daughter of mine I was reflecting upon; bleſs us! I warrant you, what a penitent ſhe will be in a little time! we ſhall have her come, with her looks down, and her belly up, full of the experiment, with a pitiful petition for pardon, and portion.

Jul. Not if ſhe be wiſe: what woman that has but the leaſt ſenſe of what it is to be happy, would not prefer want, hunger, any thing to ſuch an intolerable ſlavery?

Fern. Why then you are of her opinion, it ſeems?

Jul. Have a care of making me ſo.

Fern. I ſhall have a care of other peoples making you ſo.

Jul. Jealouſy and ill uſage may do much.

Fern. A good opportunity may do more.

Jul. One with the other, huſband.

Fern. Wou'd make you run away from your huſband? ha?

Jul. Ay, and run to another man too; any thing if my virtue would permit me

Fern. Your virtue! ah! when I ſtand to the mercy of your virtue, I'll be contented to fall by that folly: no, no, I have a trick worth two on't: I'll keep you out of the temptation, and then 'tis not much matter whether you have any virtue, or no.

Jul. Pray do, lock me up, that your neighbours may know you dare not truſt me at your kinſman's wedding.

Fab. Sir, you and my mother are invited: *Villeroy* is your relation, and will take it ill if you don't go.

Fern. Yes, yes, wife, we will go ——

Fab. Or I ſhall be diſappointed. [*Aſide.*

Fern. Hanging days are commonly holy-days; I love to ſee the execution of a huſband: they have had their jeſt long enough upon me, I ſhall be glad to laugh in my turn. Beſides, 'tis a public wedding, is it not?

Jul. Why, what's that to the purpoſe?

Fab. 'Tis kept publicly.

Fern. Why, ſo much the better; there's leſs danger of you, wife: theſe public entertainments ſeldom do any body hurt, but thoſe that make 'em. All the young fellows I know will be deſigning upon the new marry'd woman; you muſt not take it ill, wife; every one in their turn, you have had yours already. When the huſband invites, 'tis a ſort of mannerly gratitude to be civil to his wife.

Fab. They ſay indeed, whoever dances with the bride, the huſband pays the fidler.

Fern.

Fern. Ay, ay, let 'em all dance with her; if cuckolds would honeſtly declare themſelves, their number would go near to keep 'em in countenance: I hope to ſee 'em ſo much in faſhion, that no body may laugh at his neighbour. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE Iſabella's *Houſe.*

Carlos, *with* Frederick, *and* Victoria *in man's cloaths.*

Car. You are the ſtrangeſt woman in the world, run away from your father, and then ſcruple to marry the man you ran to!

Vict. That will admit of a ſcruple, ſir.

Fred. Don't you believe I love you?

Vict. O, yes, ſir, your preſent inclination may be good, I believe: but that preſent inclination how long will it laſt, I beſeech you?

Fred. There's a queſtion for a lover indeed!

Vict. When that begins to tire, as every thing is the worſe for the wearing, they ſay, how many huſbandly reflections will you have upon the matter! you will find out a thouſand pretty things you could have done with my portion; but not one civil thing with my perſon, without it: the woman, that plays the fool my way, in running from her friends, muſt have more than ſhe can carry about her, to be welcome long in a place; and marriage is only for life, they ſay.

Fred. I gad, ſhe's in the right on't. [*Aſide.*

Car. What can you ſay to this, *Frederick?*

Vict. Nay, he can ſay more than I can believe, I aſſure you: but I won't put him to the expence of his conſcience. When I ſee which way my brother's plot works upon my father, I ſhall be able to tell you more of my mind. In the mean time I have the privilege of my diſguiſe, to be at the entertainment of this wedding.

Fred. But you'll get ſuch a habit of wearing the breeches ——

Vict. When you get me out of 'em, you muſt keep me out of 'em; that will be your way I believe; not, but if

you care for a ſecurity, you have a pretty good one upon me.

Fred. As how pray?

Vict. Why, I have done too much with you, to do any thing with any body elſe; I ſhan't be twice run away with, I warrant you.

Fred. I dare rely upon you—— [*Exit* Victoria. Now, *Carlos*, every thing's to your mind.

Car. I have taken a great deal of pains to bring it about. The ſeverity of my ſiſter's widowhood was the only bar to my hopes in favour of her ſon.

Fred. This marriage has removed that.

Car. And ruin'd 'em for ever with my father.

Fred. How will you be able to thank 'em for the ſervice they have done you?

Car. The ſervice pays itſelf: we are all pleas'd, I ſhould have viſited 'em with an *Epithalamium*, to bleſs their endeavours; but I have a ſonnet is pretty well to the purpoſe. Strike up boys——'Tis not much matter now, whether by brother be alive, or no. [*Aſide.*

Enter Victoria.

Vict. No news of the bride or bridegroom yet?

Car. We are going to ſummon 'em.

Vict. By this time, I ſuppoſe, they may be glad of a handſome excuſe to be rid of one another.

A SONG, ſet by Mr. *Purcell*, and ſung by Mrs. *Hodgſon*.

I.

THE danger is over, the battle is paſt,
The nymph had her fears, but ſhe ventur'd at laſt;
She try'd the encounter, and when it was done,
She ſmil'd at her folly, and own'd ſhe had won.
By her eyes we diſcover the bride has been pleas'd;
Her bluſhes become her, her paſſion is eas'd;
She diſſembles her joy, and affects to look down;
If ſhe ſighs, 'tis for ſorrow 'tis ended ſo ſoon.

Appear

II.

Appear all you virgins, both aged and young,
All you, who have carry'd that burden too long,
Who have loſt precious time, and you who are loſing,
Betray'd by your fears between doubting and chuſing;
Draw nearer, and learn what will ſettle your mind;
You'll find yourſelves happy, when once you are kind.
Do but wiſely reſolve the ſweet venture to run,
You'll feel the loſs little, and much to be won.

Villeroy *enters to them.*

Vil. Who's there? my *Carlos! Frederick!* O my friends!
Let me embrace you: welcome, welcome all.
What ſhall I ſay to you, that may expreſs
My thanks for this good morrow? at a time——
Car. Fred. We came to wiſh you joy.——
Vil. I have it ſure;
All that this life can give me; he muſt be
More than a man who can be happier.
I am ſo much tranſported with the thoughts
Of what I am, I know not what I do.
My *Iſabella!* but poſſeſſing her,
Who would not loſe himſelf? you'll pardon me;
Oh! there was nothing wanting to my ſoul,
But the kind wiſhes of my loving friends;
And now I have you to rejoice with me.
Where are my ſervants?
Gentlemen, this purſe will tell you that I thank you.
[*To the muſic.*
Where, where are you? [*To his Servants.*
Are my friends invited? is every thing in order?
You cannot be too buſy in your care.
Pray put on your beſt looks, as well as cloaths.
Gold, that does every thing, ſhall make you ſmile;
Carry an invitation in your face,
To every one you ſee, no matter who.
I'll double all your wages; nothing appear

Within these walls, but plenty, mirth, and love;
An universal face of joy, and love.

Fred. Why this is wonderful.

Vil. O when you all get wives, and such as mine,
(If such another woman can be found)
You will rave too, doat on the dear content,
And prattle in their praise, out of all bounds;
No matter what the fools of form shall say,
Let 'em believe us mad; we'll pity them,
And their dull want of knowing how to love.

Car. If you would talk calmy, and come to particulars, we might be the better for the story.

Vil. Particulars! how? which way shall I try
To utter my full bliss? 'tis in my head,
'Tis in my heart, and takes up all my soul:
The labour of my fancy, and too vast
A birth of joy, to be disclos'd so soon.
Imagination must devour itself.
About some twelve months hence, I may begin
To speak plain sense; and then I'll tell you all.

Vict. This matrimony would be a heav'nly thing, if the first night would last always.

Vil. Sir, I must beg your pardon: pray forgive me
I did not see you sooner ——
A pretty gentleman ——

Car. A friend of ours.

Vil. Who is he?

Vict. Sir, I am one, just upon the precipice of marrying; and come here to try whether I like the condition in my friends, before I venture on't myself.

Vil. O sir; you can't do better:
I shall make converts of you all in time.

[*Servant gives him a letter.*

Car. He does not know you.

Vict. I'm glad on't; 'twould lay a restraint upon me, if he did, which I have no mind to at present.

Fred. He might take the privilege of a relation, perhaps, to censure your conduct.

Vict. That is to say, you would if you durst: but when I marry you, I'll give you leave.

Car.

Car. Does *Villeroy* know of *Fabian*'s plot upon his father?

Fred. Yes; and approves of it, for the good of the family: that was the chief reason of inviting him.

Vil. Unlucky accident! my brother the archbishop of *Malines*, intending for *Bruxelles*, is taken desperately ill; my letter presses me to be with him to-night. It must be so.

Fred. 'Tis hard indeed——

Car. To leave your bride so soon.

Vil. But having the possession of my love,
I am the better able to support
This absence, in the hopes of my return.

Car. Your stay will be but short?

Vil. It will seem long.
What say you to some cooling wines, or fruit,
Till the bride's dress'd?

Fred. We wait upon you.

Vil. *Frederick*, I hear you are a bridegroom too;
You're a bold man to marry my cousin *Victoria*,
Without her father's leave:
But we'll take pains to make up all again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sampson, *and Nurse.*

Sam. Ay, marry nurse, here's a master indeed! he'll double our wages for us! if he comes on as fast with my lady, as he does with her servants, we are all in the way to be well pleas'd.

Nurse. He's in a rare humour; if she be in as good a one——

Sam. If she be, marry, we may e'en say, they have begot it upon one another.

Nurse. Well! why don't you go back again to your old count? you thought your throat cut, I warrant you, to be turn'd out of a nobleman's service.

Sam. For the future, I will never serve in a house, where the master or mistress of it lies single: they are out of humour with every body, when they are not pleas'd themselves. Now this going to bed together, makes

makes every thing go well: there's mirth, and money ſtirring about, when thoſe matters go as they ſhould do.

Nurſe. Indeed a good bed-fellow, *Sampſon*——

Sam. Ah nurſe! a good bed-fellow is a very good thing, and goes a great way—but, what now my lady is marry'd, I hope we ſhall have company come to the houſe: there's ſomething always coming from one gentleman, or other, upon thoſe occaſions, if my lady loves company.

Nurſe. Od' ſo, my maſter! we muſt not be ſeen. [*Exit.*

Enter Villeroy *and* Fabian.

Vil. You ſay 'tis innocent?

Fab. Only a ſleeping draught, to make him forget ſome of his ill humours: when it works, he'll be thought to have tipled too much, that's all: I'll remove him with as little trouble, as poſſible.

Vil. Is he coming?

Fab. He's below; I'll way-lay him with a bottle in a corner, and give him his doſe before you ſee him.

Vil. That as you pleaſe. Pray tell the company
The bride will wait upon 'em. [Fabian *goes out.*
Iſabella.

Enter Iſabella.

My *Iſabella!* O the joy of heart!
That I have leave at laſt to call you mine:
When I give up that title to the charms
Of any other wiſh, be nothing mine.
But let me look upon you! view you well:
This is a welcome gallantry indeed;
I durſt not aſk, but it was kind to grant.
Juſt at the time: diſpenſing with your dreſs
Upon our bridal-day.

Iſa. Black might be ominous;
I would not bring ill luck along with me.

Vil. O! if your melancholy thoughts could change:
With ſhifting of your dreſs——time has done cures
Incredible, this way, and may again.

'Tis

'Tis something that the face of heav'n appears,
Darken'd, and hid so long in mourning veils:
When breaking clouds divide, they make a way
For the bright sun to smile upon the day.

Isa. I cou'd have wish'd, if you had thought it fit,
Our marriage had not been so public.

Vil. Do not you grudge me my excess of love;
That was a cause it could not be conceal'd;
Besides 'twould injure the opinion
I have of my good fortune, having you;
And lessen it in other people's thoughts,
Busy on such occasions to enquire,
Had it been private.

Isa. I have no more to say.

Enter Carlos, Frederick, Victoria, *other men and women.*

Vil. Our friends too, who come into the support
Of our bad fortune, have an honest right,
In better times, to share the good with us.

Car. We come to claim that right, to share your joy.

Fred. To wish you joy; and find it in ourselves;
For a friend's happiness reflects a warmth,
A kindly comfort, into every heart
That is not envious.

Vil. He must be a friend,
Who is not envious of a happiness
So absolute as mine; but if you are
(As I have reason to believe you are)
Concern'd for my well-being, there's the cause:
Thank her for what I am, and what must be.

Vict. Is not this better than lying alone, madam?

Car. You'll take my advice another time, sister.

Fred. You ladies are hard to be persuaded to please yourselves: but you know when you are well, I hope.

Car. When you are well pleas'd he means, sister. You are a judge, and within the degrees of comparison, having had a husband before. [Isa. *turns away.*

Vil. Carlos, what have you done? A rising smile
Stole from her thoughts, just red'ning on her cheek,
And you have dasht it.

Car.

Car. I am ſorry for't.

Vil. My beſt friends will forgive me, when I own
I muſt prefer her peace to all the world.
Pray let us bury every thing that's paſt;
Look forward to the kindly coming hour.
I have a proſpect of ſufficient joy;
Would you had all, to entertain your hopes,
And draw you on to everlaſting love.

Enter Fernando, Julia *and* Fabian.

Fern. Why, ſo, ſo, all goes well I ſee: Wiſh you joy, couſin. I am an old fellow, but I muſt ſalute your bride. [*Kiſſes her.*] A fine woman truly! I have had two or three glaſſes to her health already: I deſign to be very merry, ha.

Vil. Why, ſo you ſhall, couſin; fill ſome wine.
[*To Servants.*

Fern. Why, that's well ſaid; fill ſome wine. But one word with you——

Jul. I did not know you at firſt.

Vict. If my father does not, I ſhall have the pleaſure of teazing him.

Jul. Your brother has taken care that he ſhall know nobody.

Fern. If you had conſulted me, I could have told you—

Vil. What, couſin?

Fern. Why, that there goes a great deal of pains to keep a handſome wife to one's ſelf; remember I told you ſo.

Vil. Take care of your own, couſin.

Fern. Why, that' true too—[*Sees* Victoria *with* Julia.] Where are you? how! what have you to do with this gentlewoman, friend?

Vict. I would have ſomething to do with her, if you would let us alone.

Fern. 'Tis pity to diſturb you indeed.

Vict. 'Gad ſo, ſir, I beg your pardon——
[*Bowing to* Fernando.

Fern. No harm done in the leaſt, ſir.

Vict. You look like a civil perſon——

Fern.

Fern. O, a very civil perſon.

Vict. You may have an intereſt in the lady, to ſpeak a good word for me.

Fern. Why, ſo I may; I may ſpeak a good word for you indeed. But for your comfort, I can tell you, ſhe has the grace never to mind what I ſay to her.

Vict. Then do me the courteſy to leave us together, and I ſhall be able to ſpeak for myſelf.

Fern. I never doubted it.

Vict. I ſuppoſe you may be her grandfather; 'tis your buſineſs, you know, to provide for your family.

Fern. And why her grandfather, pray?

Vict. Becauſe you look to be about thoſe years of diſcretion.

Fern. Come, you are an idle companion, to talk at this rate to my wife, and before my face too.

Vict. How, ſir, your wife! is ſhe your wife, ſir?

Fern. I am her huſband, ſir.

Vict. I beg your pardon again, ſir; I was in hopes—

Fern. I know you were; you were in hopes to make me a cuckold: But you are an impudent fellow for your hopes; and ſo get you gone about your buſineſs. Ha! what's the matter with me?

Jul. Why, huſband, what's the matter?

Fern. I am ſo drowſy all on the ſudden—— [*Yawns.*

Vil. The glaſs ſtays for you, *Fernando.*

Fern. I'll drink no more. Wife, let us go home.

Fred. One glaſs to the bride, ſir.

Fern. O, are you there? You have a daughter of mine in keeping, I take it; wiſh you joy of her. [*Yawns.*

Fred. Your wiſhes will go a great way to't, ſir.

Fern. No farther; [*Yawns*] they will go no farther I tell you. Wife, wife, let us be going, wife. Sure I am enchanted—— [*Yawns.*

Vil. Come, come, *Fernando*, you will take your daughter into favour, I know.

Fern. Pray give me leave—— [*Yawns.*

Car. To depart in peace.

Fern. What I ought to do—[*Yawns and falls into a chair.*

Vict. We ſhall know when he riſes.

Vil.

Vil. I leave you to consider it ———

Fred. Upon his pillow.

Fern. Wife, wife, come along with me.

Fab. I'll take care of my father; take no notice, but come as soon as you can to me.

[Fabian *has* Fernando *carry'd off in a chair.*

Car. Now, madam, I may take care of you. [*To* Julia.

Fred. What have we here?

Vil. Something is well meant:
Let us receive it so. Pray sit, my friends.

An Entertainment of dancing; after which a Song sent by an unknown Hand, set by Mr. *Henry Purcel*, and sung by Mrs. *Ayliff*.

I.

I sigh'd and own'd my love:
Nor did the fair my passion disapprove:
A soft engaging air,
Not often apt to cause despair,
Declar'd she gave attention to my pray'r.
She seem'd to pity my distress,
And I expected nothing less,
Than what her every look does now confess.

II.

But, oh, her change destroys
The charming prospect of my promis'd joys:
She's robb'd of every grace
That argu'd pity in her face,
And cold, forbidding frowns, supply their place
But while she strives to chill desire,
Her brighter eyes such warmth inspire,
She checks the flame, but cannot quench the fire.

Vil. You have not minded this poor pageantry.

Isa. I minded what you said; you are to leave me:
I'm sorry for the cause.

Vil. O could I think,
Could I persuade myself, that your concern

For

For me, or for my abſence, had employ'd you——
But you are all poſſeſs'd another way.
I ſhall be jealous of this rival, grief,
That you indulge; it ſits ſo near your heart,
There is not room enough for mighty love.
[*Servant whiſpers* Vil.
We come. You, *Carlos*,
Will act a brother's part, till my return,
And be the guardian here. All, all I have,
That's dear to me, I give up to your care.
Our dinner calls upon us: would I had
An enterrainment that could ſpeak my joy,
And thanks to this kind company. Lead on.
Long ſuffering lovers would conſent to ſtay,
For the reward of ſuch a night and day.
[*Exeunt*, Carlos *leading the bride.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Monaſtery burying-place*, Fernando's *tomb*; Jacqueline, *with others, dreſs'd for proceſſion.*

Enter Fabian, *with* Carlos, Julia, Frederick, *and* Victoria:

Fab. BE ſatisfied, and expect the conſequence; if I don't anſwer your expectations, never rely upon me for a miracle again.

Jul. O! but this is carrying the jeſt too far; he has beaten him like a dog.

Vict. Where have you buried him?

Fab. This is his tomb.

Car. Then here lies an honeſt fellow, who (if his wife would have heard reaſon) might have been a cuckold, and conſequently gone to heav'n.

Jul. But now he's buried, 'tis too late, you know, to think of ſending him that way.

Car.

Car. O virtue! virtue! what an enemy art thou to a woman's good inclinations!

Jul. A troublesome companion indeed, if one knew how to be honestly rid on't: can you advise me?

Car. Nay, take your own way; you are past advising, it seems; for a woman to play the hypocrite, and counterfeit virtue, when she has it not, is a very common thing.——

Jul. But to play the hypocrite, the wrong way!

Car. To pretend to be a woman of pleasure, and not have the benefit of the character——

Jul. Is what, it seems, you are not acquainted with. But for the future, sir, you may believe there are women, who won't be provok'd to injure their husbands.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a letter for you at home: The messenger will deliver it nobody, but yourself.

Car. How? I must look about me then, I'll go with you. [*Exit with the Servant.*

Jaq. Sir, sir, I think I hear him stir in the tomb.

[*A noise in the tomb.*

Fab. We'll be within call, *Jaquelin*, begin as soon as you please. [Jaquelin *with others singing in procession.*

[Fernando *pushes off the tomb-stone, and stares about.*

Fern. Heigh ho! where am I now! who are you? what wou'd you have with me? ha!

Jaq. Bless us! what do I see! *appropinquate in nomine*—

Fern. O good sir! have a care of your hard words; you may raise the devil before you're aware of it; I have had too much of his company already.

Jaq. Avaunt, speak I conjure thee, if thou art the devil.

Fern. O! no, sir, I am none of the devil; though I have seen him very lately.

Jaq. What art thou?

Fern. Truly that's a very hard question at present; when I was in the land of the living, my name was *Fernando*, an old, jealous, covetous fellow; but what I am in this country, whether I am *Fernando*, or no——

Jaq.

Jaq. Fernando! ſave thee *Fernando!* what, coming out of thy grave!

Fern. From whence I am coming, or whither I am going, I can't tell you; but I have been in very bad company I remember; I have ſeen the devil.

Jaq. Our prayers are heard; we have been faſting, and praying thee out of purgatory, ever ſince thou wert buried.

Fern. Buried! have I been buried too?

Jaq. And now coming by thy grave in proceſſion, what a miracle is wrought for thee, to bring thee to life again!

Fern. Nay, if I am alive again, 'tis a miracle, that's certain; but are you ſure I am alive?

Jaq. Why, don't you find you are alive?

Fern. Alas! ſir, I have been ſo often miſtaken of late, I don't know what to ſay to't; I thought I was alive in purgatory; and ſtood in't a good while: but there's no contending with the devil in his own dominions you know; I was forc'd to confeſs myſelf, at laſt, as dead as a herring.

Jaq. O *Fernando!* be thankful for a good wife and ſon; they have ſhewn themſelves ſo, in their ſorrow for you, ever ſince you were bury'd.

Fern. Ay, ay, I heard of 'em; how have they done ſince I left 'em?

Jaq. They have made a hard ſhift; their ſorrow is pretty well over now; but 'twas a great while before they were to be comforted; a great while indeed before they could be perſuaded to forget you; but we muſt live by the living, you know.

Fern. That's very true.

Jaq. Your ſon *Fabian*, upon your death, was releas'd out of the monaſtery; it had been a pity, you know, that a good eſtate ſhould have wanted an heir.

Fern. Ay, ſo it had indeed.

Jaq. Yours was a very good one, I hear.

Fern. So, ſo; competent, and enough for me; as it is, I ſhall be glad to enjoy it a little longer I believe; I thank

thank you, ſir, for bringing me to it again. But my wife, is my dear wife well? You know her too?

Jaq. She has had a great many good offers, ſince your death; and truly 'twas very much for a young widow to refuſe 'em; but ſhe reſolves never to marry again.

Fern. Alack-a-day! I am beholden to her——

Jaq. They ſay you were jealous of her——

Fern. Indeed I am, very much beholden to her.

Jaq. That you were extremely jealous.

Fern. Alas! alas! I do confeſs it; I was an old fool; and ſhe was too good for me: but if I ever ſee her again——

Jaq. Here they come, your virtuous wife, and ſon; pray learn to value 'em.

Enter Fabian, Julia, Frederick, *and* Victoria.

Fab. Is't poſſible!

Jul. What! riſen from the dead!

Fab. May I believe my eyes?

Fern. Ay, ay, you may believe your eyes.

Jul. The very ſhroud my huſband was bury'd in!

Fern. The very ſame, the very ſame; pray help me out on't, as ſoon as you can, for I look but oddly, I believe.

Fab. Well enough truly, ſir, for a man that has been bury'd. You look well enough, but you ſmell a little of the place you come from, that I muſt own to you.

[Fernando *ſmells himſelf.*

Fern. Nay like enough, tho' I don't perceive it myſelf, but have I been bury'd long enough to ſtink then?

Fab. Fie, ſir, ſtink! you don't poſitively ſtink; you have only an earthy ſavour, or ſo, with lying in the grave without eating; that's all I believe.

Fern. Nay, when I was alive, my breath was none of the beſt, eſpecially from an empty ſtomach.

Fab. A day or two more had made it intolerable.

Fern. Ah, wife! I have ſuffer'd a great deal upon your account——

Jul. Alas! upon my account!

Fern. Upon the account of my jealouſy; but I deſerv'd

ſerv'd it: jealouſy is a damnable ſin there, I ſhall never be jealous more.

Jul. 'Tis well it has wrought that cure upon you.

Fern. Nay, you ſhall henceforward go when and where you pleaſe; come when, and how you pleaſe; ſay what, and to whom you pleaſe; and in fine, if you have a mind to be reveng'd of me, you ſhall make me what you pleaſe: and that I'm ſure will pleaſe you.

Jul. Leave that to me, huſband.

Fern. Fabian, you look melancholy; don't be ſorry that I am alive again: you have ſome friends in the other world, that put me in mind of you: I'll ſettle half my eſtate upon you in preſent; and when I die—who's that, *Frederick!* you marry'd my daughter, I remember.

Vict. Indeed, ſir, I had more grace than to diſpoſe of myſelf without your conſent; and more reſpect for your family, than to marry any man without a portion.

Fred. If you pleaſe to give a bleſſing to our endeavours, we have agreed upon the point to make you a grandfather.

Fern. Why that's well ſaid: you have my conſent; marry her, and I'll give her a portion; but be ſure you are as good as your word.

Fred. In what, ſir?

Fern. In making me a grandfather: I am ſo over joy'd that I am alive again, I care not how many children I have to provide for.

Vict. You ſee the fruits of jealouſy.

Fred. I'll keep out of purgatory, I warrant you.

Fern. O don't name it, good ſon in-law: I ſhall never get it out of my mind; that's certain. Come, my dear wife, and children, I owe my deliverance to your interceſſion and piety; ſince you have brought me to life again, you ſhall have no cauſe, for the future, to wiſh me dead: ſome fifty years hence I may be contented to go to heav'n, without calling by the way.

In the mean time, huſbands who doubt my ſtory,
May find in jealouſy their purgatory. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE,

SCENE, *the Street.*

Biron *and* Belford *just arriv'd.*

Bir. The longeſt day will have an end: we are got home at laſt.

Bel. We have got our legs at liberty; and liberty is home, where'er we go: tho' mine lies moſt in *England.*

Bir. Pray let me call this yours: for what I can command in *Bruxelles*, you ſhall find your own. I have a father here, who perhaps, after ſeven years abſence, and coſting him nothing in my travels, may be glad to ſee me. You know my ſtory——— [*Knocks at the door.* How does my beard become me?

Bel. Juſt as you would have it, 'tis natural, and not your own.

Bir. To-morrow you ſhall be ſure to find me here, as early as you pleaſe. This is the houſe; you have obſerv'd the ſtreet.

Bel. I warrant you; I han't many viſits to make, before I come to you.

Bir. To night I have ſome affairs, that will oblige me to be private.

Bel. A good bed is the privateſt affair, that I deſire to be engag'd in to-night; your directions will carry me to my lodgings. [*Exit.*

Biron *knocks again*, Sampſon *enters to him.*

Sam. Who's there? what would you have?

Bir. Is your lady at home, friend?

Sam. Why, truly friend, it is my employment to anſwer impertinent queſtions: but for my lady's being at home, or no, that's juſt as my lady pleaſes.

Bir. But how ſhall I know, whether it pleaſes her or no?

Sam. Why, if you'll take my word for it, you may carry your errand back again; ſhe never pleaſes to ſee any body at this time of night, that ſhe does not know; and by the length of your beard, you may be grown out of her remembrance.

Bir.

Bir. But I have buſineſs; and you don't know how that may pleaſe her.

Sam. Nay, if you have buſineſs, ſhe is the beſt judge whether your buſineſs will pleaſe her or no: therefore I will proceed in my office, and know of my lady, whether or no ſhe is pleas'd to be at home, or no —— [*Going.*

Enter Nurſe to them.

Nurſe. Who's that you are ſo buſy withal? methinks you might have found out an anſwer in fewer words: but, *Sampſon*, you love to hear yourſelf prate ſometimes, as well as your betters, that I muſt ſay for you. Let me come to him; who wou'd you ſpeak with?

Bir. With you, miſtreſs, if you can help me to ſpeak to your lady.

Nurſe. Yes, ſir, I can help you, in a civil way: but can nobody do your buſineſs but my lady?

Bir. Not ſo well: but if you'll carry her this ring, ſhe'll know my buſineſs better.

Nurſe. There's no love-letter in it, I hope: you look like a civil gentleman; in an honeſt way I may bring you an anſwer. [*Exit Nurſe.*

Bir. My old nurſe, only a little older! they ſay the tongue grows always; mercy on me! then her's is ſeven years longer, ſince I left her. Yet there's ſomething in theſe ſervants folly pleaſes me: the cautious conduct of the family appears, and ſpeaks in their impertinence. Well, miſtreſs ——

Nurſe returns.

Nurſe. I have deliver'd your ring, ſir; pray heav'n you bring no bad news along with you.

Bir. Quite contrary, I hope.

Nurſe. Nay, I hope ſo too; but my lady was very much ſurpris'd when I gave it her. Sir, I am but a ſervant as a body may ſay, but if you'll walk in, that I may ſhut the doors, for we keep very orderly hours, I can ſhow you into the parlour, and help you to an anſwer, perhaps, as ſoon as thoſe that are wiſer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Bed-chamber.*

A woman servant spreading a table.

Enter Isabella.

Isa. I've heard of witches, magick spells, and charms,
That have made nature start from her old course:
The sun has been eclips'd, the moon drawn down
From her career, still paler, and subdu'd
To the abuses of this under world:
Now I believe all possible. This ring,
This little ring, with necromantic force,
Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears;
Conjur'd the sense of honour, and of love,
Into such shapes, they fright me from myself:
I dare not think of them——— [*Servant goes out.*
I'll call you when I want you.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam, the gentleman's below.
Isa. I had forgot, pray let me speak with him.
[*Exit Nurse.*
This ring was the first present of my love
To *Biron*, my first husband: I must blush
To think I have a second: *Biron* dy'd
(Still to my loss) at *Candy*; there's my hope.
O! do I live to hope that he dy'd there!
It must be so: he's dead; and this ring left
By his last breath, to some known, faithful friend,
To bring me back again. [Biron *introduc'd, Nurse retires.*
That's all I have to trust to———
My fears were woman's: I have view'd him all:
And let me, let me say it to myself,
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.
Bir. Have you forgot me quite?
Isa. Forgot you!
Bir. Then farewell my disguise, and my misfortunes.
My *Isabella?*
[*He goes to her, she shrieks, and falls into a swoon*
Isa.

Isa. Ha!
Bir. O! come again:
Thy *Biron* summons thee to life and love;
Once I had charms to wake thee.
Thy once lov'd, ever loving husband calls:
Thy *Biron* speaks to thee.
Isa. My husband! *Biron!*
Bir. Excess of love, and joy, for my return,
Has over-power'd her —— I was to blame
To take thy sex's softness unprepar'd:
But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,
This extasy has made my welcome more
Than words could say: words may be counterfeit,
False coin'd, and current only from the tongue,
Without the mind; but passion's in the soul,
And always speaks the heart.
Isa. Where have I been? Why do you keep him from me?
I know his voice: my life upon the wing,
Hears the soft lure that brings me back again.
'Tis he himself, my *Biron*, the dear man!
My true lov'd husband! do I hold you fast,
Never to part again? can I believe it?
Nothing but you could work so great a change.
There's more than life itself in dying here:
If I must fall, 'tis welcome in these arms.
Bir. Live ever in these arms.
Isa. But pardon me,
Excuse the wild disorder of my soul:
The strange, surprising joy of seeing you,
Of seeing you again; distracted me ——
Bir. Thou everlasting goodness!
Isa. Answer me:
What hand of providence has brought you back
To your own home again? O satisfy
Th' impatience of my heart; I long to know
The story of your sufferings. You wou'd think
Your pleasures sufferings, so long remov'd
From *Isabella*'s love: but tell me all,
For every thought confounds me.
Bir. My best life; at leisure, all.

Isa. We thought you dead; kill'd at the siege of *Candy*.
Bir. There I fell among the dead:
But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,
I was preserv'd, but to be made a slave.
I often writ to my hard father, but never had
An answer. I writ to thee too——
Isa. What a world of woe
Had been prevented, but in hearing from you!
Bir. Alas thou could'st not help me.
Isa. You do not know how much I cou'd ha' done;
At least, I'm sure I cou'd have suffer'd all:
I wou'd have sold myself to slavery,
Without redemption; giv'n up my child,
The dearest part of me, to basest wants——
Bir. My little boy!
Isa. My life, but to have heard
You were alive——which now too late I find. [*Aside.*
Bir. No more, my love! complaining of the past,
We lose the present joy: 'tis over-price
Of all my pains, that thus we meet again,
I have a thousand things to say to thee——
Isa. Wou'd I were past the hearing. [*Aside.*
Bir. How does my child, my boy? my father too,
I hear, he is living still.
Isa. Well both, both well:
And may he prove a father to your hopes;
Tho' we have found him none.
Bir. Come, no more tears.
Isa. Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,
Have mourn'd with me——
Bir. And all my days behind
Shall be employ'd in a kind recompence
For thy afflictions——Can't I see my boy?
Isa. He's gone to bed: I'll have him brought to you.
Bir. To-morrow I shall see him; I want rest
Myself, after my weary pilgrimage.
Isa. Alas! what shall I get for you?
Bir. Nothing but rest, my love! to-night I would not
Be known, if possible, to your family;
I see my nurse is with you; her welcome

Would

Would be tedious at this time;
To-morrow will do better.
Isa. I'll dispose of her, and order every thing
As you would have it. [*Exit.*
Bir. Grant me but life, good Heav'n, and give the means
To make this wond'rous goodness some amends;
And let me then forget her, if I can!
O! she deserves of me much more than I
Can lose for her, tho' I again could venture
A father, and his fortune, for her love.
You wretched fathers! blind as fortune all!
Not to perceive that such a woman's worth
Weighs down the portions you provide your sons.
What has she, in my absence, undergone?
I must not think of that; it drives me back
Upon myself, the fated cause of all.

Isabella *returns.*

Isa. I have obey'd your pleasure;
Every thing is ready for you.
Bir. I can want nothing here; possessing thee,
All my desires have carry'd to their aim
Of happiness; there's no room for a wish,
But to continue still this blessing to me.
I know the way, my love, I shall sleep sound.
Isa. Shall I help to undress you?
Bir. By no means;
I've been so long a slave to others pride,
To learn, at least, to wait upon myself;
You'll make haste after—— [*Goes in.*
Isa. I'll but say my prayers, and follow you——
My prayers! no, I must ne'er pray again.
Prayers have their blessings to reward our hopes:
But I have nothing left to hope for more.
What Heav'n cou'd give, I have enjoy'd; but now
The baleful planet rises on my fate,
And what's to come, is a long line of woe;
Yet I may shorten it——
I promis'd him to follow——him!

Is he without a name? *Biron*, my husband:
To follow him to bed——my husband! ha!
What then is *Villeroy*? but yesterday
That very bed receiv'd him for its lord;
Yet a warm witness of my broken vows,
To send another to usurp his room.
O *Biron!* hadst thou come but one day sooner,
I wou'd have follow'd thee through beggary,
Through all the chances of this weary life,
Wander'd the many ways of wretchedness
With thee, to find a hospitable grave;
For that's the only bed that's left me now. [*Weeping.*
—What's to be done—for something must be done.
Two husbands! yet not one! by both enjoy'd,
And yet a wife to neither! hold my brain——
This is to live in common! very beasts,
That welcome all they meet, make just such wives.
My reputation! O, 'twas all was left me;
The virtuous pride of an uncensur'd life;
Which the dividing tongues of *Biron*'s wrongs,
And *Villeroy*'s resentments tear asunder,
To gorge the throats of the blaspheming rabble.
This is the best of what can come to-morrow.
Besides old *Baldwin*'s triumph in my ruin.
I cannot bear it———
Therefore to-morrow. Ha! a lucky thought
Works the right way to rid me of 'em all,
All the reproaches, infamies, and scorns,
That every tongue and finger will find for me.
Let the just horror of my apprehensions
But keep me warm——no matter what can come.
'Tis but a blow——if it should miss my heart
———But every part is mortal to such wounds.
Yet I will see him first——
Have a last look to heighten my despair,
And then to rest for ever—— [*Going.*

Biron *meets her.*

Bir. Despair! and rest for ever! *Isabella!*
These words are far from thy condition;

And

And be they ever ſo. I heard thy voice,
And cou'd not bear thy abſence: come, my love!
You have ſtaid long; there's nothing, nothing ſure
Now to deſpair of in ſucceeding fate.
Iſa. I am contented to be miſerable,
But not this way; I've been too long abus'd,
And can believe no more;
Let me ſleep on, to be deceiv'd no more.
Bir. Look up, my love, I never did deceive thee,
Nor ever can; believe thyſelf, thy eyes
That firſt enflam'd, and lit me to thy love,
Thoſe ſtars, that ſtill muſt guide me to my joys.
Iſa. And me to my undoing. I look round
And find no path, but leading to the grave.
Bir. I cannot underſtand thee.
Iſa. My good friends above,
I thank 'em, have at laſt found out a way,
To make my fortune perfect; having you,
I need no more; my fate is finiſh'd here.
Bir. Both our ill fates, I hope.
Iſa. Hope is a lying, fawning flatterer,
That ſhews the fair ſide only of our fortunes,
To cheat us eaſier into our fall;
A truſted friend, who only can betray you;
Never believe him more. If marriages
Are made in heav'n, they ſhould be happier.
Why was I made this wretch?
Bir. Has marriage made thee wretched?
Iſa. Miſerable, beyond the reach of comfort.
Bir. Do I live to hear thee ſay ſo?
Iſa. Why! what did I ſay?
Bir. That I have made thee miſerable.
Iſa. No: you are my only earthly happineſs,
And my falſe tongue bely'd my honeſt heart,
If it ſaid otherwiſe.
Bir. And yet you ſaid,
Your marriage made you miſerable.
Iſa. I know not what I ſaid:
I've ſaid too much, unleſs I could ſpeak all.

Bir. Thy words are wild; my eyes, my ears, my heart
Were all so full of thee, so much employ'd
In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it:
Now I perceive it plain——
Isa. You'll tell nobody—— [*Distractedly.*
Bir. Thou art not well.
Isa. Indeed I am not; I knew that before,
But where's the remedy?
Bir. Rest will relieve my cares: come, come, no more,
I'll banish sorrow from thee.
Isa. Banish first the cause.
Bir. Heav'n knows how willingly.
Isa. You are the only cause.
Bir. Am I the cause? the cause of thy misfortunes?
Isa. The fatal innocent cause all my woes.
Bir. Is this my welcome home? this the reward
Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,
And pining wants of wretched slavery,
Which I've out-liv'd, only in hopes of thee?
Am I thus paid at last for deathless love?
And call'd the cause of thy misfortunes now?
Isa. Enquire no more; 'twill be explain'd too soon.
[*She is going.*
Bir. What! canst thou leave me too? [*He stays her.*
Isa. Pray let me go:
For both our sakes permit me——
Bir. Rack me not with imaginations
Of things impossible——Thou can'st not mean
What thou hast said——yet something she must mean
——'Twas madness all——Compose thyself, my love!
The fit is past; all may be well again.
Let us to bed.
Isa. To bed! you've rais'd the storm
Will sever us for ever. O my *Biron!*
While I have life, still I must call you mine:
I know I am, and always was unworthy
To be the happy partner of your love:
And now must never, never share it more,
But, oh! if ever I was dear to you,

As

As ſometimes you have thought me; on my knees,
(The laſt time I ſhall care to be believ'd)
I beg you, beg to think me innocent,
Clear of all crimes, that thus can baniſh me
From this world's comforts, in my loſing you.

Bir. Where will this end?

Iſa. The rugged hand of fate has got between
Our meeting hearts, and thruſt 'em from their joys.
Since we muſt part——

Bir. Nothing ſhall ever part us.

Iſa. Parting's the leaſt that is ſet down for me:
Heav'n has decreed, and we muſt ſuffer all.

Bir. I know thee innocent; I know myſelf ſo.
Indeed we both have been unfortunate:
But ſure misfortunes ne'er were faults in love.

Iſa. Oh! there's a fatal ſtory to be told;
Be deaf to that, as heav'n has been to me!
And rot the tongue that ſhall reveal my ſhame.
When thou ſhalt hear how much thou haſt been wrong'd,
How wilt thou curſe thy fond believing heart,
Tear me from the warm boſom of thy love,
And throw me like a pois'nous weed away.
Can I bear that? bear to be curs'd and torn,
And thrown out from thy family and name,
Like a diſeaſe? can I bear this from thee?
I never can; no, all things have their end.
When I am dead, forgive and pity me. [*Exit.*

Bir. Yet ſtay, if the ſad news at laſt muſt come,
Thou art my fate, and beſt may ſpeak my doom.
[*Exit after her.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Biron, *Nurſe following her.*

Bir. I Know enough; th' important queſtion
Of life or death, fearful to be reſolv'd,
Is clear'd to me: I ſee where it muſt end;

And need enquire no more——pray let me have
Pen, ink, and paper, I muſt write a while,
And then I'll try to reſt——to reſt! for ever. [*Exit Nurſe.*
Poor *Iſabella!* now I know the cauſe,
The cauſe of thy diſtreſs, and cannot wonder
That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back
Upon thy loſs, it will diſtract me too.
O, any curſe but this might be remov'd!
But 'twas the rancorous malignity
Of all ill ſtars combin'd, of heav'n, and fate,
To put it quite out of their mercies reach,
To ſpeak peace to us: if they could repent,
They cannot help us now. Alas! I rave:
Why do I tax the ſtars, or heav'n, or fate?
They are all innocent of driving us
Into deſpair; they have not urg'd my doom,
My father, and my brother are my fates,
That drive me to my ruin. They knew well
I was alive; too well they knew how dear
My *Iſabella*——O my wife no more!
How dear her love was to me——yet they ſtood,
With a malicious ſilent joy, ſtood by,
And ſaw her give up all my happineſs,
The treaſure of her beauty, to another.
Stood by, and ſaw her married to another.
O cruel father! and unnatural brother!
Shall I not tell you that you have undone me?
I have but to accuſe you of my wrongs,
And then to fall forgotten——ſleep, or death,
Sits heavy on me, and benumbs my pains:
Either is welcome; but the hand of death
Works always ſure, and beſt can cloſe my eyes.
[*Exit* Biron.

Enter Nurſe and Sampſon.

Nurſe. Here's ſtrange things towards *Sampſon:* what will be the end of 'em, do you think?

Sam. Nay, marry Nurſe, I can't ſee ſo far; but the law, I believe, is on *Biron*, the firſt huſband's ſide.

Nurſe. Yes; no queſtion, he has the law on his ſide.

Sam.

Sam. For I have heard, the law ſays, a woman muſt be a widow, all out ſeven years, before ſhe can marry again, according to law.

Nurſe. Ay, ſo it does; and our lady has not been a widow altogether ſeven years.

Sam Why then, Nurſe, mark my words, and ſay I told you ſo: the man muſt have his mare again, and all will do well.

Nurſe. But if our new maſter *Villeroy* comes back again———

Sam. Why, if he does, he is not the firſt man that has had his wife taken from him.

Nurſe. For fear of the worſt, will you go to the old count, deſire him to come as ſoon as he can, there may be miſchief, and he is able to prevent it.

Sam. Now you ſay ſomething; now I take you, Nurſe, that will do well indeed: miſchief ſhould be prevented; a little thing will make a quarrel, when there's a woman in the way. I'll about it inſtantly—— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *drawn, ſhews* Biron *aſleep on a couch.*

Iſabella *comes in to him.*

Iſa. Aſleep ſo ſoon! O happy! happy thou!
Who thus can'ſt ſleep: I never ſhall ſleep more.
If then to ſleep be to be happy, he
Who ſleeps the longeſt, is the happieſt;
Death is the longeſt ſleep. O! have a care,
Miſchief will thrive apace. Never wake more; [*To* Bir.
If thou didſt ever love thy *Iſabella*,
To-morrow muſt be dooms-day to thy peace.
——The ſight of him diſarms ev'n death itſelf.
——The ſtarting tranſport of new quick'ning life
Gives juſt ſuch hopes; and pleaſure grows again
With looking on him——Let me look my laſt——
But is a look enough for parting love!
Sure I may take a kiſs——where am I going!
Help, help me, *Villeroy!*——mountains, and ſeas

Divide your love never to meet my shame.

[*Throws herself upon the floor*, ; *after a short pause, she raises herself upon her elbow.*

What will this battle of the brain do with me!
This little ball, this ravag'd province, long
Cannot maintain——The globe of earth wants room
And food for such a war——I find I'm going——
Famine, plagues, and flames,
Wide waste and desolation, do your work
Upon the world, and then devour yourselves.
——The scene shifts fast——[*She rises.*] and now 'tis better with me.
Conflicting passions have at last unhing'd
The great machine; the soul itself seem'd chang'd:
O, 'tis a happy revolution here!
The reas'ning faculties are all depos'd,
Judgment, and understanding, common sense,
Driv'n out, as traitors to the public peace.
Now I'm reveng'd upon my memory,
Her seat dug up, where all the images
Of a long mispent life, were rising still,
To glare a sad reflection of my crimes,
And stab a conscience through 'em: you are safe,
You monitors of mischief! what a change!
Better and better still! this is the infant state
Of innocence, before the birth of care.
My thoughts are smooth as the *Elysian* plains
Without a rub: the drowsy falling streams
Invite me to their slumbers.
Would I were landed there—— [*Sinks into a chair.*
What noise was that! a knocking at the gate!
It may be *Villeroy*——no matter who.

Bir. Come, *Isabella*, come—— [Biron *in a dream.*

Isa. Hark, I am call'd.

Bir. You stay too long from me.

Isa. A man's voice! in my bed! how came he there? [*Rises.*

Nothing but villainy in this bad world;
Coveting neighbours goods, or neighbours wives;
Cuckolds or cuckold-makers every where;

Here's physick for your fever;
[*Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch.*
Breathing a vein is the only remedy.
Why, at this rate, 'tis impossible for an
Honest man to keep his wife to himself;
The trade must thrive they say
If husband's go to heav'n,
Where do they go, that send 'em?——This to try.
[*Just going to stab him, he rises, she knows him.*
What do I see! [*Shrieks.*
Bir. My *Isabella!* arm'd!
Isa. Against my husband's life!
Who, but the wretch, most reprobate to grace,
Despair ever harden'd for damnation,
Could think of such a deed! murder my husband!
Bir. Thou did'st not think it.
Isa. Madness has brought me to the gates of hell,
And there has left me. O the frightful change
Of my distractions! or is this interval
Of reason, but to aggravate my woes;
To drive the horror back with greater force
Upon my soul, and fix me mad for ever?
Bir. Why dost thou fly me so?
Isa. I cannot bear his sight; distraction, come,
Possess me all, and take me to thyself;
Shake off my chains, and hasten to my aid;
Thou art my only cure——like other friends,
He will not come to my necessities;
Then I must go to find the tyrant out;
Which is the nearest way?—— [*Running out.*
Bir. Poor *Isabella*, she's not in a condition
To give me any comfort, if she could;
Lost to herself; as quickly I shall be
To all the world. Death had been most welcome,
From any hand but hers; she never could
Deserve to be the executioner,
To take my life; nor I to fall by her.
Enter Nurse.
Nurse. Sir, there's somebody at the door, must needs speak with you; he won't tell his name.

Bir.

Bir. I come to him—— [*Exit Nurse.*
'Tis *Bellford*, I suppose; he little knows
Of what has happen'd here; I wanted him,
And must employ his friendship—— [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to the street.*

Carlos *enters with three ruffians.*

Car. A younger brother! I was one too long,
Not to prevent my being so again——
We must be sudden——Younger brothers are
But lawful bastards of another name,
Thrust out of their nobility of birth
And family, and tainted into trades.
Shall I be one of 'em? bow, and retire,
To make more room for the unwieldly heir
To play the fool in? No.
But how shall I prevent it! *Biron* comes
To take possession of my father's love;
Would that were all; there is a birth-right too
That he will seize——besides, if *Biron* lives
He will unfold some practices, which I
Cannot well answer——therefore he shall die;
This night must be dispos'd of: I have means
That will not fail my purpose——Here he comes.

Bir. Ha! am I beset? I live but to revenge me.

[*They surround him fighting*; Villeroy *enters with two servants, they rescue him*; Carlos *and his party run.* Biron *very much wounded, one of* Villeroy's *servants struggling on the ground with one of the Ruffians.*

Vil. How are you, sir? mortally hurt, I fear.
Take care and lead him in. [Biron *led in by a servant.*

Serv. Here's one of 'em. [Villeroy *and servant secure him.*

Vil. O 'tis very well; I'll make you an example.
[*They lead him in.*

SCENE

SCENE *changes to the inside of the house.*

Enter Isabella.

Isa. Murder my husband! O! I must not dare
To think of living on; my desperate hand,
In a mad rage, may offer it again;
Stab any where, but there. Here's room enough
In my own breast, to act the fury in,
The proper scene of mischief. *Villeroy* comes;
Villeroy and *Biron* come: O! hide me from 'em——
They rack, they tear; let 'em carve out my limbs,
Divide my body to their equal claims:
My soul is only *Biron*'s; that is free,
And thus I strike for him, and liberty.
[*Going to stab herself,* Villeroy *runs in, and prevents her, by taking the dagger from her.*
Vil. Angels defend and save thee!
Attempt thy precious life! the treasury
Of nature's sweets! life of my little world!
Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self!
Isa. Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.
What would you have with me? pray let me go.
——Are you there, sir? you are the very man
Have done all this——You would have made
Me believe, you married me; but the fool
Was wiser I thank you; 'tis not all gospel
You men preach upon that subject.
Vil. Dost thou not know me?
Isa. O, yes, very well. [*Staring on him.*
You are the widow's comforter, that marries
Any woman, when her husband's out of the way.
But I'll never, never take your word again.
Vil. I am thy loving husband.
Isa. I have none; no husband—— [*Weeping.*
Never had but one, and he dy'd at *Candy*,
Did he not? I'm sure you told me so; you,
Or somebody, with just such a lying look,
As you have now; speak, did he not die there?

Vil.

Vil. He did, my life!
Isa. But swear it, quickly swear,

Biron *enters bloody, and leaning upon his sword.*

Before that screaming evidence appears,
In bloody proof against me——
[*She seeing* Biron *swoons into a chair*, Vil. *helps her.*
Vil. Help there, Nurse, where are you?
Ha! I am distracted too! [*Going to call for help sees* Biron.
Biron alive!
Bir. The only wretch on earth that must not live.
Vil. *Biron*, or *Villeroy* must not, that's decreed.
Bir. You've sav'd me from the hands of murderers:
Would you had not, for life's my greatest plague;
And then of all the world, you are the man
I would not be oblig'd to——*Isabella!*
I came to fall before thee: I had dy'd
Happy, not to have found your *Villeroy* here.
A long farewel, and a last parting kiss. [*Kisses her.*
Vil. A kiss, confusion! it must be your last. [*Draws.*
Bir. I know it must——here I give up that death
You but delay'd. Since what is past has been
The work of fate, thus we must finish it.
Thrust home, be sure—— [*Falls down.*
Vil. Alas! he faints! some help there.
Bir. This letter is my last, last dying care:
Give it my father—— [*Dies.*
Vil. He's gone: let what will be the consequence,
I'll give it him. I have involv'd myself,
And would be clear'd; that must be thought on now.
My care of her is lost in wild amaze. [*Going to* Isa.
Are you all dead within there? Where, where are you?
[*Exit.*

Isabella *comes to herself.*

Isa. Where have I been! methinks I stand upon
The brink of life, ready to shoot the gulph
That lies between me and the realms of rest;
But still detain'd, I cannot pass the streight.
Deny'd to live, and yet I must not die.
Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,

To

To my unbury'd body——Here it lies,
[*Throws herself by* Biron's *body.*
My body, soul, and life. A little dust
To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave,
There, there we shall sleep safe and sound together.

Enter Villeroy *with servants.*

Vil. Poor wretch! upon the ground! she's not herself,
Remove her from the body. [*Servants going to raise her.*
Isa. Never, never:
You have divorc'd us once, but shall no more.
Help, help me, *Biron*; ha! bloody and dead!
O murder, murder! you have done this deed!
Vengeance! and murder! bury us together;
Do any thing but part us.
Vil. Gently, gently raise her——
She must be forc'd away.
[*She drags the body after her, they get her into their arms, and carry her off.*
Isa. O, they tear me! cut off my hands,
Let me leave something with him,
They'll clasp him fast——
O cruel, cruel men!
This you must answer one day.
Vil. Good nurse, take care of her: [*Nurse follows her.*
Send for all helps: all, all that I am worth,
Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.
Be sure you do [*To a Servant.*
Just as I order'd you. The storm grows loud,
[*Knocking at the door.*
I am prepar'd for it; now let them in.

Enter Count Baldwin, Carlos, Bellford, Frederick, *with Servants.*

C. Bald. O do I live to this unhappy day!
Where is my wretched son?
Car. Where is my brother?
[*They see, and gather about the body.*
Vil. I hope in heav'n.

Car.

Car. Can'ſt thou pity him,
Wiſh him in heav'n? When thou haſt done a deed,
That muſt forever cut thee from the hopes
Of ever coming there?
Vil. I do not blame you,
You have a brother's right to be concern'd
For his untimely death——
Car. Untimely death indeed!
Vil. But yet you muſt not ſay, I was the cauſe.
Car. Not you the cauſe! why, who ſhould murder him?
We do not aſk you to accuſe yourſelf:
But I muſt ſay that you have murder'd him:
And will ſay nothing elſe, 'till juſtice draws
Upon our ſide, at the loud call of blood,
To execute ſo foul a murderer.
Bell. Poor *Biron!* is this thy welcome home?
Fred. Riſe, ſir, there is a comfort in revenge,
Which yet is left you. [*To C.* Baldwin.
Car. Take the body hence. [Biron *carried off.*
C. Bald. What could provoke you?
Vil. Nothing could provoke me
To a baſe murder; which, I find, you think
Me guilty of: I know my innocence:
My ſervants too can witneſs that I drew
My ſword in his defence, to reſcue him.
Bell. Let the ſervants be call'd.
Fred. Let's hear what they can ſay.
Car. What they can ſay! why, what ſhould ſervants ſay?
They're his accomplices, his inſtruments,
And will not charge themſelves. If they could do
A murder for his ſervice; they can lie,
Lie nimbly; and ſwear hard to bring him off.
You ſay, you drew your ſword in his defence?
Who were his enemies? Did he need defence?
Had he wrong'd any one? Could he have cauſe
To apprehend a danger but from you?
And yet you reſcu'd him! no, no, he came
Unſeaſonably, (that was all his crime)

Unluckily

Unluckily to interrupt your ſport:
You were new marry'd, marry'd to his wife;
And therefore you, and ſhe, and all of you,
(For all of you I muſt believe concern'd)
Combin'd to murder him out of the way.

Bell. If it be ſo.

Car. It can be only ſo.

Fred. Indeed it has a face.

Car. As black as hell.

C. Bald. The law will do me juſtice: ſend for the magiſtrate.

Car. I'll go myſelf for him—— [*Exit.*

Vil. Theſe ſtrong preſumptions, I muſt own indeed,
Are violent againſt me; but I have
A witneſs, and on this ſide heav'n too.

Fred. What cries are thoſe?

Vil. Open that door:

SCENE *opened, ſhews* Pedro *on a rack.*

Here's one can tell you all.

Ped. All, all: take me but from the rack, I'll confeſs all. I can hold out no longer.

Vil. You and your accomplices deſign'd
To murder *Biron?* ſpeak.

Ped. We did.

Vil. Did you engage upon your private wrongs,
Or were employ'd?

Ped. He never did us wrong.

Vil. You were ſet on then.

Ped. O! we were ſet on.

Vil. What do you know of me?

Ped. Nothing, nothing;
You ſav'd his life; and have diſcover'd me.

Vil. Take him down.

C. Bald. Hold.

Vil. He has acquitted me.
If you wou'd be reſolv'd of any thing,
He ſtands upon his anſwer.

C. Bald. Who ſet you on to act this horrid deed?

Ped. Kill me out-right; let all the guilt be mine.

C. Bald.

C. Bald. I'll know the villain; give me quick his name,
Or I ſhall tear it from thy bleeding heart.
Pull hard, rack, torture him——
Ped. O! I confeſs.
C. Bald. Do then.
Ped. It was my maſter, *Carlos*, your own ſon.
C. Bald. O monſtrous! monſtrous! moſt unnatural!
Fred. Did he employ you to murder his own brother?
Ped. He did, and he was with us when 'twas done.
C. Bald. If this be true, which is impoſſible,
It is but juſt upon me: *Biron*'s wrongs
Muſt be reveng'd; and I the cauſe of all.
Fred. What will you do with him?
C. Bald. Now take him down:
[Pedro *taken from the rack.*
I know too much.
Vil. I had forgot: your wretched, dying ſon,
Gave me this letter for you. [*Gives it to* Baldwin.
I dare deliver it: if it ſpeaks of me,
I pray to have it read.
C. Bald. You know the hand.
Bel. I know 'tis *Biron*'s hand.
C. Bald. Pray read it.

Bellford *reads the letter.*

SIR,

I Find I am come only to lay my death at your door: I am now going out of the world, but cannot forgive you, nor my brother Carlos, *for not hindering my poor wife* Iſabella *from marrying with* Villeroy, *when you both knew, from ſo many letters, that I was alive.*——

BIRON.

Vil. How! did you know it then?
C. Bald. Amazement! all.

Enter Carlos *with Officers.*

O *Carlos!* are you come? your brother here,
Here in a wretched letter, lays his death

On

On you, and me: have you done any thing
To haften his fatal end?
Car. Blefs me, fir, I do any thing? who, I!
C. Bald. He talks of letters that were fent to us;
I never heard of any: did you know
He was alive?
Car. Alive! heav'n knows, not I.
C. Bald. Had you no news of him, from a report,
Or letter never?
Car. Never, never, I.
Bel. That's ftrange indeed: I know he often writ
To lay before you the condition [*To* Baldwin.
Of his hard flavery: and more I know,
That he had feveral anfwers of his letters:
He faid they came from you; you are his brother.
Car. Never from me.
Bel. That will appear.
The letters I believe are ftill about him;
For fome of 'em I faw but yefterday.
C. Bald. What did thofe anfwers fay?
Bel. I cannot fpeak to the particulars;
But I remember well the fum of 'em
Was much the fame, and all agreed,
That there was nothing to be hop'd from you;
That 'twas your barbarous refolution,
To let him perifh there.
C. Bald. O *Carlos! Carlos!* hadft thou been a brother.
Car. This is a plot upon me; I never knew
He was in flavery, or was alive,
Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.
Bel. There, fir, I muft confront you:
He fent you a letter, to my knowledge, laft night;
And you fent him word you would come to him:
I fear you came too foon.
C. Bald. 'Tis all too plain.
Bring out that wretch before him. [Pedro *produc'd.*
Car. Ha! *Pedro* there! then I am caught indeed.
Bel. You ftart at fight of him,
He has confeft the bloody deed.

Car.

Car. Well then, he has confeſt,
And I muſt anſwer it.
Bel. Is there no more?
Car. Why, what would you have more? I know the worſt,
And I expect it.
C. Bald. Why haſt thou done all this?
Car. Why, that which damns moſt men, has ruin'd me,
The making of my fortune. *Biron* ſtood
Between me, and your favour; while he liv'd,
I had not that; hardly was thought a ſon;
And not at all a-kin to your eſtate.
I could not bear a younger brother's lot,
To live depending, upon courteſy.
Had you provided for me like a father,
I had been ſtill a brother.
C. Bald. 'Tis too true,
I never lov'd thee, as I ſhou'd have done;
It was my ſin, and I am puniſh'd for't.
O! never may diſtinction riſe again
In families: let parents be the ſame
To all their children; common in their care,
And in their love of 'em: I am unhappy
For loving one too well.
Vil. You knew your brother liv'd; why did you take
Such pains to marry me to *Iſabella?*
Car. I had my reaſons for't.
Fred. More then I thought you had.
Car. But one was this;
I knew my brother lov'd his wife ſo well,
That if he ever ſhou'd come home again,
He cou'd not long out-live the loſs of her.
Bel. If you rely'd on that, why did you kill him?
Car. To make all ſure. Now you are anſwer'd all.
Where muſt I go? I'm tir'd of your queſtions.
C. Bald. I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art:
A father cannot find a name for thee.
But parricide is higheſt treaſon ſure
To ſacred nature's laws; and muſt be ſo,
So ſentenc'd in thy crimes. Take him away——

The

The violent remedy is found at laſt,
That drives thee out, thou poiſon of my blood,
Infected long, and only foul in thee. [Carlos *led off.*
Grant me, ſweet heav'n, thy patience, to go through
The torment of my cure——here, here begins
The operation——alas! ſhe's mad.

Enter Iſabella *diſtracted held by her women, her hair diſhevel'd, her little ſon running in before, being afraid of her.*

Vil. My *Iſabella!* poor unhappy wretch!
What can I ſay to her?
Iſa. Nothing, nothing, 'tis a babbling world,
I'll hear no more on't. When does the court ſit?
I'll not be bought, what! to ſell innocent blood!
You look like one of the pale judges here,
Minos, or *Radamanth*, or *Æacus*,
I have heard of you.
I have a cauſe to try, an honeſt one;
Will you not hear it? then I muſt appeal
To the bright throne, call down the heav'nly powers,
To witneſs how you uſe me.
Wom. Help, help, we cannot hold her.
Vil. You but enrage her more.
C. Bald. Pray give her way, ſhe'll hurt no body.
Iſa. What have you done with him? he was here but now;
I ſaw him here. Oh *Biron*, *Biron!* where,
Where have they hid thee from me? he is gone——
But here's a little flaming cherubin——
Child. O ſave me, ſave me! [*Running to* Baldwin.
Iſa. The *Mercury* of heav'n, with ſilver wings,
Impt for the flight, to overtake his ghoſt,
And bring him back again.
Child. I fear ſhe'll kill me.
C. Bald. She will not hurt thee. [*She flings away.*
Iſa. Will nothing do! I did not hope to find
Juſtice on earth; 'tis not in heav'n neither.
Biron hath watch'd his opportunity.

Softly;

Softly; he ſteals it from the ſleeping gods,
And ſends it thus. [*Stabs herſelf.*
Now, now I laugh at you, defy you all,
You tyrants, murderers.
Vil. Call, call for help: O heav'n! this was too much.
C. Bald. O! thou moſt injur'd innocence! yet live,
Live but to witneſs for me to the world,
How much I do repent me of the wrongs,
Th' unnatural wrongs, which I have heap'd on thee,
And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.
Vil. O ſpeak, ſpeak but a word of comfort to me.
C. Bald. If the moſt tender father's care, and love
Of thee, and thy poor child can make amends;
O yet look up, and live.
Iſa. Where is that little wretch? [*They raiſe her.*
I die in peace to leave him to your care.
I have a wretched mother's legacy,
A dying kiſs, pray let me give it him,
My bleſſing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.
O may thy father's virtues live in thee:
And all his wrongs be buried in my grave.
The waves and winds will daſh, and tempeſts roar;
But wrecks are toſs'd at laſt upon the ſhore. [*Dies.*
Vil. She's gone, and all my joys of life with her.
Where are your officers of juſtice now?
Seize, bind me, drag me to the bloody bar.
Accuſe, condemn me; let the ſentence reach
My hated life, no matter how it comes,
I'll think it juſt, and thank you as it falls.
Self-murder is deny'd me: elſe how ſoon
Could I be paſt the pain of my remembrance!
But I muſt live, grow gray with ling'ring grief,
To die at laſt in telling this ſad tale.
C. Bald. Poor wretched orphan of moſt wretched parents!
'Scaping the ſtorm, thou'rt thrown upon a rock,
To periſh there; the very rocks wou'd melt;
Soften their nature ſure to foſter thee:
I find it by myſelf. My flinty heart,
That barren rock, on which thy father ſtarv'd

Opens

Opens its ſprings of nouriſhment to thee :
There's not a vein but ſhall run milk for thee.
O had I pardon'd my poor *Biron*'s fault!
His firſt, his only fault, this had not been.
To erring youth there's ſome compaſſion due;
But while with rigour you their crimes purſue,
What's their misfortune, is a crime in you.
Hence learn, offending children to forgive :
Leave puniſhment to heav'n, 'tis heav'n's prerogative.

EPILOGUE:

Spoken by Mrs. VERBRUGGEN.

NOW tell me, when you saw the lady die,
Were you not puzzled for a reason why?
A buxom damsel, and of play-house race,
Not to out-live th' enjoyment of a brace!
Were that the only marriage-curse in store,
How many would compound to suffer more,
And yet live on, with comfort, to threescore?
But on our Exits *there is no relying:*
We women are so whimsical in dying.
Some pine away for loss of ogling fellows;
Nay some have dy'd for love, as stories tell us.
Some, say our histories, though long ago,
For having undergone a rape, or so,
Plung'd the fell dagger, without more ado.
But time has laugh'd those follies out of fashion;
And sure they'll never gain the approbation
Of ladies who consult their reputation.
For if a rape must be esteem'd a curse,
Grim death, and publication make it worse:
Should the opinion of the world be try'd,
They'll scarce give judgment on the plaintiff's side;
For all must own, 'tis most egregious nonsense,
To die for being pleas'd, with a safe conscience.
Nay, look not on your fans, nor turn away,
For tell me, ladies, why do you marry, pray?
But to enjoy your wishes as you may.

OROONOKO.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it was Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL,

By Their MAJESTIES SERVANTS,

In the YEAR 1699.

—— Quo fata trahunt, virtus ſecura ſequetur. LUCAN.

Virtus recludens immeritis mori
Cœlum, negata tentat iter via. HOR. OD. II. lib iii.

To his GRACE,

WILLIAM,

DUKE of DEVONSHIRE, &c.

Lord Steward of his Majesty's Houshold, Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter, and one of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy-Council.

MY LORD,

THE best part of the fortune of my last play (*The Innocent Adultery*) was, that it gave me an opportunity of making myself known to your grace. You were pleased to countenance the advances which I had been a great while directing and aiming at you, and have since encouraged me into an industry, which, I hope, will allow me in this play to own (which is the only way I can) the great obligations I have to you.

I stand engaged to Mrs. *Behn* for the occasion of a most passionate distress in my last play; and in a conscience that I had not made her a sufficient acknowledgment, I have run farther into her debt for *Oroonoko*, with a design to oblige me to be honest; and that every one may find me out for ingratitude, when I don't say all that's fit for me upon that subject. She had a great command of the stage; and I have often wondered that she would bury her favourite hero in a *novel*, when she might have revived him in the *scene*. She thought either that no actor could re-

present him, or she could not bear him represented: and I believe at last, when I remember what I have heard from a friend of hers, that she always told his story more feelingly than she wrote it. Whatever has happened to him at *Surinam*, he has mended his condition in *England*. He was born here under your grace's influence; and that has carried his fortune farther into the world, than all the poetical stars that I could have solicited for his success. It was your opinion, my lord, that directed me to Mr. *Verbruggen*; and it was his care to maintain your opinion, that directed the town to me, the better part of it, the people of quality; whose favours, as I am proud of, I shall always be industrious to preserve.

My lord, I know the respect and reverence which in this address I ought to appear in before you, who are so intimate with the ancients, so general a knower of the several species of poetry, and so just a judge in the trials of this kind. You have an absolute power to *arraign* and *convict*, but a prevailing inclination to *pardon* and *save*; and from the humanity of your temper, and the true knowledge of the difficulties of succeeding this way, never aggravate or insist upon faults,

——Quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura——

HOR. ART. POET.

to our condemnation, where they are venial, and not against the principles of the art we pretend to. *Horace*, who found it so, says,

——Gratia regum
Pieriis tentata modis.

The favour of great men is the poet's inheritance, and all ages have allowed them to put in their claim; I only wish that I had merit enough to prefer me to

your

your grace: that I might deſerve in ſome meaſure that patronage which you are pleaſed to beſtow on me: that I were a *Horace* for ſuch a *Mæcenas*. That I could deſcribe what I admire; and tell the world what I really think, that as you poſſeſs thoſe infinite advantages of nature and fortune in ſo eminent a degree; that as you ſo far excel in the perfections of body and mind, you were deſigned and faſhioned a prince, to be the honour of the nation, and the grace and ornament of the court. Sir, in the fullneſs of happineſs and bleſſings which you enjoy, I can only bring in my wiſhes for the continuance of them; they ſhall conſtantly be devoted to you, with all the ſervices of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's moſt obliged,

moſt thankful, and

moſt humble ſervant,

T. SOUTHERNE.

PROLOGUE:

Sent by an Unknown Hand.

And ſpoken by Mr. POWEL.

AS when in hoſtile times two neighbouring ſtates
Strive by themſelves, and their confederates;
The war at firſt is made with a awkward ſkill,
And ſoldiers clumſily each other kill;
'Till time at length their untaught fury tames,
And into rules their heedleſs rage reclaims:
Then every ſcience by degrees is made
Subſervient to the man-deſtroying trade:
Wit, wiſdom, reading, obſervation, art;
A well-turn'd head to guide a generous heart.
So it may prove with our contending ſtages,
If you will kindly but ſupply their wages:
Which you with eaſe may furniſh, by retrenching
Your ſuperfluities of wine and wenching.
Who'd grudge to ſpare from riot and hard drinking,
To lay it out on meams to mend his thinking?
To follow ſuch advice you ſhou'd have leiſure,
Since what refines your ſenſe, refines your pleaſure:
Women grown tame by uſe each fool can get,
But cuckolds all are made by men of wit.
To virgin favours fools have no pretence:
For maidenheads were made for men of ſenſe.
'Tis not enough to have a horſe well bred;
To ſhew his mettle, he muſt be well fed:
Nor is it all in provender and breed.
He muſt be try'd and ſtrain'd, to mend his ſpeed:

A favour'd

A favour'd poet, like a pamper'd horse,
Will strain his eye-balls out to win the course.
Do you but in your wisdoms vote it fit
To yield due succours to this war of wit,
The buskin with more grace shall tread the stage,
Love sigh in softer strains, heroes less rage:
Satire shall shew a triple row of teeth,
And comedy shall laugh your fops to death:
Wit shall refine, and Pegasus *shall foam,*
And soar in search of ancient Greece *and* Rome.
And since the nation's in the conquering fit,
As you by arms, we'll vanquish France *in wit:*
The work were over, cou'd our poets write
With half the spirit that our soldiers fight.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

OROONOKO,	Mr. *Verbruggen.*
ABOAN,	Mr. *Powell.*
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR of SURINAM,	Mr. *Williams.*
BLANDFORD,	Mr. *Harland.*
STANMORE,	Mr. *Horden.*
JACK STANMORE,	Mr. *Mills.*
Captain DRIVER,	Mr. *B Johnson.*
DANIEL, son to Widow LACKITT,	Mr. *M. Lee.*
HOTTMAN,	Mr. *Sympson.*

WOMEN.

IMOINDA,	Mrs. *Rogers.*
Widow LACKITT,	Mrs. *Knight.*
CHARLOTT WELLDON, in man's cloaths.	Mrs. *Verbruggen.*
LUCY WELLDON, her sister.	Mrs. *Lucas.*

Planters, Indians, Negroes, Men, Women, and Children.

The SCENE, *Surinam*, a colony in the *West-Indies*; at the time of the action of this tragedy, in the possession of the *English*.

ORO-

OROONOKO.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Welldon *following* Lucy.

LUCY.

WHAT will this come to? what can it end in? you have perſuaded me to leave dear *England*, and dearer *London*, the place of the world moſt worth living in, to follow you a huſband-hunting into *America*: I thought huſbands grew in theſe plantations.

Wel. Why ſo they do, as thick as oranges, ripening one under another. Week after week they drop into ſome woman's mouth: 'tis but a little patience, ſpreading your apron in expectation, and one of 'em will fall into your lap at laſt.

Luc. Ay, ſo you ſay indeed.

Wel. But you have left dear *London*, you ſay: pray what have you left in *London* that was very dear to you, that had not left you before?

Luc. Speak for yourſelf, ſiſter.

Wel. Nay, I'll keep you in countenance. The young fellows, you know, the deareſt part of the town, and without whom *London* had been a wilderneſs to you and me, had forſaken us a great while.

Luc. Forſaken us! I don't know that they ever had us.

Wel. Forſaken us the worſt way, child; that is, did not think us worth having; they neglected us, no longer deſign'd upon us, they were tir'd of us. Women in *London* are like the rich ſilks, they are out of faſhion a great while before they wear out——

Luc. The devil take the faſhion, I ſay.

Wel. You may tumble 'em over and over at their firſt coming up, and never diſparage their price; but they fall upon wearing immediately, lower and lower in their value, till they come to the broker at laſt.

Luc. Ay, ay, that's the merchant they deal with. The men would have us at their own ſcandalous rates; their plenty makes 'em wanton, and in a little time, I ſuppoſe, they won't know what they would have of the women themſelves.

Wel. O, yes, they know what they would have. They would have a woman give the town a pattern of her perſon and beauty, and not ſtay in it ſo long to have the whole piece worn out. They would have the good face only diſcover'd, and not the folly that commonly goes along with it. They ſay there is a vaſt ſtock of beauty in the nation, but a great part of it lies in unprofitable hands; therefore, for the good of the public, they would have a draught made once a quarter, ſend the decaying beauties for breeders into the country, to make room for new faces to appear, to countenance the pleaſures of the town.

Luc. 'Tis very hard, the men muſt be young as long as they live, and poor women be thought decaying and unfit for the town at one or two and twenty. I'm ſure we were not ſeven years in *London*.

Wel. Not half the time taken notice of, ſiſter. The two or three laſt years we could make nothing of it, even in a vizard-maſk; not in a vizard-maſk, that has cheated many a man into an old acquaintance. Our faces began to be as familiar to the men of intrigue, as their duns, and as much avoided. We durſt not appear in public places, and were almoſt grudg'd a gallery in the churches; even there they had their jeſts upon us, and cry'd

cry'd, ſhe's in the right on't, good gentlewoman, ſince no man conſiders her body, ſhe does very well indeed to take care of her ſoul.

Luc. Such unmannerly fellows there will always be.

Wel. Then you may remember, we were reduc'd to the laſt neceſſity, the neceſſity of making ſilly viſits to our civil acquaintance, to bring us into tolerable company. Nay, the young inns-of-court beaux, of but one term's ſtanding in the faſhion, who knew nobody, but as they were ſhewn 'em by the orange-women, had nick-names for us: how often have they laugh'd out, there goes my landlady; is not ſhe come to let lodgings yet?

Luc. Young coxcombs that knew no better.

Wel. And that we muſt have come to. For your part, what trade could you ſet up in? you wou'd never arrive at the truſt and credit of a guinea-bawd: you would have too much buſineſs of your own, ever to mind other people's.

Luc. That is true, indeed.

Wel. Then, as a certain ſign that there was nothing more to be hop'd for, the maids at the chocolate-houſes found us out, and laugh'd at us; our billet-doux lay there neglected for waſte paper; we were cry'd down ſo low we could not paſs upon the city; and became ſo notorious in our galloping way, from one end of the town to t'other, that at laſt we could hardly compaſs a competent change of petticoats to diſguiſe us to the hackney-coachmen: and then it was near walking on foot indeed.

Luc. Nay, that I began to be afraid of.

Wel. To prevent which, with what youth and beauty was left, ſome experience, and the ſmall remainder of fifteen hundred pounds a-piece, which amounted to bare two hundred between us both, I perſuaded you to bring your perſon for a venture to the Indies. Every thing has ſucceeded in our voyage. I paſs for your brother: one of the richeſt planters here happening to die juſt as we landed, I have claim'd kindred with him; ſo, without making his will, he has left us the credit of his relation to trade upon; we paſs for his couſins, coming here to

Surinam

Surinam chiefly upon his invitation: we live in reputation; have the beſt acquaintance of the place; and we ſhall ſee our account in't, I warrant you.

Luc. I muſt rely upon you——

Enter Widow Lackitt.

Wid. Mr. *Welldon*, your ſervant. Your ſervant, Mrs. *Lucy*. I am an ill viſitor, but 'tis not too late, I hope, to bid you welcome to this ſide of the world.

[*Salutes* Lucy.

Wel. Gad ſo, I beg your pardon, widow, I ſhould have done the civilities of my houſe before: but, as you ſay, 'tis not too late, I hope—— [*Going to kiſs her.*

Wid. What! you think now this was a civil way of begging a kiſs; and by my troth, if it were, I ſee no harm in't: 'tis a pitiful favour indeed that is not worth aſking for; tho' I have known a woman ſpeak plainer before now, and not underſtood neither.

Wel. Not under my roof. Have at you, widow——

Wid. Why, that's well ſaid, ſpoke like a younger brother, that deſerves to have a widow—— [*He kiſſes her.* You're a younger brother, I know, by your kiſſing.

Wel. How ſo, pray?

Wid. Why you kiſs as if you expected to be paid for't. You have birdlime upon your lips. You ſtick ſo cloſe, there's no getting rid of you.

Wel. I am a-kin to a younger brother.

Wid. So much the better: we widows are commonly the better for younger brothers.

Luc. Better, or worſe, moſt of you. But you won't be much better for him, I can tell you—— [*Aſide.*

Wel. I was a younger brother; but an uncle of my mother's has maliciouſly left me an eſtate, and, I'm afraid, ſpoil'd my fortune.

Wid. No, no; an eſtate will never ſpoil your fortune. I have a good eſtate myſelf, thank heav'n, and a kind huſband that left it behind him.

Wel. Thank heav'n, that took him away from it, widow, and left you behind him.

Wid. Nay, heav'n's will muſt be done; he's in a better place.

Wel.

Wel. A better place for you, no doubt on't: now you may look about you; chuſe for yourſelf, Mrs. *Lackitt*, that's your buſineſs; for I know you deſign to marry again.

Wid. O dear! not I, I proteſt and ſwear; I don't deſign it: but I won't ſwear neither; one does not know what may happen to tempt one.

Wel. Why, a luſty young fellow may happen to tempt you.

Wid. Nay, I'll do nothing raſhly: I'll reſolve againſt nothing. The devil, they ſay, is very buſy upon theſe occaſions, eſpecially with the widows. But if I am to be tempted, it muſt be with a young man, I promiſe you——Mrs. *Lucy*, your brother is a very pleaſant gentleman: I came about buſineſs to him, but he turns every thing into merriment.

Wel. Buſineſs, Mrs. *Lackitt*? Then, I know, you wou'd have me to yourſelf. Pray leave us together, ſiſter. [*Ex.* Luc. What am I drawing upon myſelf here? [*Aſide.*

Wid. You have taken a very pretty houſe here; every thing ſo neat about you already. I hear you are laying out for a plantation.

Wel. Why, yes truly, I like the country, and wou'd buy a plantation, if I cou'd reaſonably.

Wid. O! by all means reaſonably.

Wel. If I cou'd have one to my mind, I wou'd think of ſettling among you.

Wid. O! you can't do better. Indeed we can't pretend to have ſo good company for you, as you had in *England*; but we ſhall make very much of you. For my own part, I aſſure you, I ſhall think myſelf very happy to be more particularly known to you.

Wel. Dear Mrs. *Lackitt*, you do me too much honour.

Wid. Then as to a plantation, Mr. *Welldon*, you know I have ſeveral to diſpoſe of. Mr. *Lackitt*, I thank him, has left, tho' I ſay it, the richeſt widow upon the place: therefore I may afford to uſe you better than other people can. You ſhall have one upon any reaſonable terms.

Wel. That's a fair offer indeed.

Wid. You ſhall find me as eaſy as any body you can have to do with, I aſſure you. Pray try me; I would have

have you try me, Mr. *Welldon*. Well, I like that name of yours exceedingly, Mr. *Welldon*.

Wel. My name!

Wid. O exceedingly! if any thing cou'd perſuade me to alter my own name, I verily believe nothing in the world would do it ſo ſoon as to be call'd Mrs. *Welldon*.

Wel. Why, indeed *Welldon* does ſound ſomething better than *Lackitt*.

Wid. O! a great deal better. Not that there is ſo much in a name neither. But I don't know, there is ſomething; I ſhou'd like mightily to be call'd Mrs. *Welldon*.

Wel. I'm glad you like my name.

Wid. Of all things. But then there's the misfortune; one can't change one's name, without changing one's condition.

Wel. You'll hardly think it worth that, I believe.

Wid. Think it worth what, ſir? changing my condition? indeed, ſir, I think it worth every thing. But, alas! Mr. *Welldon*, I have been a widow but ſix weeks; 'tis too ſoon to think of changing one's condition yet; indeed it is: pray don't deſire it of me; not but that you may perſuade me to any thing ſooner than any perſon in the world——

Wel. Who, I, Mrs. *Lackitt!*

Wid. Indeed you may, Mr. *Welldon*, ſooner than any man living. Lord, there's a great deal in ſaving a decency; I never minded it before; well, I'm glad you ſpoke firſt to excuſe my modeſty. But what, modeſty means nothing, and is the virtue of a girl, that does not know what ſhe would at it; a widow ſhould be wiſer. Now I will own to you; but I won't confeſs neither; I have had a great reſpect for you a great while; I beg your pardon, ſir, and I muſt declare to you, indeed I muſt, if you deſire to diſpoſe of all I have in the world, in an honourable way, which I don't pretend to be any way deſerving your conſideration, my fortune and perſon, if you won't underſtand me without telling you ſo, are both at your ſervice. Gad ſo! another time——

Enter Stanmore *to 'em.*

Stan. So, Mrs. *Lackitt*, your widowhood is weaning apace:

pace; I ſee which way 'tis going. *Welldon*, you're a happy man. The women and their favours come home to you.

Wid. A fiddle of favour, Mr. *Stanmore*: I am a lone woman, you know it, left in a great deal of buſineſs, and buſineſs muſt be follow'd or loſt. I have ſeveral ſtocks and plantations upon my hands, and other things to diſpoſe of, which Mr. *Welldon* may have occaſion for.

Wel. We were juſt upon the brink of a bargain, as you came in.

Stan. Let me drive it on for you.

Wel. So you muſt, I believe, you or ſomebody for me.

Stan. I'll ſtand by you: I underſtand more of this buſineſs, than they can pretend to.

Wel. I don't pretend to't; 'tis quite out of my way indeed.

Stan. If the widow gets you to herſelf, ſhe will certainly be too hard for you: I know her of old; ſhe has no conſcience in a corner; a very *Jew* in a bargain, and would circumciſe you to get more of you.

Wel. Is this true, widow?

Wid. Speak as you find, Mr. *Welldon*: I have offer'd you very fair: think upon't, and let me hear of you: the ſooner the better, Mr. *Welldon*—— [*Exit.*

Stan. I aſſure you, my friend, ſhe'll cheat you if ſhe can.

Wel. I don't know that; but I can cheat her, if I will.

Stan. Cheat her? how?

Wel. I can marry her; and then I'm ſure I have it in my power to cheat her.

Stan. Can you marry her?

Wel. Yes, faith, ſo ſhe ſays: her pretty perſon and fortune (which, one with the other, you know, are not contemptible) are both at my ſervice.

Stan. Contemptible! very conſiderable, I'gad; very deſirable: why, ſhe's worth ten thouſand pounds, man; a clear eſtate: no charge upon't, but a boobily ſon: he indeed was to have half; but his father begot him, and ſhe breeds him up, not to know or have more than ſhe has a mind to: and ſhe has a mind to ſomething elſe, it ſeems.

Wel.

Wel. There's a great deal to be made of this——

[*Musing.*

Stan. A handsome fortune may be made on't; and I advise you to't, by all means.

Wel. To marry her! an old, wanton witch! I hate her.

Stan. No matter for that: let her go to the devil for you. She'll cheat her son of a good estate for you: that's a perquisite of a widow's portion always.

Wel. I have a design, and will follow her at least; 'till I have a pen'worth of the plantation.

Stan. I speak as a friend, when I advise you to marry her. For 'tis directly against the interest of my own family. My cousin *Jack* has belabour'd her a good while that way.

Wel. What! honest *Jack!* I'll not hinder him. I'll give over the thoughts of her.

Stan. He'll make nothing on't; she does not care for him. I'm glad you have her in your power.

Wel. I may be able to serve him.

Stan. Here's a ship come into the river; I was in hopes it had been from *England.*

Wel. From *England?*

Stan. No, I was disappointed; I long to see this handsome cousin of yours: the picture you gave me of her has charm'd her.

Wel. You'll see whether it has flatter'd her or no, in a little time. If she recover'd of that illness, that was the reason of her staying behind us; I know she will come with the first opportunity. We shall see her, or hear of her death.

Stan. We'll hope the best. The ships from *England* are expected every day.

Wel. What ship is this?

Stan. A rover, a buccaneer, a trader in slaves: that's the commodity we deal in, you know. If you have a curiosity to see our manner of marketting, I'll wait upon you.

Wel. We'll take my sister with us.—— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE,

SCENE, *an open place.*

Enter Lieutenant-Governor *and* Blandford.

Gov. There's no resisting your fortune, *Blandford*; you draw all the prizes.

Blan. I draw for our lord governor, you know; his fortune favours me.

Gov. I grudge him nothing this time; but if fortune had favour'd me in the last sale, the fair slave had been mine; *Clemene* had been mine.

Blan. Are you still in love with her?

Gov. Every day more in love with her.

Enter Capt. Driver, *teaz'd and pull'd about by Widow* Lackitt *and several planters. Enter at another door* Welldon, Lucy, Stanmore.

Wid. Here have I six slaves in my lot, and not a man among 'em; all women and children; what can I do with 'em, captain? pray consider, I am a woman myself, and can't get my own slaves as some of my neighbours do.

1 *Plan.* I have all men in mine; pray, captain, let the men and women be mingled together, for procreation-sake, and the good of the plantation.

2 *Plan.* Ay, ay, a man and a woman, captain, for the good of the plantation.

Capt. Let 'em mingle together and be damn'd, what care I? would you have me pimp for the good of the plantation?

1 *Plan.* I am a constant customer, captain.

Wid. I am always ready money to you, captain.

1 *Plan.* For that matter, mistress, my money is as ready as yours.

Wid. Pray hear me, captain.

Capt. Look you, I have done my part by you; I have brought the number of slaves you bargain'd for; if your lots have not pleas'd you, you must draw again among yourselves.

3 *Plan.* I am contented with my lot.

4 *Plan.* I am very well satisfied.

3 *Plan.* We'll have no drawing again.

Capt. Do you hear, miſtreſs? you may hold your tongue; for my part, I expect my money.

Wid. Captain, nobody queſtions or ſcruples the payment. But I won't hold my tongue; 'tis too much to pray and pay too: one may ſpeak for one's own, I hope.

Capt. Well, what wou'd you ſay?

Wid. I ſay no more than I can make out.

Capt. Out with it then.

Wid. I ſay, things have not been ſo fair carry'd as they might have been. How do I know how you have juggled together in my abſence? you drew the lots before I came, I'm ſure.

Capt. That's your own fault, miſtreſs; you might have come ſooner.

Wid. Then here's a prince, as they ſay, among the ſlaves, and you ſet him down to go as a common man.

Capt. Have you a mind to try what a man he is? you'll find him no more than a common man at your buſineſs.

Wid. Sir, you're a ſcurvy fellow to talk at this rate to me. If my huſband were alive, gadsbodykins, you wou'd not uſe me ſo.

Capt. Right, miſtreſs, I would not uſe you at all.

Wid. Not uſe me! your betters every inch of you, I wou'd have you to know, wou'd be glad to uſe me, ſirrah. Marry come up here, who are you, I trow? you begin to think yourſelf a captain, forſooth, becauſe we call you ſo. You forget yourſelf as faſt as you can; but I remember you; I know you for a pitiful paltry fellow, as you are; an upſtart to proſperity; one that is but juſt come acquainted with cleanlineſs, and that never ſaw five ſhillings of your own, without deſerving to be hang'd for 'em.

Gov. She has giv'n you a broadſide, Captain; you'll ſtand up to her.

Capt. Hang her, ſtink-pot, I'll come no nearer.

Wid. By this good light, it wou'd make a woman do a thing ſhe never deſign'd; marry again, tho' ſhe were ſure to repent it, to be reveng'd of ſuch a——

J. Stan.

J. Stan. What's the matter, Mrs. *Lackitt?* can I ſerve you?

Wid. No, no, you can't ſerve me; you are for ſerving yourſelf, I'm ſure. Pray go about your buſineſs, I have none for you: you know I have told you ſo. Lord! how can you be ſo troubleſome? nay, ſo unconſcionable, to think that every rich widow muſt throw herſelf away upon a young fellow that has nothing?

Stan. *Jack*, you are anſwer'd, I ſuppoſe.

J. Stan. I'll have another pluck at her.

Wid. Mr. *Welldon*, I am a little out of order; but pray bring your ſiſter to dine with me: gad's my life, I'm out of all patience with that pitiful fellow; my fleſh riſes at him: I can't ſtay in the place where he is—— [*Exit.*

Blan. Captain, you have us'd the widow very familiarly.

Capt. This is my way; I have no deſign, and therefore am not over civil. If ſhe had ever a handſome daughter to wheedle her out of; or if I could make any thing of her booby ſon.

Wel. I may improve that hint, and make ſomething of him. [*Aſide.*

Gov. She's very rich.

Capt. I'm rich myſelf. She has nothing that I want: I have no leaks to ſtop. Old women are fortune-menders. I have made a good voyage, and wou'd reap the fruits of my labour. We plow the deep, my maſters, but our harveſt is on ſhore. I'm for a young woman.

Stan. Look about, captain, there's one ripe, and ready for the ſickle.

Capt. A woman indeed! I will be acquainted with her: who is ſhe?

Wel. My ſiſter, ſir.

Capt. Wou'd I were a-kin to her: if ſhe were my ſiſter, ſhe ſhould never go out of the family. What ſay you, miſtreſs? you expect I ſhould marry you, I ſuppoſe.

Luc. I ſhan't be diſappointed, if you don't. [*Turning away.*

Wel. She won't break her heart, ſir.

Capt. But I mean—— [*Following her.*

Wel.

Wel. And I mean—— [*Going between him and* Lucy. That you muſt not think of her without marrying.

Capt. I mean ſo too.

Wel. Why then your meaning's out.

Capt. You're very ſhort.

Wel. I will grow, and be taller for you.

Capt. I ſhall grow angry, and ſwear.

Wel. You'll catch no fiſh then.

Capt. I don't well know whether he deſigns to affront me, or no.

Stan. No, no, he's a little familiar; 'tis his way.

Capt. Say you ſo; nay, I can be as familiar as he, if that be it. Well, ſir, look upon me full: what ſay you? how do you like me for a brother-in-law?

Wel. Why yes, faith, you'll do my buſineſs, [*Turning him about.*] If we can agree about my ſiſter's.

Capt. I don't know whether your ſiſter will like me, or not: I can't ſay much to her: but I have money enough: and if you are her brother, as you ſeem to be akin to her, I know that will recommend me to you.

Wel. This is your market for ſlaves; my ſiſter is a free woman, and muſt not be diſpos'd of in public. You ſhall be welcome to my houſe, if you pleaſe: and, upon better acquaintance, if my ſiſter likes you, and I like your offers——

Capt. Very well, ſir, I'll come and ſee her.

Gov. Where are the ſlaves, captain? they are long acoming.

Blan. And who is this prince that's fallen to my lot, for the lord governor? let me know ſomething of him, that I may treat him accordingly; who is he?

Capt. He's the devil of a fellow, I can tell you; a prince every inch of him: you have paid dear enough for him, for all the good he'll do you: I was forc'd to clap him in irons, and did not think the ſhip ſafe neither You are in hoſtility with the *Indians*, they ſay; they threaten you daily: you had beſt have an eye upon him.

Blan. But who is he?

Gov. And how do you know him to be a prince?

Capt.

Capt. He is ſon and heir to the great king of *Angola*; a miſchevous monarch in thoſe parts, who, by his good will, would never let any of his neighbours be in quiet. This ſon was his general, a plaguy fighting fellow: I have formerly had dealings with him for ſlaves, which he took priſoners, and have got pretty roundly by him. But the wars being at an end, and nothing more to be got by the trade of that country, I made bold to bring the prince along with me.

Gov. How could you do that?

Blan What! ſteal a prince out of his own country? impoſſible!

Capt. 'Twas hard indeed; but I did it. You muſt know this *Oroonoko*——

Blan. Is that his name?

Capt. Ay, *Oroonoko.*

Gov. *Oroonoko?*

Capt. Is naturally inquiſitive about the men and manners of the white nations. Becauſe I could give him ſome account of the other parts of the world, I grew very much into his favour; in return of ſo great an honour, you know I cou'd do no leſs upon my coming away, than invite him on board me: never having been in a ſhip, he appointed his time, and I prepar'd my entertainment. He came the next evening as privately as he cou'd, with about ſome twenty along with him. The punch went round; and as many of his attendants as wou'd be dangerous, I ſent dead drunk on ſhore; the reſt we ſecur'd: and ſo you have the prince *Oroonoko*.

1 *Plan.* Gad-a-mercy, captain, there you were with him, i'faith.

2 *Plan.* Such men as you are fit to be employ'd in public affairs: the plantation will thrive by you.

3 *Plan.* Induſtry ſhould be encourag'd.

Capt. There's nothing done without it, boys. I have made my fortune this way.

Blan. Unheard-of villainy!

Stan. Barbarous treachery!

Blan. They applaud him for't.

Gov. But, captain, methinks you have taken a great deal

deal of pains for this prince *Oroonoko*; why did you part with him at the common rate of slaves?

Capt. Why, lieutenant-governor, I'll tell you; I did design to carry him to *England*, to have show'd him there; but I found him troublesome upon my hands, and I'm glad I'm rid of him——Oh, ho, hark they come.

Black slaves, men, women, and children, pass across the stage by two and two; Aboan, *and others of* Oroonoko's *attendants, two and two:* Oroonoko *last of all in chains.*

Luc. Are all these wretches slaves?

Stan. All sold, they and their posterity all slaves.

Luc. O miserable fortune!

Blan. Most of 'em know no better! they were born so, and only change their masters. But a prince born only to command, betray'd and sold! my heart drops blood for him.

Capt. Now, governor, here he comes, pray observe him.

Oro. So, sir, you have kept your word with me.

Capt. I am a better christian, I thank you, than to keep it with a heathen.

Oro. You are a christian; be a christian still:
If you have any God that teaches you
To break your word, I need not curse you more:
Let him cheat you, as you are false to me.
You faithful followers of my better fortune!
We have been fellow-soldiers in the field;
[*Embracing his friends.*
Now we are fellow-slaves. This last farewel.
Be sure of one thing that will comfort us,
Whatever world we next are thrown upon,
Cannot be worse than this.

[*All slaves go off, but* Oroonoko.

Capt. You see what a bloody pagan he is, governor; but I took care that none of his followers should be in the same lot with him, for fear they should undertake some desperate action, to the danger of the colony.

Oro. Live still in fear; it is the villain's curse,
And will revenge my chains: fear ev'n me,

Who

Who have no pow'r to hurt thee. Nature abhors,
And drives thee out from the ſociety
And commerce of mankind, for breach of faith.
Men live and proſper but in mutual truſt,
A confidence of one another's truth:
That thou haſt violated. I have done.
I know my fortune, and ſubmit to it.

Gov. Sir, I am ſorry for your fortune, and would help it, if I could.

Blan. Take off his chains. You know your condition; but you are fallen into honourable hands: you are the lord governor's ſlave, who will uſe you nobly: in his abſence it ſhall be my care to ſerve you.

[Blandford *applying to him.*

Oro. I hear you, but I can believe no more.

Gov. Captain, I'm afraid the world won't ſpeak ſo honourably of this action of yours, as you would have 'em.

Capt. I have the money. Let the world ſpeak and be damn'd, I care not.

Oro. I would forget myſelf. Be ſatisfy'd, [*To* Blan.
I am above the rank of common ſlaves:
Let that content you. The chriſtian there, that knows me,
For his own ſake will not diſcover more.

Capt. I have other matters to mind. You have him, and much good may do you with your prince. [*Exit.*

The planters pulling and ſtaring at Oroonoko.

Blan. What would you have there? you ſtare as if you never ſaw a man before. Stand further off.

[*Turns 'em away.*

Oro. Let 'em ſtare on.
I am unfortunate, but not aſham'd
Of being ſo: no, let the guilty bluſh,
The white man that betray'd me: honeſt black
Diſdains to change its colour. I am ready:
Where muſt I go? diſpoſe me as you pleaſe.
I am not well acquainted with my fortune,
But muſt learn to know it better: ſo I know, you ſay:
Degrees make all things eaſy.

Blan. All things ſhall be eaſy.

Oro. Tear off this pomp, and let me know myſelf:
The ſlaviſh habit beſt becomes me now.
Hard fare, and whips, and chains may overpow'r
The frailer fleſh, and bow my body down:
But there's another, nobler part of me,
Out of your reach, which you can never tame.

Blan. You ſhall find nothing of this wretchedneſs
You apprehend. We are not monſters all.
You ſeem unwilling to diſcloſe yourſelf:
Therefore, for fear the mentioning your name
Shou'd give you new diſquiets, I preſume
To call you *Cæſar*.

Oro. I am myſelf; but call me what you pleaſe.

Stan. A very good name, *Cæſar*.

Gov. And very fit for his character.

Oro. Was *Cæſar* then a ſlave?

Gov. I think he was; to pirates too: he was a great conqueror, but unfortunate in his friends——

Oro. His friends were chriſtians?

Blan. No.

Oro. No! that's ſtrange.

Gov. And murder'd by 'em.

Oro. I would be *Cæſar* there. Yet I will live.

Blan. Live to be happier.

Oro. Do what you will with me.

Blan. I'll wait upon you, attend, and ſerve you.

[*Exit with* Oroonoko.

Luc. Well, if the captain had brought this prince's country along with him, and would make me queen of it, I would not have him, after doing ſo baſe a thing.

Wel. He's a man to thrive in the world, ſiſter: he'll make you the better jointure.

Luc. Hang him, nothing can proſper with him.

Stan. Enquire into the great eſtates, and you will find moſt of 'em depend upon the ſame title of honeſty: the men who raiſe 'em firſt are much of the captain's principles.

Wel. Ay, ay, as you ſay, let him be damn'd for the good of his family. Come, ſiſter, we are invited to dinner.

Gov. *Stanmore*, you dine with me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE *Widow* Lackitt's *House.*

Enter Widow Lackitt *and* Welldon.

Well. THIS is so great a favour, I don't know how to receive it.

Wid. O dear sir! you know how to receive and how to return a favour, as well as any body, I don't doubt it: 'tis not the first you have had from our sex, I suppose.

Wel. But this is so unsuspected.

Wid. Lord, how can you say so, Mr. *Welldon?* I won't believe you. Don't I know you handsome gentlemen expect every thing that a woman can do for you? and by my troth you're in the right on't: I think one can't do too much for a handsome gentleman; and so you shall find it.

Wel. I shall never have such an offer again, that's certain: what shall I do? I am mightily divided——

[*Pretending a concern.*

Wid. Divided! O dear, I hope not so, sir. If I marry, truly I expect to have you to myself.

Wel. There's no danger of that, Mrs. *Lackitt.* I am divided in my thoughts My father upon his death-bed oblig'd me to see my sister dispos'd of, before I married myself. 'Tis that sticks upon me. They say indeed promises are to be broken or kept; and I know 'tis a foolish thing to be tied to a promise; but I can't help it: I don't know how to get rid of it.

Wid. Is that all?

Wel. All in all to me. The commands of a dying father, you know, ought to be obey'd.

Wid. And so they may.

Wel. Impossible, to do me any good.

Wid. They shan't be your hinderance. You would have a husband for your sister, you say: he must be very well to pass too in the world, I suppose?

Wel. I would not throw her away.

Wid. Then marry her out of hand to the ſea captain you were ſpeaking of.

Wel. I was thinking of him, but 'tis to no purpoſe: ſhe hates him.

Wid. Does ſhe hate him? nay 'tis no matter, an impudent raſcal as he is, I would not adviſe her to marry him.

Wel. Can you think of nobody elſe?

Wid. Let me ſee.

Wel. Ay, pray do; I ſhould be loth to part with my good fortune in you for ſo ſmall a matter as a ſiſter: but you find how it is with me.

Wid. Well remembered, i'faith: well, if I thought you would like of it, I have a huſband for her: what do you think of my ſon?

Well. You don't think of it yourſelf.

Wid. I proteſt but I do: I am in earneſt, if you are. he ſhall marry her within this half hour, if you'll give your conſent to it.

Wel. I give my conſent! I'll anſwer for my ſiſter, ſhe ſhall have him: you may be ſure I ſhall be glad to get over the difficulty.

Wid. No more to be ſaid then, that difficulty is over. But I vow and ſwear you frightened me, Mr. *Willdon.* If I had not had a ſon now for your ſiſter, what muſt I have done, do you think? were not you an ill natur'd thing to boggle at a promiſe? I could break twenty for you.

Wel I am the more oblig'd to you: but this ſon will ſave all.

Wid. He's in the houſe; I'll go and bring him myſelf. [*Going.*] You would do well to break the buſineſs to your ſiſter: ſhe's within, I'll ſend her to you ——

[*Going again, comes back.*

Wel. Pray do.

Wid. But d'you hear? perhaps ſhe may ſtand upon her maidenly behaviour, and blush, and play the fool, and delay: but don't be anſwer'd ſo: what! ſhe is not a girl at theſe years: ſhew your authority, and tell her roundly, ſhe muſt be married immediately. I'll manage my ſon, I warrant you —— [*Goes out in haſte.*

Wel.

Wel. The widow's in haſte, I ſee: I thought I had laid a rub in the road, about my ſiſter: but ſhe has ſtept over that. She's making way for herſelf as faſt as ſhe can; but little thinks where ſhe is going: I could tell her ſhe is going to play the fool: but people don't love to hear of their faults: beſides, that is not my buſineſs at preſent.

Enter Lucy.

So, ſiſter, I have a huſband for you——

Luc. With all my heart: I don't know what confinement marriage may be to the men, but I'm ſure the women have no liberty without it. I am for any thing that will deliver me from the care of a reputation, which I begin to find impoſſible to preſerve.

Wel. I'll eaſe you of that care: you muſt be married immediately.

Luc. The ſooner the better; for I am quite tir'd of ſetting up for a huſband. The widow's fooliſh ſon is the man, I ſuppoſe.

Wel. I conſider'd your conſtitution, ſiſter; and finding you would have occaſion for a fool, I have provided accordingly.

Luc. I don't know what occaſion I may have for a fool when I'm married: but I find none but fools have occaſion to marry.

Wel. Since he is to be a fool then, I thought it better for you to have one of his mother's making than your own; 'twill ſave you the trouble.

Luc. I thank you; you take a great deal of pains for me: but, pray tell me, what are you doing for yourſelf all this while?

Wel. You were never true to your own ſecrets, and therefore I won't truſt you with mine. Only remember this, I am your elder ſiſter, and conſequently laying my breeches aſide, have as much occaſion for a huſband as you can have. I have a man in my eye, be ſatisfy'd.

Enter Widow Lackitt, *with her son* Daniel.

Wid Come, *Daniel*, hold up thy head, child; look like a man: you must not take it as you have done. Gad's my life! there's nothing to be done with twirling your hat, man.

Dan. Why, mother, what's to be done then?

Wid. Why look me in the face, and mind what I say to you.

Dan Marry, who's the fool then? what shall I get by minding what you say to me?

Wid. Mrs. *Lucy*, the boy is bashful, don't discourage him: pray come a little forward, and let him salute you. [*Going between* Lucy *and* Daniel.

Luc. A fine husband I am to have truly. [*To* Welldon.

Wid Come, *Daniel*, you must be acquainted with this gentlewoman.

Dan Nay, I'm not proud, that is not my fault: I am presently acquainted when I know the company; but this gentlewoman is a stranger to me.

Wid. She is your mistress; I have spoke a good word for you; make her a bow, and go and kiss her.

Dan. Kiss her! have a care what you say; I warrant she scorns your words. Such fine folks are not us'd to be slopt and kiss'd. Do you think I don't know that, mother?

Wid. Try her, try her, man. [Daniel *bows, she thrusts him forward.*] Why that's well done; go nearer her.

Dan. Is the devil in the woman? why so I can go nearer her, if you wou'd let a body alone. [*To his mother.*] Cry you mercy, forsooth; my mother is always shaming one before company: she would have me as unmannerly as herself, and offer to kiss you? [*To* Lucy.

Wel. Why, won't you kiss her?

Dan. Why, pray, may I?

Wel. Kiss her, kiss her, man.

Dan. Marry, and I will. [*Kisses her.*] Gadsooks! she kisses rarely! An'please you, mistress, and seeing my mother will have it so, I don't much care if I kiss you again, forsooth. [*Kiss her again.*

Luc.

Luc. Well, how do you like me now!

Dan. Like you! marry, I don't know. You have bewitch'd me, I think: I was never so in my born days before.

Wid. You must marry this fine woman, *Daniel.*

Dan. Hey-day! marry her! I was never marry'd in all my life. What must I do with her then, mother?

Wid. You must live with her, eat and drink with her, go to bed with her, and sleep with her.

Dan. Nay, marry, if I must go to bed with her, I shall never sleep, that's certain: shell break me of my rest, quite and clean, I tell you before-hand. As for eating and drinking with her, why I have a good stomach, and can play my part in any company. But how do you think I can go to bed to a woman I don't know?

Wel. You shall know her better.

Dan. Say you so, sir?

Wel. Kiss her again. [Daniel *kisses* Lucy.

Dan. Nay, kissing I find will make us presently acquainted, we'll steal into a corner to practise a little, and then I shall be able to do any thing.

Wel. The young man mends apace.

Wid. Pray don't baulk him.

Dan. Mother, mother, if you'll stay in the room by me, and promise not to leave me, I don't care for once if I venture to go to bed with her.

Wid. There's a good child; go in and put on thy best cloaths; pluck up a spirit; I'll stay in the room by thee, she won't hurt thee, I warrant thee.

Dan. Nay, as to that matter, I'm not afraid of her: I'll give her as good as she brings: I have a *Rowland* for her *Oliver*, and so you may tell her. [*Exit.*

Wid. Mrs. *Lucy*, we shan't stay for you: you are in a readiness, I suppose.

Wel. She's always ready to do what I would have her, I must say that for my sister.

Wid. 'Twill be her own another day. Mr. *Welldon*, we'll marry 'em out of hand, and then——

Wel. And then, Mrs. *Lackitt*, look to yourself—[*Exe.*

SCENE II.

Enter Orooncko *and* Blandford.

Oro. You grant I have good reason to suspect
All the professions you can make to me.
Blan. Indeed you have.
Oro. The dog that sold me did profess as much
As you can do——But yet I know not why——
Whether it is because I'm fall'n so low,
And have no more to fear——That is not it;
I am a slave no longer than I please.
'Tis something nobler——Being just myself,
I am inclining to think others so:
'Tis that prevails upon me to believe you.
Blan. You may believe me.
Oro. I do believe you.
From what I know of you, you are no fool:
Fools only are the knaves, and live by tricks:
Wise men may thrive without 'em, and be honest.
Blan. They won't all take your counsel —— [*Aside.*
Oro. You know my story, and you say you are
A friend to my misfortunes: that's a name
Will teach you what you owe yourself and me.
Blan. I'll study to deserve to be your friend.
When once our noble governor arrives,
With him you will not need my interest:
He is too generous not to feel your wrongs.
But be assur'd I will employ my pow'r,
And find the means to send you home again.
Oro. I thank you, sir——My honest, wretched friends!
Their chains are heavy: they have hardly found [*Sighing.*
So kind a master. May I ask you, sir,
What is become of 'em? perhaps I should not.
You will forgive a stranger.
Blan. I'll enquire,
And use my best endeavours, where they are,
To have 'em gently us'd.

Oro.

Oro. Once more I thank you.
You offer every cordial that can keep
My hopes alive, to wait a better day.
What friendly care can do, you have apply'd.
But, Oh! I have a grief admits no cure.
Blan. You do not know, sir——
Oro. Can you raise the dead?
Pursue and overtake the wings of time?
And bring about again the hours, the days,
The years that made me happy?
Blan. That is not to be done.
Oro. No, there is nothing to be done for me.
[*Kneeling and kissing the earth.*
Thou God ador'd! thou ever-glorious sun!
If she be yet on earth, send me a beam
Of thy all-seeing power to light me to her.
Or if thy sister goddess has preferr'd
Her beauty to the skies to be a star;
O tell me where she shines, that I may stand
Whole nights, and gaze upon her.
Blan. I am rude, and interrupt you.
Oro. I am troublesome:
But pray give me your pardon. My swoll'n heart
Bursts out its passage, and I must complain.
O! can you think of nothing dearer to me?
Dearer than liberty, my country, friends,
Much dearer than my life? that I have lost.
The tend'rest, best belov'd, and loving wife.
Blan. Alas! I pity you.
Oro. Do, pity me:
Pity's a kin to love; and every thought
Of that soft kind is welcome to my soul.
I would be pity'd here.
Blan. I dare not ask
More than you please to tell me: but if you
Think it convenient to let me know
Your story, I dare promise you to bear
A part in your distress, if not assist you.
Oro. Thou honest-hearted man! I wanted such,
Just such a friend as thou art, that would sit

Still as the night, and let me talk whole days
Of my *Imoinda*. O! I'll tell thee all
From first to last; and pray observe me well.

Blan. I will most heedfully.

Oro. There was a stranger in my father's court,
Valu'd and honour'd much: he was a white,
The first I ever saw of your complexion:
He chang'd his gods for ours, and so grew great;
Of many virtues, and so fam'd in arms,
He still commanded all my father's wars:
I was bred under him. One fatal day,
The armies joining, he before me stept,
Receiving in his breast a poison'd dart
Levell'd at me; he dy'd within my arms.
I've tir'd you already.

Blan. Pray go on,

Oro. He left an only daughter, whom he brought
An infant to *Angola*. When I came
Back to the court, a happy conqueror;
Humanity oblig'd me to condole
With this sad virgin for a father's loss,
Lost for my safety. I presented her
With all the slaves of battle to atone
Her father's ghost. But when I saw her face,
And heard her speak, I offer'd up myself
To be the sacrifice. She bow'd and blush'd:
I wonder'd and ador'd. The sacred pow'r
That had subdu'd me, then inspir'd my tongue,
Inclin'd her heart; and all our talk was love.

Blan. Then you were happy.

Oro. O! I was too happy.
I marry'd her: and though my country's custom
Indulg'd the privilege of many wives,
I swore myself never to know but her.
She grew with child, and I grew happier still.
O my *Imoinda!* but it could not last,
Her fatal beauty reach'd my father's ears:
He sent for her to court, where, cursed court!
No woman comes, but for his amorous use.
He raging to possess her, she was forc'd

To

To own herſelf my wife. The furious king
Started at inceſt: but grown deſperate,
Not daring to enjoy what he deſir'd,
In mad revenge, which I could never learn,
He poiſon'd her, or ſent her far, far off,
Far from my hopes ever to ſee her more.

Blan. Moſt barbarous of fathers! the ſad tale
Has ſtruck me dumb with wonder.

Oro. I have done.
I'll trouble you no farther: now and then,
A ſigh will have its way; that ſhall be all.

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. Blanford, the lieutenant-governor is gone to your plantation. He deſires you would bring the royal ſlave with you. The ſight of his fair miſtreſs, he ſays, is an entertainment for a prince; he would have his opinion of her.

Oro. Is he a lover?

Blan. So he ſays himſelf: he flatters a beautiful ſlave, that I have, and calls her miſtreſs.

Oro. Muſt he then flatter her to call her miſtreſs?
I pity the proud man, who thinks himſelf
Above being in love: What, tho' ſhe be a ſlave,
She may deſerve him.

Blan. You ſhall judge of that, when you ſee her, ſir.

Oro. I go with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *A Plantation.*

Lieut. Governor following Imoinda.

Gov. I have diſturb'd you, I confeſs my fault,
My fair *Clemene*; but begin again,
And I will liſten to your mournful ſong,
Sweet as the ſoft complaining nightingale's.
While every note calls out my trembling ſoul,
And leaves me ſilent, as the midnight groves,
Only to ſhelter you; ſing, ſing again,
And let me wonder at the many ways
You have to raviſh me.

Imo. O! I can weep
Enough for you, and me, if that will pleaſe you.

Gov. You muſt not weep: I come to dry your tears,
And raiſe you from your ſorrow. Look upon me,
Look with the eyes of kind indulging love,
That I may have full cauſe for what I ſay:
I come to offer you your liberty,
And be myſelf the ſlave. You turn away [*Following her.*
But every thing becomes you. I may take
This pretty hand: I know your modeſty
Would draw it back; but you would take it ill,
If I ſhould let it go, I know you wou'd.
You ſhall be gently forc'd to pleaſe yourſelf;
That you will thank me for.

[*She ſtruggles, and gets her hand from him, then he offers to kiſs her.*

Nay if you ſtruggle with me, I muſt take——

Imo. You may, my life, that I can part with freely.

[*Exit.*

Enter Blandford, Stanmore, Oroonoko *to him.*

Blan. So, governor, we don't diſturb you, I hope: your miſtreſs has left you: you were making love, ſhe's thankful for the honour, I ſuppoſe.

Gov. Quite inſenſible to all I ſay, and do:
When I ſpeak to her, ſhe ſighs, or weeps.
But never anſwers me as I would have her.

Stan. There's ſomething nearer than her ſlavery, that touches her.

Blan. What do her fellow-ſlaves ſay of her; can't they find the cauſe?

Gov. Some of 'em, who pretend to be wiſer than the reſt, and hate her, I ſuppoſe, for being us'd better than they are, will need have it ſhe's with child.

Blan. Poor wretch; if it be ſo, I pity her:
She has loſt a huſband, that perhaps was dear
To her, and then you cannot blame her.

Oro. If it be ſo, indeed you cannot blame her.

[*Sighing.*

Gov.

Gov. No, no, it is not so: if it be so,
I still must love her: and desiring still,
I must enjoy her.

Blan. Try what you can do with fair means, and welcome.

Gov. I'll give you ten slaves for her.

Blan. You know she is our lord governor's: but if I could dispose of her, I would not now, especially to you.

Gov. Why not to me?

Blan. I mean against her will. You are in love with her.
And we all know what your desires would have:
Love stops at nothing but possession.
Were she within your pow'r, you do not know
How soon you would be tempted to forget
The nature of the deed, and, may be, act
A violence, you after would repent.

Oro. 'Tis godlike in you to protect the weak.

Gov. Fy, fy, I would not force her. Tho' she be
A slave, her mind is free, and should consent.

Oro. Such honour will engage her to consent:
And then, if you're in love, she's worth the having.
Shall we not see this wonder?

Gov. Have a care;
You have a heart, and she has conquering eyes.

Oro. I have a heart: but if it could be false
To my first vows, ever to love again,
These honest hands should tear it from my breast,
And throw the traitor from me. O! *Imoinda!*
Living or dead, I can be only thine.

Blan. *Imoinda* was his wife: she's either dead,
Or living, dead to him: force'd from his arms
By an inhuman father. Another time
I'll tell you all. [*To the Gov. and* Stan.

Stan. Hark! the slaves have done their work:
And now begins their evening merriment.

Blan. The men are all in love with fair *Clemene*
As much as you are: and the women hate her,
From an instinct of natural jealousy.
They sing, and dance, and try their little tricks

To

To entertain her, and divert her ſadneſs.
May be ſhe is among 'em: ſhall we ſee? [*Exeunt.*

The SCENE *drawn ſhews the ſlaves, men, women and children upon the ground, ſome riſe and dance, others ſing the following ſongs.*

A SONG by Sir *Harry Sheers.*

Set by Mr. *Courtevill,* and ſung by the Boy to Miſs *Croſs.*

I.

A Laſs there lives upon the green,
Cou'd I her picture draw;
A brighter nymph was never ſeen,
That looks, and reigns a little queen,
And keeps the ſwains in awe.

II.

Her eyes are Cupid's *darts and wings,*
Her eye-brows are his bow;
Her ſilken hair the ſilver ſtrings,
Which ſure and ſwift deſtruction brings
To all the vale below.

III.

If Paſtorella's *dawning light*
Can warm, and wound us ſo:
Her noon will ſhine ſo piercing bright,
Each glancing beam will kill outright,
And every ſwain ſubdue.

A SONG by Mr. *Cheek.*

Set by Mr. *Courtevill,* and ſung by Mr. *Leveridge.*

I.

BRight Cynthia's *pow'r divinely great,*
What heart is not obeying?
A thouſand Cupids *on her wait,*
And in her eyes are playing.

She

II.

She seems the queen of love to reign,
For she alone dispences
Such sweets, as best can entertain
The guest of all the senses.

III.

Her face a charming prospect brings;
Her breath gives balmy blisses:
I hear an angel, when she sings,
And taste of heav'n in kisses.

IV.

Four senses thus she feasts with joy,
From nature's richest treasure:
Let me the other sense employ,
And I shall die with pleasure.

During the entertainment, the Governor, Blandford, Stanmore, Oroonoko, *enter as spectators; that ended, Captain* Driver, Jack Stanmore, *and several planters enter with their swords drawn.* [*A bell rings.*

Capt. Where are you, governor? make what haste you can
To save yourself, and the whole colony.
I bid 'em ring the bell.

Gov. What's the matter?

J. Stan. The *Indians* are come down upon us: they have plunder'd some of the plantations already, and are marching this way, as fast as they can.

Gov. What can we do against 'em?

Blan. We shall be able to make a stand, 'till more planters come in to us.

J. Stan. There are a great many more without, if you wou'd shew yourself, and put us in order.

Gov. There's no danger of the white slaves, they'll not stir: *Blanford* and *Stanmore*, come you along with me: some of you stay here to look after the black slaves.

[*All go out but the Captain, and six Planters, who all at once seize* Oroonoko.

1 *Plan.*

1 *Plan.* Ay, ay, let us alone.

Capt. In the first place we secure you, sir,
As an enemy to the government.

Oro. Are you there, sir? you are my constant friend.

1 *Plan.* You will be able to do a great deal of mischief.

Capt. But we shall prevent you: bring the irons hither. He has the malice of a slave in him, and wou'd be glad to be cutting his masters throats, I know him. Chain his hands and feet, that he may not run over to 'em: if they have him, they shall carry him on their backs, that I can tell 'em.

As they are chaining him, Blandford *enters, runs to them.*

Blan. What are you doing there?

Capt. Securing the main chance: this is a bosom enemy.

Blan. Away, you brutes: I'll answer with my life for his behaviour; so tell the governor.

Capt. Plan. Well, sir, so we will.

[*Exeunt Capt and Planters.*

Oro. Give me a sword, and I'll deserve your trust.

A party of Indians *enter, hurrying* Imoinda *among the slaves; another party of* Indians *sustains them retreating, followed at a distance by the Governor with the Planters:* Blandford, Oroonoko *join them.*

Blan. Hell, and the devil! they drive away our slaves before our faces. Governor, can you stand tamely by, and suffer this? *Clemene*, sir, your mistress is among 'em.

Gov. We throw ourselves away in the attempt to rescue 'em.

Oro. A lover cannot fall more glorious,
Than in the cause of love He that deserves
His mistress' favour will not stay behind:
I'll lead you on, be bold, and follow me.

[Oroonoko, *at the head of the Planters, falls upon the* Indians *with a great shout, beats them off.*

Enter Imoinda.

Imo. I'm toss'd about by my tempestuous fate,

And

And no where must have rest; *Indians*, or *English*?
Whoever has me, I am still a slave
No matter whose I am, since I'm no more
My royal master's; since I'm his no more.
O I was happy! nay, I will be happy,
In the dear thought that I am still his wife,
Tho' far divided from him.

[*Draws off to a corner of the stage.*

After a shout, enter the Governor with Oroonoko, Blanford, Stanmore, *and Planters.*

Gov. Thou glorious man! thou something greater sure
Than *Cæsar* ever was! that single arm
Has sav'd us all; accept our general thanks.

[*All bow to* Oroonoko.

And what we can do more to recompence
Such noble services, you shall command.
Clemene too shall thank you——she is safe——
Look up, and bless your brave deliverer.

[*Brings* Clemene *forward, looking down on the ground.*

Oro. Bless me indeed!
Blan. You start!
Oro. O all you gods!
Who govern this great world, and bring about
Things strange, and unexpected, can it be?
Gov. What is't you stare at so?
Oro. Answer me some of you, you who have power,
And have your senses free: or are you all
Struck thro' with wonder too? [*Looking still fixt on her.*
Blan. What wou'd you know?
Oro. My soul steals from my body thro' my eyes:
All that is left of life, I'll gaze away,
And die upon the pleasure.
Gov. This is strange!
Oro. If you but mock me with your image here:
If she be not *Imoinda*——

[*She looks upon him, and falls into a swoon, he runs to her.*

Ha! she faints!
Nay, then it must be she: it is *Imoinda*:
My heart confesses her, and leaps for joy,

To

To welcome her to her own empire here.
I feel her all, in every part of me.
O! let me press her in my eager arms,
Wake her to life, and with this kindling kiss
Give back that soul, she only sent to me. [*Kisses her.*

Gov. I am amaz'd!

Blan. I am as much as you.

Oro. *Imoinda!* O! thy *Oroonoko* calls.

[Imoinda *coming to life.*

Imo. My *Oroonoko!* O! I can't believe
What any man can say. But if I am
To be deceiv'd, there's something in that name,
That voice, that face, [*Staring on him.*
O! if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken.

[*Runs and embraces* Oroonoko.

Oro. Never here;
You cannot be mistaken: I am yours,
Your *Oroonoko*, all that you would have,
Your tender loving husband.

Imo. All indeed
That I would have: my husband! then I am
Alive, and waking to the joys I feel:
They were so great, I could not think 'em true.
But I believe all that you say to me;
For truth itself, and everlasting love
Grows in this breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oro. Take, take me all: enquire into my heart,
(You know the way to every secret there)
My heart, the sacred treasury of love:
And if, in absence, I have mis-employ'd
A mite from the rich store; if I have spent
A wish, a sigh, but what I sent to you;
May I be curs'd to wish, and sigh in vain,
And you not pity me.

Imo. O! I believe,
And know you by myself. If these sad eyes,
Since last we parted, have beheld the face
Of any comfort; or once wish'd to see
The light of any other heav'n, but you;

May

May I be ſtruck this moment blind, and loſe
Your bleſſed ſight, never to find you more.

Oro. Imoinda! O! this ſeparation
Has made you dearer, if it can be ſo,
Than you were ever to me. You appear
Like a kind ſtar to my benighted ſteps,
To guide me on my way to happineſs:
I cannot miſs it now. Governor, friend,
You think me mad: but let me bleſs you all,
Who, any way, have been the inſtruments
Of finding her again. *Imoinda*'s found!
And every thing, that I would have in her.

[*Embracing her in the moſt paſſionate fondneſs.*

Stan. Where's your miſtreſs now, governor?

Gov. Why, where moſt men's miſtreſſes are forc'd to be ſometimes,
With her huſband, it ſeems: but I won't loſe her ſo.

[*Aſide.*

Stan. He has fought luſtily for her, and deſerves her, I'll ſay that for him.

Blan. Sir, we congratulate your happineſs; I do moſt heartily.

Gov. And all of us: but how it comes to paſs——

Oro. That will require
More precious time than I can ſpare you now.
I have a thouſand things to aſk of her,
And ſhe has many more to know of me.
But you have made me happier, I confeſs,
Acknowledge it, much happier, than I
Have words, or pow'r to tell you. Captain, you,
Ev'n you, who moſt have wrong'd me, I forgive.
I will not ſay you have betray'd me now:
I'll think you but the miniſter of fate,
To bring me to my lov'd *Imoinda* here.

Imo. How, how ſhall I receive you? how be worthy
Of ſuch endearments, all this tenderneſs?
Theſe are the tranſports of proſperity,
When fortune ſmiles upon us.

Oro. Let the fools,
Who follow fortune, live upon her ſmiles.

All

All our prosperity is plac'd in love.
We have enough of that to make us happy.
This little spot of earth you stand upon,
Is more to me, than the extended plains,
Of my great father's kingdom. Here I reign
In full delights, in joys to pow'r unknown;
Your love my empire, and your heart my throne.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Aboan *with several Slaves, and* Hottman.

Hot. WHAT! to be slaves to cowards! slaves to rogues! who can't defend themselves!

Abo. Who is this fellow? he talks as if he were acquainted with our design: is he one of us?

[*Aside to his own gang.*

Slav. Not yet: but he will be glad to make one, I believe.

Abo. He makes a mighty noise.

Hot. Go, sneak in corners; whisper out your griefs,
For fear your masters hear you: cringe and crouch
Under the bloody whip, like beaten curs,
That lick their wounds, and know no other cure.
All, wretches all! you feel their cruelty,
As much as I can feel, but dare not groan.
For my part, while I have a life and tongue,
I'll curse the authors of my slavery.

Abo. Have you been long a slave?

Hot. Yes, many years.

Abo. And do you only curse?

Hot. Curse? only curse? I cannot conjure,
To raise the spirits up of other men:
I am but one. O! for a soul of fire,
To warm, and animate our common cause,
And make a body of us; then I would

Do

Do something more than curse.

Abo. That body set on foot, you would be one,
A limb, to lend it motion?

Hot. I would be
The heart of it; the head, the hand, and heart.
Would I could see the day.

Abo. You will do all yourself?

Hot. I would do more
Than I shall speak: but I may find a time.

Abo. The time may come to you; be ready for't.
Methinks he talks too much: I'll know him more,
Before I trust him farther.

Slav. If he dares
Half what he says, he'll be of use to us.

Enter Blandford *to them.*

Blan. If there be any one among you here
That did belong to *Oroonoko*, speak,
I come to him.

Abo. I did belong to him. *Aboan* my name.

Blan. You are the man I want; pray, come with me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter Oroonoko *and* Imoinda.

Oro. I do not blame my father for his love:
(Tho' that had been enough to ruin me)
'Twas nature's fault, that made you like the sun,
The reasonable worship of mankind:
He could not help his adoration.
Age had not lock'd his senses up so close,
But he had eyes, that open'd to his soul,
And took your beauties in: he felt your pow'r,
And therefore I forgive his loving you.
But when I think on his barbarity,
That could expose you to so many wrongs;
Driving you out to wretched slavery,
Only for being mine; then I confess,

I wish

I wish I could forget the name of son,
That I might curse the tyrant.
Imo. I will bless him,
For I have found you here: heav'n only knows
What is reserv'd for us: but if we guess
The future by the past, our fortune must
Be wonderful, above the common size
Of good or ill; it must be in extremes:
Extremely happy, or extremely wretched.
Oro. 'Tis in our pow'r to make it happy now.
Imo. But not to keep it so.

Enter Blandford *and* Aboan.

Blan. My royal lord!
I have a present for you.
Oro. Aboan!
Abo. Your lowest slave.
Oro. My try'd and valu'd friend.
This worthy man always prevents my wants:
I only wish'd, and he has brought thee to me.
Thou art surpris'd: carry thy duty there;
[Aboan *goes to* Imoinda *and falls at her feet.*
While I acknowledge mine, how shall I thank you?
Blan. Believe me honest to your interest,
And I am more than paid. I have secur'd,
That all your followers shall be gently us'd.
This gentleman, your chiefest favourite,
Shall wait upon your person, while you stay
Among us.
Oro. I owe every thing to you.
Blan. You must not think you are in slavery.
Oro. I do not find I am.
Blan. Kind heav'n has miraculously sent
Those comforts, that may teach you to expect
Its farther care, in your deliverance.
Oro. I sometimes think myself, heav'n is concern'd
For my deliverance.
Blan. It will be soon;
You may expect it. Pray, in the mean time,
Appear as chearful as you can among us.

You

You have ſome enemies, that repreſent
You dangerous, and would be glad to find
A reaſon, in your diſcontent, to fear:
They watch your looks. But there are honeſt men,
Who are your friends: you are ſecure in them.
Oro. I thank you for your caution.
Blan. I will leave you:
And be aſſur'd, I wiſh your liberty. [*Exit.*
Abo. He ſpeaks you very fair.
Oro. He means me fair.
Abo. If he ſhould not, my lord.
Oro. If he ſhould not!
I'll not ſuſpect this truth: but if I did,
What ſhall I get by doubting?
Abo. You ſecure,
Not to be diſappointed: but beſides,
There's this advantage in ſuſpecting him:
When you put off the hopes of other men,
You will rely upon your god-like ſelf:
And then you may be ſure of liberty.
Oro. Be ſure of liberty! what doſt thou mean;
Adviſing to rely upon myſelf?
I think I may be ſure on't: we muſt wait:
'Tis worth a little patience. [*Turning to* Imoinda.
Abo. O my lord!
Oro. What doſt thou drive at?
Abo. Sir, another time
You would have found it ſooner: but I ſee
Love has your heart, and takes up all your thoughts.
Oro. And canſt thou blame me?
Abo. Sir, I muſt not blame you.
But as our fortune ſtands, there is a paſſion
(Your pardon royal miſtreſs, I muſt ſpeak,)
That would become you better than your love:
A brave reſentment; which inſpir'd by you,
Might kindle and diffuſe a generous rage
Among the ſlaves, to rouze and ſhake our chains,
And ſtruggle to be free.
Oro. How can we help ourſelves?
Abo. I knew you, when you would have found a way.
How,

How help ourſelves? the very *Indians* teach us:
We need but to attempt our liberty,
And we may carry it. We have hands ſufficient,
Double the number of our maſters force,
Ready to be employ'd. What hinders us
To ſet 'em at work? we want but you,
To head our enterprize, and bid us ſtrike.
Oro. What would you do?
Abo. Cut our oppreſſors throats.
Oro. And you would have me join in your deſign
Of murder?
Abo. It deſerves a better name:
But be it what it will, 'tis juſtify'd
By ſelf-defence, and natural liberty.
Oro. I'll hear no more on't.
Abo. I am ſorry for't.
Oro. Nor ſhall you think of it.
Abo. Not think of it!
Oro. No, I command you not.
Abo. Remember, Sir,
You are a ſlave yourſelf, and to command
Is now another's right. Not think of it!
Since the firſt moment they put on my chains,
I've thought of nothing but the weight of 'em,
And how to throw 'em off: can yours ſit eaſy?
Oro. I have a ſenſe of my condition,
As painful, and as quick, as yours can be.
I feel for my *Imoinda* and myſelf;
Imoinda much the tendereſt part of me.
But though I languiſh for my liberty,
I would not buy it at the Chriſtian price
Of black ingratitude: they ſhall not ſay,
That we deſerv'd our fortune by our crimes.
Murder the innocent!
Abo. The innocent!
Oro. Theſe men are ſo, whom you would riſe againſt:
If we are ſlaves, they did not make us ſlaves;
But bought us in an honeſt way of trade:
As we have done before 'em, bought and ſold
Many a wretch, and never thought it wrong.

They

They paid our price for us, and we are now
Their property, a part of their eſtate,
To manage as they pleaſe. Miſtake me not,
I do not tamely ſay, that we ſhould bear
All they could lay upon us: but we find
The load ſo light, ſo little to be felt,
(Conſidering they have us in their power,
And may inflict what grievances they pleaſe)
We ought not to complain.

Abo. My royal lord!
You do not know the heavy grievances,
The toils, the labours, weary drudgeries,
Which they impoſe; burdens, more fit for beaſts,
For ſenſeleſs beaſts to bear, than thinking men.
Then if you ſaw the bloody cruelties
They execute on every ſlight offence;
Nay ſometimes in their proud, inſulting ſport:
How worſe than dogs, they laſh their fellow-creatures:
Your heart would bleed for them. O could you know
How many wretches lift their hands and eyes
To you, for their relief.

Oro. I pity 'em,
And wiſh I could with honeſty do more.

Abo. You muſt do more, and may, with honeſty.
O royal ſir, remember who you are:
A prince, born for the good of other men;
Whoſe god like office is to draw the ſword
Againſt oppreſſion, and ſet free mankind:
And this I'm ſure, you think oppreſſion now.
What tho' you have not felt theſe miſeries,
Never believe you are oblig'd to them;
They have their ſelfiſh reaſons, may be, now,
For uſing of you well: but there will come
A time, when you muſt have your ſhare of 'em.

Oro. You ſee how little cauſe I have to think ſo:
Favour'd in my own perſon, in my friends;
Indulg'd in all that can concern my care,
In my *Imoinda*'s ſoft ſociety. [*Embracing her.*

Abo. And therefore would you lye contented down
In the forgetfulneſs, and arms of love,

To get young princes for 'em?

Oro. Say'ſt thou! ha!

Abo. Princes, the heirs of empire, and the laſt
Of your illuſtrious lineage, to be born
To pamper up their pride, and be their ſlaves?

Oro. Imoinda! ſave me, ſave me from that thought.

Imo. There is no ſafety from it: I have long
Suffer'd it with a mother's labouring pains;
And can no longer. Kill me, kill me now,
Whilſt I am bleſt, and happy in your love;
Rather than let me live to ſee you hate me;
As you muſt hate me: me, the only cauſe;
The fountain of theſe flowing miſeries:
Dry up this ſpring of life, this pois'nous ſpring,
That ſwells ſo faſt, to overwhelm us all.

Oro. Shall the dear babe, the eldeſt of my hopes,
Whom I begot a prince, be born a ſlave?
The treaſure of this temple was deſign'd
T'enrich a kingdom's fortune: ſhall it here
Be ſeiz'd upon by vile unhallow'd hands,
To be employ'd in uſes moſt prophane?

Abo. In moſt unworthy uſes; think of that;
And while you may, prevent it. O my lord!
Rely on nothing that they ſay to you.
They ſpeak you fair, I know, and bid you wait.
But think what 'tis to wait on promiſes:
And promiſes of men, who know no tie
Upon their words, againſt their intereſt:
And where's their intereſt in freeing you?

Imo. O! where indeed, to loſe ſo many ſlaves?

Abo. Nay, grant this man, you think ſo much your friend,
Be honeſt, and intends all that he ſays:
He is but one; and in a government,
Where, he confeſſes, you have enemies
That watch your looks; what looks can you put on,
To pleaſe theſe men, who are before reſolv'd
To read 'em their own way? alas! my lord!
If they incline to think you dangerous,
They have their knaviſh arts to make you ſo.

And

And then who knows how far their cruelty
May carry their revenge?
Imo. To every thing,
That does belong to you; your friends, and me;
I ſhall be torn from you, forced away,
Helpleſs, and miſerable: ſhall I live
To ſee that day again?
Oro. That day ſhall never come.
Abo. I know you are perſuaded to believe
The governor's arrival will prevent
Theſe miſchiefs, and beſtow your liberty:
But who is ſure of that? I rather fear
More miſchiefs from his coming: he is young,
Luxurious, paſſionate, and amorous:
Such a complexion, and made bold by power,
To countenance all he is prone to do;
Will know no bounds, no law againſt his luſts:
If, in a fit of his intemperance,
With a ſtrong hand, he ſhould reſolve to ſeize,
And force my royal miſtreſs from your arms,
How can you help yourſelf?
Oro. Ha! thou haſt rouz'd
The lion in his den; he ſtalks abroad,
And the wide foreſt trembles at his roar.
I find the danger now: my ſpirits ſtart
At the alarm, and from all quarters come
To man my heart, the citadel of love.
Is there a power on earth to force you from me?
And ſhall I not reſiſt it? not ſtrike firſt
To keep, to ſave you; to prevent that curſe?
This is your cauſe, and ſhall it not prevail?
O! you were born all ways to conquer me.
Now I am faſhion'd to thy purpoſe: ſpeak,
What combination, what conſpiracy,
Would'ſt thou engage me in? I'll undertake
All thou wouldſt have me now for liberty,
For the great cauſe of love and liberty.
Abo Now, my great maſter, you appear yourſelf.
And ſince we have you join'd in our deſign,
It cannot fail us. I have muſter'd up

The choiceſt ſlaves, men who are ſenſible
Of their condition, and ſeem moſt reſolv'd:
They have their ſeveral parties.
Oro. Summon 'em,
Aſſemble 'em: I will come forth, and ſhew
Myſelf among them: if they are reſolv'd,
I'll lead their foremoſt reſolutions.
Abo. I have provided thoſe will follow you.
Oro. With this reſerve in our proceeding ſtill,
The means that lead us to our liberty
Muſt not be bloody.
Abo. You command in all.
We ſhall expect you, Sir.
Oro. You ſhall not long.
[*Exeunt* Oro. *and* Imo. *at one door,* Abo. *at another.*

SCENE III.

Welldon *coming in before Mrs.* Lackitt.

Wid. Theſe unmannerly *Indians* were ſomething unſeaſonable, to diſturb us juſt in the nick, Mr. *Welldon*: but I have the parſon within call ſtill, to do us the good turn.

Wel. We had beſt ſtay a little, I think, to ſee things ſettled again, had not we? marriage is a ſerious thing, you know.

Wid. What do you talk of a ſerious thing, Mr. *Welldon?* I think you have found me ſufficiently ſerious: I have marry'd my ſon to your ſiſter, to pleaſure you; and now I come to claim your promiſe to me, you tell me marriage is a ſerious thing.

Wel. Why, is it not?

Wid. Fiddle faddle, I know what it is: 'tis not the firſt time I have been marry'd, I hope: but I ſhall begin to think you don't deſign to do fairly by me, ſo I ſhall.

Wel. Why indeed, Mrs. *Lackitt*, I am afraid I can't do as fairly as I would by you. 'Tis what you muſt know firſt or laſt; and I ſhould be the worſt man in the world

to

to conceal it any longer; therefore I muſt own to you, that I am marry'd already.

Wid. Marry'd! you don't ſay ſo, I hope! how have you the conſcience to tell me ſuch a thing to my face! have you abus'd me then, fool'd and cheated me? What do you take me for, Mr. *Welldon?* Do you think I am to be ſerv'd at this rate? But you ſhan't find me the ſilly creature, you think me: I would have you to know, I underſtand better things, than to ruin my ſon without a valuable conſideration. If I can't have you, I can keep my money. Your ſiſter ſhan't have the catch of him ſhe expected: I won't part with a ſhilling to 'em.

Wel You made the match yourſelf, you know, you can't blame me.

Wid. Yes, yes, I can, and do blame you: you might have told me before you were marry'd.

Wel. I would not have told you now; but you follow'd me ſo cloſe, I was forc'd to it: indeed I am marry'd in *England*; but 'tis, as if I were not; for I have been parted from my wife a great while; and to do reaſon on both ſides, we hate one another heartily. Now I did deſign, and will marry you ſtill, if you'll have a little patience.

Wid. A likely buſineſs truly.

Wel. I have a friend in *England* that I will write to, to poiſon my wife, and then I can marry you with a good conſcience, if you love me, as you ſay you do; you'll conſent to that, I'm ſure.

Wid. And will he do it, do you think?

Wel. At the firſt word, or he is not the man I take him to be.

Wid. Well, you are a dear devil, Mr. *Welldon*; and would you poiſon your wife for me?

Wel. I would do any thing for you.

Wid. Well, I am mightily obliged to you. But 'twill be a great while before you can have an anſwer of your letter.

Wel. 'Twill be a great while indeed.

Wid. In the mean time, Mr. *Welldon* ——

Wel. Why in the mean time——Here's company: we'll settle that within, I'll follow you. [*Exit Widow.*

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. So, sir, you carry your business swimmingly: you have stolen a wedding, I hear.

Wel. Ay, my sister is marry'd: and I am very near being run away with myself.

Stan. The widow will have you then.

Wel. You come very seasonably to my rescue: *Jack Stanmore* is to be had, I hope.

Stan. At half an hour's warning.

Wel. I must advise with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Oroonoko *with* Aboan, Hottman, *and slaves.*

Oro. Impossible! nothing's impossible:
We know our strength only by being try'd.
If you object the mountains, rivers, woods
Unpassable, that lie before our march:
Woods we can set on fire; we swim by nature:
What can oppose us then, but we may tame?
All things submit to virtuous industry;
That we can carry with us, that is ours.

Slav. Great sir, we have attended all you said,
With silent joy and admiration:
And, were we only men, would follow such,
So great a leader, thro' the untry'd world.
But, oh! consider we have other names,
Husbands and fathers, and have things more dear
To us than life, our children and our wives,
Unfit for such an expedition:
What must become of them?

Oro. We will not wrong
The virtue of our women, to believe
There is a wife among 'em would refuse
To share her husband's fortune. What is hard,

We

We muſt make eaſy to 'em in our love; while we live,
And have our limbs, we can take care of them;
Therefore I ſtill propoſe to lead our march
Down to the ſea, and plant a colony:
Where, in our native innocence, we ſhall live
Free, and able to defend ourſelves;
'Till ſtreſs of weather, or ſome accident
Provide a ſhip for us.

Abo. An accident!
The luckieſt accident preſents itſelf;
The very ſhip, that brought and made us ſlaves,
Swims in the river ſtill; I ſee no cauſe
But we may ſeize on that.

Oro. It ſhall be ſo:
There is a juſtice in it pleaſes me.
Do you agree to it? [*To the ſlaves.*

Omnes. We follow you.

Oro. You do not reliſh it. [*To* Hottman.

Hot. I am afraid
You'll find it difficult and dangerous.

Abo. Are you the man to find the danger firſt?
You ſhou'd have giv'n example. Dangerous!
I thought you had not underſtood the word;
You, who would be the head, the hand, and heart:
Sir, I remember you, you can talk well;
I will not doubt but you'll maintain your word.

Oro. This fellow is not right, I'll try him further.
[*To* Aboan.
The danger will be certain to us all:
And death moſt certain in miſcarrying.
We muſt expect no mercy, if we fail:
Therefore our way muſt be not to expect:
We'll put it out of expectation,
By death upon the place, or liberty.
There is no mean, but death or liberty.
There's no man here, I hope, but comes prepar'd
For all that can befall him.

Abo. Death is all:
In moſt conditions of humanity
To be deſir'd, but to be ſhunn'd in none:

The remedy of many; wish of some;
And certain end of all.
If there be one amongst us, who can fear
The face of death appearing like a friend,
As in this cause of honour death must be;
How will he tremble, when he sees him dreſt
In the wild fury of our enemies,
In all the terrors of their cruelty?
For now if we should fall into their hands,
Could they invent a thousand murd'ring ways,
By racking torments, we should feel 'em all.

Hot. What will become of us?

Oro. Observe him now. [*To* Abo. *concerning* Hot.
I could die altogether, like a man:
As you, and you, and all of us may do:
But who can promise for his bravery
Upon the rack? where fainting, weary life,
Hunted thro' every limb, is forc'd to feel
An agonizing death of all its parts?
Who can bear this? resolve to be empal'd?
His skin flead off, and roasted yet alive?
The quivering flesh torn from his broken bones,
By burning pincers? who can bear these pains?

Hot. They are not to be born.
[*Discovering all the confusion of fear.*

Oro. You see him now, this man of mighty words!

Abo. How his eyes roll!

Oro. He cannot hide his fear:
I try'd him this way, and have found him out.

Abo. I cou'd not have believ'd it. Such a blaze,
And not a spark of fire!

Oro. His violence,
Made me suspect him first: now I'm convinc'd.

Abo. What shall we do with him?

Oro. He is not fit——

Abo. Fit! hang him, he is only fit to be
Just what he is, to live and die a slave:
The base companion of his servile fears.

Oro. We are not safe with him.

Abo. Do you think so?

Oro.

Oro. He'll certainly betray us.
Abo. That he ſhan't;
I can take care of that: I have a way
To take him off his evidence.
Oro. What way?
Abo. I'll ſtop his mouth before you, ſtab him here,
And then let him inform.
[*Going to ſtab* Hottman, Oroonoko *holds him.*
Oro. Thou art not mad?
Abo. I would ſecure ourſelves.
Oro. It ſhall not be this way; nay, cannot be:
His murder would alarm all the reſt.
Make 'em ſuſpect us of barbarity,
And, may be, fall away from our deſign.
We'll not ſet out in blood: we have, my friends,
This night to furniſh what we can provide,
For our ſecurity, and juſt defence.
If there be one among us we ſuſpect
Of baſeneſs, or vile fear, it will become
Our common care, to have our eyes on him:
I will not name the man.
Abo. You gueſs at him. [*To* Hottman.
Oro. To-morrow, early as the breaking day,
We rendezvous behind the citron grove.
That ſhip ſecur'd, we may tranſport ourſelves
To our reſpective homes: my father's kingdom
Shall open her wide arms to take you in,
And nurſe you for her own, adopt you all,
All, who will follow me.
Omnes. All, all follow you.
Oro. There I can give you all your liberty;
Beſtow its bleſſings, and ſecure 'em yours.
There you ſhall live with honour, as becomes
My fellow-ſufferers, and worthy friends:
This if we do ſucceed: but if we fall
In our attempt, 'tis nobler ſtill to die,
Than drag the galling yoke of ſlavery. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Welldon *and* Jack Stanmore.

Wel. YOU ſee, honeſt *Jack*, I have been induſtrious for you; you muſt take ſome pains now to ſerve yourſelf.

J. Stan. Gad, Mr. *Welldon*, I have taken a great deal of pains: and if the widow ſpeaks honeſtly, faith and troth, ſhe'll tell you what a pains-taker I am.

Wel. Fie, fie, not me: I am her huſband you know; ſhe won't tell me what pains you have taken with her: beſides, ſhe takes you for me.

J. Stan. That's true: I forgot you had marry'd her. But if you knew all ——

Wel. 'Tis no matter for my knowing all, if ſhe does—

J. Stan. Ay, ay, ſhe does know, and more than ever ſhe knew ſince ſhe was a woman, for the time; I will be bold to ſay: for I have done ——

Wel. The devil take you, for you'll never have done.

J. Stan. As old as ſhe is, ſhe has a wrinkle behind more than ſhe had, I believe —— For I have taught her, what ſhe never knew in her life before.

Wel. What care I what wrinkles ſhe has? or what you have taught her? if you'll let me adviſe you, you may; if not, you may prate on, and ruin the whole deſign.

J. Stan. Well, well, I have done.

Wel. Nobody, but your couſin, and you, and I, know any thing of this matter. I have marry'd Mrs. *Lackitt*, and put you to bed to her, which ſhe knows nothing of, to ſerve you: in two or three days I'll bring it about ſo, to reſign up my claim, and with her conſent, quietly to you.

J. Stan. But how will you do it?

Wel. That muſt be my buſineſs: in the mean time, if you ſhould make any noiſe, 'twill come to her ears, and be impoſſible to reconcile her.

J. Stan.

J. Stan. Nay, as for that, I know the way to reconcile her, I warrant you.

Wel. But how will you get her money? I am marry'd to her.

J. Stan. That I don't know indeed.

Wel. You muſt leave it to me, you find; all the pains I ſhall put you to, will be to be ſilent: you can hold your tongue for two or three days?

J. Stan. Truly, not well, in a matter of this nature: ſhould be very unwilling to loſe the reputation of this night's work, and the pleaſure of telling.

Wel. You muſt mortify that vanity a little: you will have time enough to brag and lie of your manhood, when you have her in a bare-fac'd condition to diſprove you.

J. Stan. Well, I'll try what I can do; the hopes of her money muſt do it.

Wel. You'll come at night again? 'tis your own buſineſs.

J. Stan. But you have the credit on't.

Wel. 'Twill be your own another day, as the widow ſays. Send your couſin to me; I want his advice.

J. Stan. I want to be recruited, I'm ſure, a good breakfaſt, and to bed: ſhe has rock'd my cradle ſufficiently. [*Exit.*

Wel. She would have a huſband; and if all be, as he ſays, ſhe has no reaſon to complain: but there's no relying on what the men ſay upon theſe occaſions: they have the benefit of their bragging, by recommending their abilities to other women: theirs is a trading eſtate, that lives upon credit, and increaſes by removing it out of one bank into another. Now poor women have not theſe opportunities; we muſt keep our ſtocks dead by us, at home, to be ready for a purchaſe, when it comes, a huſband, let him be never ſo dear, and be glad of him; or venture our fortunes abroad on ſuch rotten ſecurity, that the principal and intereſt, nay very often our perſons, are in danger. If the women would agree (which they never will) to call home their effects, how many proper gentlemen would ſneak into another way of liv-

ing, for want of being responsible in this? then husbands would be cheaper. Here comes the widow, she'll tell truth: she'll not bear false witness against her own interest, I know.

Enter Widow Lackitt.

Wel. Now, Mrs. *Lackitt.*

Wid. Well, well, *Lackitt*, or what you will now; now I am marry'd to you: I am very well pleas'd with what I have done, I assure you.

Wel. And with what I have done too, I hope.

Wid. Ah! Mr. *Wel'don!* I say nothing, but you're a dear man, and I did not think it had been in you.

Wel. I have more in me than you imagine.

Wid. No, no, you can't have more than I imagine; 'tis impossible to have more: you have enough for any woman, in an honest way, that I will say for you.

Wel. Then I find you are satisfied.

Wid. Satisfied! no indeed; I'm not to be satisfied, with you or without you: to be satisfied, is to have enough of you; now, 'tis a folly to lie: I shall never think I can have enough of you. I shall be very fond of you: wou'd you have me fond of you? what do you to me, to make me love you so well?

Wel. Can't you tell what?

Wid. Go; there's no speaking to you: you bring all the blood of one's body into one's face, so you do: why do you talk so?

Wel. Why, how do I talk?

Wid. You know how: but a little colour becomes me, I believe. How do I look to-day?

Wel. O! most lovingly, most amiably.

Wid. Nay, this can't be long a secret, I find, I shall discover it by my countenance.

Wel. The women will find you out, you look so chearfully.

Wid. But do I; do I really look so chearfully, so amiably? there's no such paint in the world as the natural glowing of a complexion. Let 'em find me out, if they please, poor creatures, I pity 'em: they envy me, I'm sure,

ſure, and would be glad to mend their looks upon the ſame occaſion. The young jil-flirting girls, forſooth, believe nobody muſt have a huſband but themſelves; but I would have 'em to know there are other things to be taken care of, beſides their green-ſickneſs.

Wel. Ay, ſure, or the phyſicians would have but little practice.

Wid. Mr. *Welldon*, what muſt I call you: I muſt have ſome pretty fond name or other for you? what ſhall I call you?

Wel. I thought you lik'd my own name.

Wid. Yes, yes, I like it; but I muſt have a nick-name for you: moſt women have nick-names for their huſbands——

Wel. Cuckold.

Wid. No, no; but 'tis very pretty before company; it looks negligent, and is the faſhion, you know.

Wel. To be negligent of their huſbands, it is indeed.

Wid. Nay then, I won't be in the faſhion; for I can never be negligent of dear Mr. *Welldon*: and to convince you, here's ſomething to encourage you not to be negligent of me. [*Gives him a purſe and a little caſket.* Five hundred pounds in gold in this; and jewels to the value of five hundred pounds more in this.

[Welldon *opens the caſket.*

Wel. Ay, marry, this will encourage me indeed.

Wid. There are comforts in marrying an elderly woman, Mr. *Welldon*. Now a young woman wou'd have fancy'd ſhe had paid you with her perſon, or had done you the favour.

Wel. What do you talk of young women? you are as young as any of 'em, in every thing, but their folly and ignorance.

Wid. And do you think me ſo? but I have no reaſon to ſuſpect you. Was not I ſeen at your houſe this morning, do you think?

Wel. You may venture again: you'll come at night, I ſuppoſe.

Wid. O dear! at night? ſo ſoon?

Wel. Nay, if you think it ſo ſoon.

Wid.

Wid. O! no, it is not for that Mr. *Welldon*; but——

Wel. You won't come then.

Wid. Won't! I don't ſay, I won't: that is not a word for a wife: if you command me——

Wel. To pleaſe yourſelf.

Wid. I will come to pleaſe you.

Wel. To pleaſe yourſelf, own it.

Wid. Well, well, to pleaſe myſelf then; you're the ſtrangeſt man in the world, nothing can 'ſcape you: you'll to the bottom of every thing.

Enter Daniel, Lucy *following*.

Dan. What would you have? what do you follow me for?

Luc. Why, mayn't I follow you? I muſt follow you now all the world over.

Dan. Hold you, hold you there: not ſo far by a mile or two; I have enough of your company already, by'r-lady; and ſomething to ſpare: you may go home to your brother, an you will; I have no farther to do with you.

Wid. Why, *Daniel*, child, thou art not out of thy wits ſure, art thou?

Dan. Nay, marry, I don't know; but I am very near, I believe; I am alter'd for the worſe mightily ſince you ſaw me; and ſhe has been the cauſe of it there.

Wid. How ſo, child?

Dan. I told you before what wou'd come on't, of putting me to bed to a ſtrange woman: but you would not be ſaid nay.

Wid. She is your wife now, child, you muſt love her.

Dan. Why, ſo I did, at firſt

Wid. But you muſt love her always.

Dan. Always! I lov'd her as long as I could, mother, and as long as loving was good, I believe, for I find now I don't care a fig for her.

Luc. Why, you lubberly, ſlovenly, miſbegotten block-head——

Wid. Nay, miſtreſs *Lucy*, ſay any thing elſe, and ſpare not: but as to his begetting, that touches me; he is as honeſtly

honeſtly begotten, tho' I ſay it, that he is the worſe again.

Luc. I ſee all good nature is thrown away upon you—

Wid. It was ſo with his father before him: he takes after him.

Luc. And therefore I will uſe you, as you deſerve, you Tony.

Wid. Indeed he deſerves bad enough; but don't call him out of his name, his name is *Daniel*, you know.

Dan. She may call me hermaphrodite, if ſhe will, for I hardly know whether I'm a boy or a girl.

Wel. A boy, I warrant thee, as long as thou liv'ſt.

Dan. Let her call me what ſhe pleaſes, mother, 'tis not her tongue that I am afraid of.

Luc. I will make ſuch a beaſt of thee, ſuch a cuckold!

Wid. O, pray, no, I hope, do nothing raſhly, Mrs. *Lucy*.

Luc. Such a cuckold I will make of thee!

Dan. I had rather be a cuckold, than what you wou'd make of me in a week, I'm ſure: I have no more manhood left in me already, than there is, ſaving the mark, in one of my mother's old under petticoats here.

Wid. Sirrah, ſirrah, meddle with your wife's petticoats, and let your mother's alone, you ungracious bird, you.

[*Beats him.*

Dan. Why is the devil in the woman? what have I ſaid now? do you know, if you were aſk'd, I trow? but you are all of a bundle; ev'n hang together; he that unties you, makes a rod for his own tail; and ſo he will find it, that has any thing to do with you.

Wid. Ay, rogue enough, you ſhall find it: I have a rod for your tail ſtill.

Dan. No wife, and I care not.

Wid. I'll ſwinge you into better manners, you booby.

[*Beats him off, Exit.*

Wel. You have conſummated our project upon him.

Luc. Nay, if I have a limb of the fortune, I care not who has the whole body of the fool.

Wel. That you ſhall, and a large one, I promiſe you.

Luc. Have you heard the news? they talk of an *Engliſh* ſhip in the river.

Wel.

Wel. I have heard on't: and am preparing to receive it, as faſt as I can.

Luc. There's ſomething the matter too with the ſlaves, ſome diſturbance or other; I don't know what 'tis.

Wel. So much the better ſtill: we fiſh in troubled waters: we ſhall have fewer eyes upon us. Pray, go you home, and be ready to aſſiſt me in your part of the deſign.

Luc. I can't fail in mine. [*Exit.*

Wel. The widow has furniſh'd me, I thank her, to carry it on. Now I have got a wife, 'tis high time to think of getting a huſband. I carry my fortune about me; a thouſand pounds in gold and jewels. Let me ſee—— 'twill be a conſiderable truſt: and I think, I ſhall lay it out to advantage.

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. So *Welldon*, *Jack* has told me of his ſucceſs, and his hopes of marrying the widow by your means.

Wel. I have ſtrain'd a point, *Stanmore*, upon your account, to be ſerviceable to your family.

Stan. I take it upon my account; and am very much oblig'd to you. But here we are all in an uproar.

Wel. So they ſay, what's the matter?

Stan. A mutiny among the ſlaves: *Oroonoko* is at the head of 'em. Our governor is gone out with his raſcally militia againſt 'em, what it may come to nobody knows.

Wel. For my part, I ſhall do as well as the reſt: but I'm concern'd for my ſiſter, and couſin, whom I expect in the ſhip from *England*.

Stan. There's no danger of 'em.

Wel. I have a thouſand pounds here, in gold and jewels, for my couſin's uſe, that I would more particularly take care of; 'tis too great a ſum to venture at home; and I would not have her wrong'd of it; therefore, to ſecure it, I think my beſt way will be, to put it into your own keeping.

Stan. You have a very good opinion of my honeſty.

[*Takes the purſe and caſket.*

Wel. I have indeed; if any thing ſhould happen to me, in

in this buſtle, as no body is ſecure of accidents, I know you will take my couſin into your protect on and care.

Stan. You may be ſure on't.

Wel. If you hear ſhe is dead, as ſhe may be, then I deſire you to accept of the thouſand pounds as a legacy, and token of my friendſhip; my ſiſter is provided for.

Stan. Why, you amaze me: but you are never the nearer dying, I hope, for making your will?

Wel. Not a jot; but I love to be before-hand with fortune. If ſhe comes ſafe; this is not a place for a ſingle woman, you know; pray ſee her marry'd as ſoon as you can.

Stan. If ſhe be as handſome as her picture, I can promiſe her a huſband.

Wel. If you like her, when you ſee her, I wiſh nothing ſo much as to have you marry her yourſelf.

Stan. From what I have heard of her, and my engagements to you, it muſt be her fault, if I don't: I hope to have her from your own hand.

Wel. And I hope to give her to you, for all this.

Stan. Ay, ay, hang theſe melancholy reflections. Your generoſity has engag'd all my ſervices.

Wel. I always thought you worth making a friend.

Stan. Yon ſhan't find your good opinion thrown away upon me: I am in your debt, and ſhall think ſo as long as I live. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter on one ſide of the Stage Oroonoko, Aboan, *with the Slaves.* Imoinda *with a bow and quiver, the Women, ſome leading, others carrying their children upon their backs.*

Oro. The women, with their children, fall behind.
Imoinda, you muſt not expoſe yourſelf:
Retire, my love: I almoſt fear for you.

Imo. I fear no danger: life or death I will
Enjoy with you.

Oro. My perſon is your guard.

Abo. Now, ſir, blame yourſelf: if you had not prevented my cutting his throat, that coward there had not diſcover'd us; he comes now to upbraid you.

Enter

Enter on the other side Governor, talking to Hottman, *with his rabble.*

Gov. This is the very thing I would have wish'd.
Your honest service to the government [*To* Hottman.
Shall be rewarded with your liberty.
Abo. His honest service! call it what it is,
His villainy, the service of his fear:
If he pretends to honest services,
Let him stand out, and meet me like a man. [*Advancing.*
Oro. Hold, you; and you who come against us, hold!
I charge you in a general good to all,
And wish I cou'd command you, to prevent
The bloody havock of the murd'ring sword.
I would not urge destruction uncompell'd:
But if you follow fate, you find it here.
The bounds are set, the limits of our lives:
Between us lies the gaping gulph of death,
To swallow all: who first advances——

Enter the Captain with his crew.

Capt. Here, here, here they are, governor:
What, seize upon my ship!
Come, boys, fall on——
[*Advancing first,* Oroonoko *kills him.*
Oro. Thou art fall'n indeed:
Thy own blood be upon thee.
Gov. Rest it there:
He did deserve his death. Take him away.
[*The body remov'd.*
You see, sir, you, and those mistaken men
Must be our witnesses, we do not come
As enemies, and thirsting for your blood.
If we desir'd your ruin, the revenge
Of our companion's death, had push'd it on.
But that we over-look, in a regard
To common safety, and the public good.
Oro. Regard that public good: draw off your men.
And leave us to our fortune: we're resolv'd.
Gov. Resolv'd, on what? your resolutions

Are

Are broken, overturn'd, prevented, loſt:
What fortune now can you raiſe out of 'em?
Nay, grant we ſhould draw off, what can you do?
Where can you move? what more can you reſolve?
Unleſs it be to throw yourſelves away.
Famine muſt eat you up, if you go on.
You ſee, our numbers could with eaſe compel
What we requeſt; and what do we requeſt?
Only to ſave yourſelves.

[*The women and their children gathering about the men.*

Oro. I'll here no more.

Women. Hear him, hear him. He takes no care of us.

Gov. To thoſe poor wretches who have been ſeduc'd,
And led away, to all, and every one,
We offer a full pardon——

Oro. Then fall on. [*Preparing to engage.*

Gov. Lay hold upon't, before it be too late,
Pardon and mercy.

[*The women clinging about the men, they leave* Oroonoko, *and fall upon their faces, crying out for pardon.*

Slaves. Pardon, mercy, pardon.

Oro. Let 'em go all; now, governor, I ſee,
I own the folly of my enterprize,
The raſhneſs of this action, and muſt bluſh
Quite through this veil of night, a whitely ſhame,
To think I could deſign to make thoſe free
Who were by nature ſlaves; wretches deſign'd
To be their maſters dogs, and lick their feet.
Whip, whip 'em to the knowledge of your gods,
Your chriſtian gods, who ſuffer you to be
Unjuſt, diſhoneſt, cowardly, and baſe,
And give 'em your excuſe for being ſo.
I wou'd not live on the ſame earth with creatures,
That only have the faces of their kind:
Why ſhould they look like men, who are not ſo?
When they put off their noble natures, for
The groveling quality of down-caſt beaſts,
I wiſh they had their tails.

Abo. Then we ſhould know 'em.

Oro. We were too few before for victory.
We're ſtill enow to die. [*To* Imoinda, Aboan.

Enter Blandford.

Gov. Live, royal ſir;
Live, and be happy long on your own terms:
Only conſent to yield, and you ſhall have
What terms you can propoſe, for you, and yours.
Oro. Conſent to yield! ſhall I betray myſelf?
Gov. Alas! we cannot fear, that your ſmall force,
The force of two, with a weak woman's arm,
Should conquer us. I ſpeak in the regard
And honour of your worth, in my deſire
And forwardneſs to ſerve ſo great a man.
I would not have it lie upon my thoughts,
That I was the occaſion of the fall
Of ſuch a prince, whoſe courage carried on
In a more noble cauſe, would well deſerve
The empire of the world.
Oro. You can ſpeak fair.
Gov. Your undertaking, tho' it would have brought
So great a loſs on us, we muſt all ſay
Was generous, and noble; and ſhall be
Regarded only as the fire of youth,
That will break out ſometimes in gallant ſouls;
We'll think it but the natural impulſe,
A raſh impatience of liberty:
No otherwiſe.
Oro. Think it what you will.
I was not born to render an account
Of what I do, to any but myſelf. [Blan. *comes forward.*
Blan. I'm glad you have proceeded by fair means.
[*To the Governor.*
I came to be a mediator.
Gov. Try what you can work upon him.
Oro. Are you come againſt me too?
Blan. Is this to come againſt you?
[*Offering his ſword to* Oroonoko.
Unarm'd to put myſelf into your hands?
I come, I hope, to ſerve you.
Oro. You have ſerv'd me:
I thank you for't; and I am pleas'd to think

You

You were my friend, while I had need of one:
But now 'tis paſt; this farewel, and be gone.
[*Embraces him.*

Blan. It is not paſt, and I muſt ſerve you ſtill.
I would make up theſe breaches, which the ſword
Will widen more; and cloſe us all in love.

Oro. I know what I have done, and I ſhould be
A child to think they ever can forgive:
Forgive! were there but that, I would not live
To be forgiven: is there a power on earth,
That I can ever need forgiveneſs from?

Blan. You ſhall not need it.

Oro. No, I will not need it.

Blan. You ſee he offers you your own conditions,
For you and yours.

Oro. I muſt capitulate?
Precariouſly compound, on ſtinted terms,
To ſave my life?

Blan. Sir, he impoſes none.
You make 'em for your own ſecurity.
If your great heart cannot deſcend to treat,
In adverſe fortune, with an enemy:
Yet ſure, your honour's ſafe, you may accept
Offers of peace, and ſafety from a friend.

Gov. He will rely on what you ſay to him: [*To* Blan.
Offer him what you can, I will confirm
And make all good; be you my pledge of truſt.

Blan. I'll anſwer with my life for all he ſays.

Gov. Ay, do, and pay the forfeit if you pleaſe. [*Aſide.*

Blan. Conſider, ſir, can you conſent to throw
That bleſſing from you, you ſo hardly found, [*Of* Imo.
And ſo much valu'd once?

Oro. *Imoinda!* Oh!
'Tis ſhe that holds me on this argument
Of tedious life: I could reſolve it ſoon,
Were this curs'd being only in debate.
But my *Imoinda* ſtruggles in my ſoul;
She makes a coward of me: I confeſs
I am afraid to part with her in death:
And more afraid of life to loſe her here.

Blan.

Blan. This way you muſt loſe her, think upon
The weakneſs of her ſex, made yet more weak
With her condition, requiring reſt,
And ſoft indulging eaſe, to nurſe your hopes,
And make you a glad father.

Oro. There I feel
A father's fondneſs, and a huſband's love.
They ſeize upon my heart, ſtrain all its ſtrings,
To pull me to 'em, from my ſtern reſolve.
Huſband, and father! all the melting art
Of eloquence lives in thoſe ſoft'ning names.
Methinks I ſee the babe, with infant hands,
Pleading for life, and begging to be born:
Shall I forbid his birth; deny him light?
The heav'nly comforts of all-cheering light?
And make the womb the dungeon of his death?
His bleeding mother his ſad monument?
Theſe are the calls of nature, that call loud,
They will be heard, and conquer in their cauſe:
He muſt not be a man, who can reſiſt 'em.
No, my *Imoinda!* I will venture all
To ſave thee, and that little innocent:
The world may be a better friend to him,
Than I have found it. Now I yield myſelf:
[*Gives up his ſword.*
The conflict's paſt, and we are in your hands.
[*Several men get about* Oroonoko *and* Aboan, *and ſeize them.*

Gov. So you ſhall find you are. Diſpoſe of them.
As I commanded you.

Blan. Good heav'n forbid! you cannot mean ——

Gov. This is not your concern.
[*To* Blandford *who goes to* Oroonoko.
I muſt take care of you. [*To* Imoinda.

Imo. I'm at the end
Of all my care: here I will die with him. [*Holding* Oro.

Oro. You ſhall not force her from me. [*He holds her.*

Gov. Then I muſt [*They force her from him.*
Try other means, and conquer force by force:
Break, cut off his hold, bring her away.

Imo.

Imo. I do not aſk to live, kill me but here.

Oro. O bloody dogs! inhuman murderers!

[Imoinda *forc'd out of one door by the governor, and others.* Oroonoko *and* Aboan *hurried out of another.* [Exeunt.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Stanmore, Lucy, *and* Charlott.

Stan. 'TIS ſtrange we cannot hear of him: can nobody give an account of him?

Luc. Nay, I begin to deſpair; I give him for gone.

Stan. Not ſo, I hope.

Luc. There were ſo many diſturbances in this deviliſh country! would we had never ſeen it.

Stan. This is but a cold welcome for you, madam, after ſo troubleſome a voyage.

Char. A cold welcome indeed, ſir, without my couſin *Welldon:* he was the beſt friend I had in the world.

Stan. He was a very good friend of your's indeed, madam.

Luc. They have made him away, murder'd him for his money, I believe; he took a conſiderable ſum with him, I know, that has been his ruin.

Stan. That has done him no injury, to my knowledge: for this morning he put into my cuſtody what you ſpeak of, I ſuppoſe, a thouſand pounds, for the uſe of this lady.

Char. I was always oblig'd to him; and he has ſhewn his care of me, in placing my little affairs in ſuch honourable hands.

Stan. He gave me a particular charge of you, madam; very particular, ſo particular, that you will be ſurpris'd when I tell you.

Char. What, pray ſir?

Stan. I am engag'd to get you a huſband, I promis'd that

that before I ſaw you; and now I have ſeen you, you muſt give me leave to offer you myſelf.

Luc. Nay, couſin, never be coy upon the matter; to my knowledge, my brother always deſign'd you for this gentleman.

Stan. You hear, madam, he has given me his intereſt, and 'tis the favour I would have begg'd of him. Lord! you are ſo like him——

Char. That you are oblig'd to ſay you like me for his ſake.

Stan. I ſhould be glad to love you for your own.

Char. If I ſhould conſent to the fine things you can ſay to me, how would you look at laſt, to find 'em thrown away upon an old acquaintance?

Stan. An old acquaintance!

Char. Lord, how eaſily are you men to be impos'd upon! I am no couſin newly arriv'd from *England*, not I; but the very *Welldon* you wot of.

Stan. *Welldon!*

Char. Not murder'd nor made away, as my ſiſter would have you believe, but am in very good health, your old friend in breeches that was, and now your humble ſervant in petticoats.

Stan. I'm glad we have you again. But what ſervice can you do me in petticoats, pray?

Char. Can't you tell what?

Stan. Not I, by my troth: I have found my friend, and loſt my miſtreſs, it ſeems, which I did not expect from your petticoats.

Char. Come, come, you have had a friend of your miſtreſs long enough, 'tis high time now to have a miſtreſs of your friend.

Stan. What do you ſay?

Char. I am a woman, ſir.

Stan. A woman!

Char. As arrant a woman as you would have had me but now, I aſſure you

Stan. And at my ſervice?

Char. If you have any for me in petticoats.

Stan. Yes, yes, I ſhall find you employment.

Char.

Char. You wonder at my proceeding, I believe.

Stan. 'Tis a little extraordinary, indeed.

Char. I have taken ſome pains to come into your favour.

Stan. You might have had it cheaper a great deal.

Char. I might have marry'd you in the perſon of my *Engliſh* couſin, but could not conſent to cheat you, even in the thing I had a mind to.

Stan. 'Twas done as you do every thing.

Char. I need not tell you, I made that little plot, and carry'd it on only for this opportunity. I was reſolv'd to ſee whether you lik'd me as a woman, or not: if I had found you indifferent, I would have endeavour'd to have been ſo too: but you ſay you like me, and therefore I have ventur'd to diſcover the truth.

Stan. Like you! I like you ſo well, that I'm afraid you won't think marriage a proof on't: ſhall I give you any other?

Char. No, no, I'm inclin'd to believe you, and that ſhall convince me. At more leiſure I'll ſatisfy you how I came to be in man's cloaths; for no ill, I aſſure you, tho' I have happen'd to play the rogue in 'em: they have aſſiſted me in marrying my ſiſter, and have gone a great way in befriending your couſin *Jack* with the widow. Can you forgive me for pimping for your family?

Enter Jack Stanmore.

Stan. So, *Jack*, what news with you?

J. Stan. I am the forepart of the widow, you know; ſhe's coming after with the body of the family, the young 'ſquire in her hand, my ſon-in-law that is to be, with the help of Mr. *Welldon*.

Char. Say you ſo, ſir? [*Clapping* Jack *upon the back.*

Enter Widow Lackitt *with her ſon* Daniel.

Wid. So, Mrs. *Lucy*, I have brought him about again, I have chaſtis'd him, I have made him as ſupple as a glove for your wearing, to pull on, or throw off, at your pleaſure. Will you ever rebel again? will you, ſirrah? but come, come, down on your marrow-bones, and aſk her

 forgive-

forgiveneſs. [Daniel *kneels.*] Say after me: Pray, forſooth wife.

Daniel. Pray forſooth wife.

Luc. Well, well, this is a day of good-nature, and ſo I take you into favour: but firſt take the oath of allegiance. [*He kiſſes her hand, and riſes.*] If ever you do ſo again ——

Dan. Nay marry if I do, I ſhall have the worſt on't.

Luc. Here's a ſtranger, forſooth, would be glad to be known to you, a ſiſter of mine, pray ſalute her.

[*Starts at* Charlott.

Wid. Your ſiſter! Mrs. *Lucy!* what do you mean? This is your brother, Mr. *Welldon*; do you think I do not know Mr. *Welldon?*

Lucy. Have a care what you ſay: this gentleman's about marrying her: you may ſpoil all.

Wid. Fiddle, faddle, what! you would put a trick upon me.

Char. No faith, widow, the trick is over; it has taken ſufficiently, and now I will teach you the trick, to prevent your being cheated another time.

Wel. How! cheated, Mr. *Welldon!*

Char. Why, ay, you will always take things by the wrong handle, I ſee you will have me, Mr. *Welldon*: I grant you I was Mr *Welldon* a little while to pleaſe you, or ſo; but Mr. *Stanmore* here has perſuaded me into a woman again.

Wid. A woman! pray let me ſpeak with you. [*Drawing her aſide.*] You are not in earneſt, I hope? A woman!

Char. Really a woman.

Wid. Gads my life! I could not be cheated in every thing: I know a man from a woman at theſe years, or the devil's in't. Pray, did not you marry me?

Char. You wou'd have it ſo.

Wid. And did not I give you a thouſand pounds this morning?

Char. Yes indeed, 'twas more than I deſerv'd: but you had your pennyworth for your penny, I ſuppoſe: you ſeem'd to be pleas'd with your bargain.

Wid.

Wid. A rare bargain I have made on't, truly. I have laid out my money to fine purpoſe upon a woman.

Char. You would have a huſband, and I provided for you as well as I could.

Wid. Yes, yes, you have provided for me.

Char. And you have paid me very well for't, I thank you.

Wid. 'Tis very well; I may be with child too, for ought I know, and may go look for the father.

Char. Nay if you think ſo, 'tis time to look about you indeed. Ev'n make up the matter as well as you can, I adviſe you as a friend, and let us live neighbourly and lovingly together.

Wid. I have nothing elſe for it, that I know now.

Char. For my part, Mrs. *Lackitt*, your thouſand pounds will engage me not to laugh at you. Then my ſiſter is marry'd to your ſon, he is to have half your eſtate, I know; and indeed they may live upon it, very comfortably to themſelves, and very creditably to you.

Wid. Nay, I can blame nobody but myſelf.

Char. You have enough for a huſband ſtill, and that you may beſtow upon honeſt *Jack Stanmore*.

Wid. Is he the man then?

Char. He is the man you are oblig'd to.

J. Stan. Yes, faith, widow, I am the man! I have done fairly by you, you find, you know what you have to truſt to before hand.

Wid. Well, well, I ſee you will have me, ev'n marry me, and make an end of the buſineſs.

Stan. Why, that's well ſaid, now we are all agreed, and all provided for.

Enter a Servant to Stanmore.

Serv. Sir, Mr. *Blandford* deſires you to come to him, and bring as many of your friends as you can with you.

Stan. I come to him. You'll all go along with me. Come, young gentleman, marriage is the faſhion, you ſee, you muſt like it now.

Dan. If I don't, how ſhall I help myſelf?

Luc. Nay, you may hang yourſelf in the nooſe, if you pleaſe, but you'll never get out on't with ſtruggling.

Dan. Come then, let's ev'n jogg on in the old road.
Cuckold, or worſe, I muſt be now contented:
I'm not the firſt has marry'd, and repented. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter Governor with Blandford, *and Planters.*

Blan. Have you no reverence of future fame?
No awe upon your actions, from the tongues,
The cenſuring tongues of men, that will be free?
If you confeſs humanity, believe
There is a God, or devil to reward
Our doings here, do not provoke your fate.
The hand of heav'n is arm'd againſt theſe crimes,
With hotter thunder-bolts, prepar'd to ſhoot,
And nail you to the earth, a ſad example;
A monument of faithleſs infamy.

Enter Stanmore, J. Stanmore, Charlott, Lucy, *Widow and* Daniel.

So, *Stanmore*, you I know, the women too
Will join with me: 'tis *Oroonoko*'s cauſe,
A lover's cauſe, a wretched woman's cauſe,
That will become your interceſſion. [*To the women.*

1 *Plan.* Never mind 'em, Governor; he ought to be made an example for the good of the plantation.

2 *Plan.* Ay, ay, 'twill frighten the negroes from attempting the like again.

1 *Plan.* What, riſe againſt their lords and maſters! at this rate no man is ſafe from his own ſlaves.

2 *Plan.* No, no more he is. Therefore one and all, Governor, we declare for hanging.

Om. Plan. Ay, ay, hang him, hang him.

Wid. What! hang him! O! forbid it, Governor.

Char. Luc. We all petition for him.

J. Stan. They are for a holiday; guilty or not, is not the buſineſs, hanging is their ſport.

Blan. We are not ſure ſo wretched, to have theſe,

The

The rabble, judge for us: the changing croud;
The arbitrary guard of fortune's power,
Who wait to catch the ſentence of her frowns,
And hurry all to ruin ſhe condemns.

Stan. So far from farther wrong, that 'tis a ſhame
He ſhould be where he is: good Governor,
Order his liberty: he yielded up
Himſelf, his all, at your diſcretion.

Blan. Diſcretion! no, he yielded on your word;
And I am made the cautionary pledge,
The gage, and hoſtage of your keeping it.
Remember, ſir, he yielded on your word;
Your word! which honeſt men will think ſhould be
The laſt reſort of truth, and truſt on earth:
There's no appeal beyond it, but to heav'n:
An oath is a recognizance to heav'n,
Binding us over, in the courts above,
To plead to the indictment of our crimes:
That thoſe who 'ſcape this world ſhould ſuffer there.
But in the common intercourſe of men,
(Where the dread Majeſty is not invok'd,
His honour not immediately concern'd,
Not made a party in our intereſts,)
Our word is all to be rely'd upon.

Wid. Come, come, you'll be as good as your word, we know.

Stan. He's out of all power of doing any harm now, if he were diſpos'd to it.

Char. But he is not diſpos'd to it.

Blan. To keep him, where he is, will make him ſoon
Find out ſome deſperate way to liberty:
He'll hang himſelf, or daſh out his mad brains.

Char. Pray try him by gentle means; we'll all be ſureties for him.

Om. All, all.

Luc. We will anſwer for him now.

Gov. Well, you will have it ſo, do what you pleaſe, juſt what you will with him, I give you leave. [*Exit.*

Blan. We thank you, ſir; this way, pray come with me.
[*Exeunt.*

The SCENE *drawn, shews* Oroonoko *upon his back, his legs and arms stretched out, and chained to the ground.*

Enter Blandford, Stanmore, *&c.*

Blan. O miserable sight! help every one,
Assist me all to free him from his chains.
[*They help him up, and bring him forward, looking down.*
Most injur'd prince! how shall we clear ourselves?
We cannot hope you will vouchsafe to hear,
Or credit what we say in the defence,
And cause of our suspected innocence.
Stan. We are not guilty of your injuries,
No way consenting to 'em; but abhor,
Abominate, and loath his cruelty.
Blan. It is our curse, but make it not our crime;
A heavy curse upon us, that we must
Share any thing in common, ev'n the light,
The elements, and seasons, with such men,
Whose principles, like the fam'd dragon's teeth,
Scatter'd, and sown, would shoot a harvest up
Of fighting mischiefs, to confound themselves,
And ruin all about 'em.
Stan. Profligates!
Whose bold *Titanian* impiety
Would once again pollute their mother earth,
Force her to teem with her old monstrous brood
Of giants, and forget the race of men.
Blan. We are not so: believe us innocent.
We come prepar'd with all our services,
To offer a redress of your base wrongs.
Which way shall we employ 'em?
Stan. Tell us, sir,
If there is any thing that can atone;
But nothing can; that may be some amends——
Oro. If you would have me think you are not all
Confederates, all accessary to
The base injustice of your governor;
If you would have me live, as you appear
Concern'd for me, if you would have me live

To

To thank, and bless you, there is yet a way
To tie me ever to your honest love:
Bring my *Imoinda* to me; give me her,
To charm my sorrows, and, if possible,
I'll sit down with my wrongs; never to rise
Against my fate, or think of vengeance more.
Blan. Be satisfy'd, you may depend upon us,
We'll bring her safe to you, and suddenly.
Char. We will not leave you in so good a work.
Wid. No, no, we'll go with you.
Blan. In the mean time
Endeavour to forget, sir, and forgive:
And hope a better fortune. [*Exeunt.*

Oroonoko *alone.*

Oro. Forget! forgive! I must indeed forget,
When I forgive; but while I am a man,
In flesh, that bears the living marks of shame,
The print of his dishonourable chains,
My memory still rousing up my wrongs,
I never can forgive this governor;
This villain; the disgrace of trust, and place,
And just contempt of delegated power.
What shall I do? if I declare myself,
I know him, he will sneak behind his guard
Of followers, and brave me in his fears.
Else, lion like, with my devouring rage,
I would rush on him, fasten on his throat,
Tear a wide passage to his treacherous heart,
And that way lay him open to the world. [*Pausing.*
If I should turn his christian arts on him,
Promise him, speak him fair, flatter, and creep
With fawning steps, to get within his faith,
I could betray him then, as he has me.
But am I sure by that to right myself?
Lying's a certain mark of cowardice:
And when the tongue forgets its honesty,
The heart and hand may drop their functions too,
And nothing worthy be resolv'd, or done.
The man must go together, bad, or good:

In one part frail, he ſoon grows weak in all.
Honour ſhou'd be concern'd in honour's cauſe;
That is not to be cur'd by contraries,
As bodies are, whoſe health is often drawn
From rankeſt poiſons. Let me but find out
An honeſt remedy, I have the hand,
A miniſtring hand, that will apply it home. [*Exit.*

SCENE *the Governor's houſe.*

Enter Governor.

Gov. I would not have her tell me, ſhe conſents:
In favour of the ſexes modeſty,
That ſtill ſhould be preſum'd, becauſe there is
A greater impudence in owning it,
Than in allowing all that we can do.
This truth I know, and yet againſt myſelf,
(So unaccountable are lovers ways)
I talk, and loſe the opportunities,
Which love, and ſhe, expects I ſhould employ;
Ev'n ſhe expects: for when a man has ſaid
All that is fit, to ſave the decency,
The women know the reſt is to be done.
I will not diſappoint her. [*Going.*

Enter to him Blandford, *the* Stanmores, Daniel, *Mrs* Lackitt, Charlott, *and* Lucy.

Wid. O Governor! I'm glad we lit upon you.

Gov. Why! what's the matter?

Char. Nay, nothing extraordinary. But one good action draws on another. You have given the prince his freedom; now we come a begging for his wife: you won't refuſe us.

Gov. Refuſe you. No, no, what have I to do to refuſe you?

Wid. You won't refuſe to ſend her to him, ſhe means.

Gov. I ſend her to him!

Wid. We have promis'd him to bring her.

Gov. You do very well; 'tis kindly done of you: ev'n carry her to him, with all my heart.

Luc.

Luc. You muſt tell us where ſhe is.

Gov. I tell you! why, don't you know?

Blan. Your ſervants ſay ſhe's in the houſe.

Gov. No, no, I brought her home at firſt indeed; but I thought it would not look well to keep her here: I remov'd her in the hurry, only to take care of her. What! ſhe belongs to you: I have nothing to do with her.

Char. But where is ſhe now, ſir?

Gov. Why, faith, I can't ſay certainly: you'll hear of her at *Parham* houſe, I ſuppoſe: there, or thereabouts: I think I ſent her there.

Blan. I'll have an eye on him. [*Aſide.*

[*Exeunt all but the Governor.*

Gov. I have ly'd myſelf into a little time;
And muſt employ it: they'll be here again;
But I muſt be before 'em.

[*Going out, he meets* Imoinda, *and ſeizes her.*

Are you come!
I'll court no longer for a happineſs
That is in mine own keeping: you may ſtill
Refuſe to grant, ſo I have power to take.
The man that aſks deſerves to be deny'd.

[*She diſengages one hand, and draws his ſword from his ſide upon him; Governor ſtarts and retires,* Blanford *enters behind him.*

Imo. He does indeed, that aſks unworthily.

Blan. You hear her, ſir, that aſks unworthily.

Gov. You are no judge.

Blan. I am of my own ſlave.

Gov. Be gone, and leave us.

Blan. When you let her go.

Gov. To faſten upon you.

Blan. I muſt defend myſelf.

Imo. Help, murder, help.

[Imoinda *retreats towards the door, favour'd by* Blandford, *when they are clos'd, ſhe throws down the ſword, and runs out, governor takes up his ſword, they fight, cloſe, and fall,* Blandford *upon him. Servants enter, and part 'em.*

Gov. She ſhall not 'ſcape me ſo. I've gone too far,
Not to go farther. Curſe on my delay!
But yet ſhe is, and ſhall be in my power.
Blan. Nay then it is the war of honeſty:
I know you, and will ſave you from yourſelf.
Gov. All come along with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *The laſt.*

Enter Oroonoko.

Oro. To honour bound! and yet a ſlave to love!
I am diſtracted by their rival powers,
And both will be obey'd. O great revenge!
Thou raiſer, and reſtorer of fal'n fame!
Let me not be unworthy of thy aid,
For ſtopping in thy courſe: I ſtill am thine:
But can't forget I am *Imoinda*'s too.
She calls me from my wrongs to reſcue her.
No man condemn me, who has ever felt
A woman's power, or try'd the force of love:
All tempers yield, and ſoften in thoſe fires;
Our honours, intereſts reſolving down,
Run in the gentle current of our joys:
But not to ſink, and drown our memory:
We mount again to action, like the ſun,
That riſes from the boſom of the ſea,
To run his glorious race of light anew,
And carry on the world. Love, love will be
My firſt ambition, and my fame the next.

Enter Aboan *bloody.*

My eyes are turn'd againſt me, and combine
With my ſworn enemies, to repreſent
This ſpectacle of honour. *Aboan!*
My ever faithful friend!
Abo. I have no name,
That can diſtinguiſh me from the vile earth,
To which I'm going: a poor, abject worm,
That crawl'd a while upon a buſtling world,
And now am trampled to my duſt again.
Oro. I ſee thee gaſh'd, and mangled.

Abo.

Abo. Spare my ſhame
To tell how they have us'd me: but believe
The hangman's hand would have been merciful.
Do not you ſcorn me, ſir, to think I can
Intend to live under this infamy.
I do not come for pity, to complain.
I've ſpent an honourable life with you;
The earlieſt ſervant of your riſing fame,
And would attend it with my lateſt care:
My life was yours, and ſo ſhall be my death.
You muſt not live.
Bending, and ſinking, I have dragg'd my ſteps
Thus far, to tell you that you cannot live:
To warn you of thoſe ignominious wrongs,
Whips, rods, and all the inſtruments of death,
Which I have felt, and are prepar'd for you.
This was the duty that I had to pay.
'Tis done, and now I beg to be diſcharg'd.
Oro. What ſhall I do for thee?
Abo. My body tires,
And will not bear me off to liberty;
I ſhall again be taken, made a ſlave.
A ſword, a dagger yet would reſcue me.
I have not ſtrength to go to find out death,
You muſt direct him to me.
Oro. Here he is, [*Gives him a dagger.*
The only preſent I can make thee now:
And next the honourable means of life,
I would beſtow the honeſt means of death.
Abo. I cannot ſtay to thank you. If there is
A being after this, I ſhall be yours
In the next world, your faithful ſlave again.
This is to try [*Stabs himſelf.*] I had a living ſenſe
Of all your royal favours, but this laſt
Strikes thro' my heart. I will not ſay farewel,
For you muſt follow me. [*Dies.*
Oro. In life, and death,
The guardian of my honour! Follow thee!
I ſhould have gone before thee: then perhaps
Thy fate had been prevented. All his care

Was

Was to preſerve me from the barbarous rage
That worry'd him, only for being mine.
Why, why, ye gods! why am I ſo accurſt,
That it muſt be a reaſon of your wrath,
A guilt, a crime ſufficient to the fate
Of any one, but to belong to me?
My friend has found it, and my wife will ſoon:
My wife! the very fear's too much for life:
I can't ſupport it. Where? *Imoinda!* Oh!

[*Going out, ſhe meets him, running into his arms.*

Thou boſom-ſoftneſs! down of all my cares!
I could recline my thoughts upon this breaſt
To a forgetfulneſs of all my griefs,
And yet be happy: but it will not be.
Thou art diſorder'd, pale, and out of breath!
If fate purſues thee, find a ſhelter here.
What is it thou wouldſt tell me?

Imo. 'Tis in vain to call him villain.

Oro. Call him governor: is it not ſo?

Imo. There's not another ſure.

Oro. Villain's the common name of mankind here,
But his moſt properly. What! what of him?
I fear to be reſolv'd, and muſt enquire.
He had thee in his power.

Imo. I bluſh to think it.

Oro. Bluſh! to think what?

Imo. That I was in his power.

Oro. He cou'd not uſe it?

Imo. What can't ſuch men do?

Oro. But did he? durſt he?

Imo. What he cou'd, he dar'd.

Oro. His own gods damn him then! for ours have none,
No puniſhment for ſuch unheard-of crimes.

Imo. This monſter, cunning in his flatteries,
When he had weary'd all his uſeleſs arts,
Leapt out, fierce as a beaſt of prey, to ſeize me.
I trembl'd, fear'd.

Oro. I fear and tremble now.
What cou'd preſerve thee? what deliver thee?

Imo. That worthy man, you us'd to call your friend—

Oro. Blandford?
Imo. Came in, and ſav'd me from his rage.
Oro. He was a friend indeed to reſcue thee!
And for his ſake, I'll think it poſſible
A chriſtian may be yet an honeſt man.
Imo. Oh! did you know what I have ſtruggled through,
To ſave me yours, ſure you would promiſe me
Never to ſee me forc'd from you again.
Oro. To promiſe thee! O! do I need to promiſe?
But there is now no farther uſe of words.
Death is ſecurity for all our fears.
[*Shews* Aboan's *body on the floor.*
And yet I cannot truſt him.
Imo. Aboan!
Oro. Mangled and torn, reſolv'd to give me time
To fit myſelf for what I muſt expect?
Groan'd out a warning to me, and expir'd.
Imo. For what you muſt expect?
Oro. Would that were all.
Imo. What! to be butcher'd thus——
Oro. Juſt as thou ſee'ſt.
Imo. By barbarous hands, to fall at laſt their prey!
Oro. I have run the race with honour, ſhall I now
Lag, and be overtaken at the goal?
Imo. No.
Oro. I muſt look back to thee. [*Tenderly.*
Imo. You ſhall not need.
I'm always preſent to your purpoſe, ſay,
Which way would you diſpoſe me?
Oro. Have a care,
Thou'rt on a precipice, and doſt not ſee
Whither that queſtion leads thee. O! too ſoon
Thou doſt enquire what the aſſembled gods
Have not determin'd, and will lateſt doom.
Yet this I know of fate, this is moſt certain,
I cannot, as I would, diſpoſe of thee:
And, as I ought, I dare not. Oh *Imoinda!*
Imo. Alas! that ſigh! why do you tremble ſo?
Nay then 'tis bad indeed, if you can weep.
Oro. My heart runs over, if my guſhing eyes

Betray

Betray a weakneſs which they never knew,
Believe, thou, only thou couldſt cauſe theſe tears.
The gods themſelves conſpire with faithleſs men
To our deſtruction.
Imo. Heav'n and earth our foes!
Oro. It is not always granted to the great,
To be moſt happy: if the angry pow'rs
Repent their favours, let 'em take 'em back:
The hopes of empire, which they gave my youth,
By making me a prince, I here reſign.
Let 'em quench in me all thoſe glorious fires,
Which kindled at their beams; that luſt of fame,
That fever of ambition, reſtleſs ſtill,
And burning with the ſacred thirſt of ſway,
Which they inſpir'd, to qualify my fate,
And make me fit to govern under them,
Let 'em extinguiſh. I ſubmit myſelf
To their high pleaſure, and devoted bow
Yet lower, to continue ſtill a ſlave;
Hopeleſs of liberty: and if I could
Live after it, would give up honour too,
To ſatisfy their vengeance, to avert
This only curſe, the curſe of loſing thee.
Imo. If heav'n could be appeas'd, theſe cruel men
Are not to be entreated, or believ'd:
O! think on that, and be no more deceiv'd.
Oro. What can we do?
Imo. Can I do any thing?
Oro. But we were born to ſuffer.
Imo. Suffer both,
Both die, and ſo prevent 'em.
Oro. By thy death!
O! let me hunt my travell'd thoughts again;
Range the wide waſte of deſolate deſpair;
Start any hope. Alas! I loſe myſelf.
'Tis pathleſs, dark, and barren all to me.
Thou art my only guide, my light of life,
And thou art leaving me: ſend out thy beams
Upon the wing; let them fly all around,
Diſcover every way: is there a dawn,

A glim-

A glimmering of comfort? the great God,
That rises on the world, must shine on us.
Imo. And see us set before him.
Oro. Thou bespeak'st,
And goest before me.
Imo. So I would, in love:
In the dear unsuspected part of life,
In death for love. Alas! what hopes for me?
I was preserv'd but to acquit myself,
To beg to die with you.
Oro. And can'st thou ask it?
I never durst inquire into myself
About my fate, and thou resolv'st it all.
Imo. Alas! my lord! my fate's resolv'd in yours.
Oro. O! keep thee there: let not thy virtue shrink
From my support, and I will gather strength,
Fast as I can, to tell thee ——
Imo. I must die.
I know 'tis fit, and I can die with you.
Oro. O! thou hast banish'd hence a thousand fears,
Which sickened at my heart, and quite unman'd me.
Imo. Your fear's for me, I know you fear'd my strength,
And could not overcome your tenderness,
To pass this sentence on me: and indeed
There you were kind, as I have always found you,
As you have ever been: for tho' I am
Resign'd, and ready to obey my doom,
Methinks it should not be pronounc'd by you.
Oro O! that was all the labour of my grief.
My heart, and tongue forsook me in the strife:
I never could pronounce it.
Imo. I have for you, for both of us.
Oro. Alas! for me! my death
I could regard as the last scene of life,
And act it thro' with joy, to have it done:
But then to part with thee——
Imo. 'Tis hard to part.
But parting thus, as the most happy must,
Parting in death, makes it the easier.
You might have thrown me off, forsaken me,

And

And my misfortunes: that had been a death
Indeed of terror, to have trembled at.
Oro. Forſaken! thrown thee off!
Imo. But 'tis a pleaſure more than life can give,
That with unconquer'd paſſion to the laſt,
You ſtruggle ſtill, and fain would hold me to you.
Oro. Ever, ever, and let thoſe ſtars, which are my enemies,
Witneſs againſt me in the other world,
If I would leave this manſion of my bliſs,
To be the brighteſt ruler of their ſkies.
O! that we could incorporate, be one, [*Embracing her.*
One body, as we have been long one mind:
That blended ſo, we might together mix,
And loſing thus our beings to the world,
Be only found to one another's joys.
Imo. Is this the way to part?
Oro. Which is the way?
Imo. The God of love is blind, and cannot find it;
But quick, make haſte, our enemies have eyes
To find us out, and ſhew us the worſt way
Of parting; think on them.
Oro. Why doſt thou wake me?
Imo. O! no more of love.
For if I liſten to you, I ſhall quite
Forget my dangers, and deſire to live.
I can't live yours. [*Takes up the dagger.*
Oro. There all the ſtings of death
Are ſhot into my heart——what ſhall I do?
Imo. This dagger will inſtruct you. [*Gives it him.*
Oro. Ha! this dagger!
Like fate, it points me to the horrid deed.
Imo. Strike, ſtrike it home, and bravely ſave us both.
There is no other ſafety.
Oro. It muſt be——
But firſt a dying kiſs—— [*Kiſſes her.*
This laſt embrace—— [*Embracing her.*
And now——
Imo. I'm ready.
Oro. O! where ſhall I ſtrike?

Is

Is there a ſmalleſt grain of that lov'd body
That is not dearer to me than my eyes,
My boſom'd heart, and all the life-blood there?
Bid me cut off theſe limbs, hew off theſe hands,
Dig out theſe eyes, tho' I would keep them laſt
To gaze upon thee: but to murder thee!
The joy, and charm of every raviſh'd ſenſe,
My wife! forbid it nature.

Imo. 'Tis your wife,
Who on her knees conjures you. O! in time
Prevent thoſe miſchiefs that are falling on us.
You may be hurry'd to a ſhameful death,
And I too dragg'd to the vile governor:
Then I may cry aloud: when you are gone,
Where ſhall I find a friend again to ſave me?

Oro. It will be ſo. Thou unexampled virtue!
Thy reſolution has recover'd mine:
And now prepare thee.

Imo. Thus with open arms,
I welcome you, and death.

[*He drops his dagger as he looks on her, and throws himſelf on the ground.*

Oro. I cannot bear it.
O let me daſh againſt this rock of fate.
Dig up this earth, tear, tear her bowels out,
To make a grave, deep as the center down,
To ſwallow wide, and bury us together.
It will not be. O! then ſome pitying God
(If there be one a friend to innocence)
Find yet a way to lay her beauties down
Gently in death, and ſave me from her blood.

Imo. O riſe, 'tis more than death to ſee you thus.
I'll eaſe your love, and do the deed myſelf——

[*She takes up the dagger, he riſes in haſte to take it from her.*

Oro. O! hold, I charge thee, hold.

Imo. Tho' I muſt own
It would be nobler for us both from you.

Oro. O! for a whirlwind's wing to hurry us
To yonder cliff, which frowns upon the flood:
That in embraces lock'd we might plunge in,

And

And perish thus in one another's arms.

Imo. Alas! what shout is that?

Oro. I see 'em coming.
They shall not overtake us. This last kiss:
And now farewel.

Imo. Farewel, farewel for ever.

Oro. I'll turn my face away, and do it so.
Now, are you ready?

Imo. Now. But do not grudge me
The pleasure in my death of a last look,
Pray look upon me——now I'm satisfied.

Oro. So fate must be by this.

[*Going to stab her, he stops short, she lays her hands on his, in order to give the blow.*

Imo. Nay then I must assist you.
And since it is the common cause of both,
'Tis just that both should be employ'd in it.
Thus, thus 'tis finish'd, and I bless my fate, [*Stabs herself.*
That where I liv'd, I die, in these lov'd arms. [*Dies.*

Oro. She's gone. And now all's at an end with me.
Soft, lay her down. O we will part no more.
[*Throws himself by her.*
But let me pay the tribute of my grief,
A few sad tears to thy lov'd memory,
And then I follow—— [*Weeps over her.*
But I stay too long. [*A noise again.*
The noise comes nearer. Hold, before I go,
There's something would be done. It shall be so.
And then, *Imoinda*, I'll come all to thee. [*Rises.*

Blanford, *and his party, enters before the Governor and his party, swords drawn on both sides.*

Gov. You strive in vain to save him, he shall die.

Blan. Not while we can defend him with our lives.

Gov. Where is he?

Oro. Here's the wretch whom you would have.
Put up your swords, and let not civil broils
Engage you in the cursed cause of one
Who cannot live, and now entreats to die.

This

This object will convince you.

Blan. 'Tis his wife! [*They gather about the body.*

Alas! there was no other remedy.

Gov. Who did the bloody deed?

Oro. The deed was mine:

Bloody I know it is, and I expect

Your laws ſhould tell me ſo. Thus ſelf-condemn'd,

I do reſign myſelf into your hands,

The hands of juſtice——but I hold the ſword

For you——and for myſelf.

[*Stabs the Governor, and himſelf, then throws himſelf by* Imoinda's *body.*

Stan. He has kill'd the Governor, and ſtab'd himſelf.

Oro. 'Tis as it ſhould be now. I have ſent his ghoſt

To be a witneſs of that happineſs

In the next world, which he deny'd us here. [*Dies.*

Blan. I hope there is a place of happineſs

In the next world for ſuch exalted virtue.

Pagan or unbeliever, yet he liv'd

To all he knew: and if he went aſtray,

There's mercy ſtill above to ſet him right.

But chriſtians guided by the heav'nly ray,

Have no excuſe if we miſtake our way. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPI-

EPILOGUE:

Written by Mr. CONGREVE, and spoken by Mrs. VERBRUGGEN.

YOU see we try all shapes, and shifts, and arts,
To tempt your favours, and regain your hearts.
We weep, and laugh, join mirth and grief together,
Like rain and sun-shine mixt, in April *weather.*
Your different tastes divide our poet's cares:
One foot the sock, t'other the buskin wears:
Thus while he strives to please, he's forc'd to do't,
Like Volscius, *hip-hop, in a single boot.*
Critics, he knows, for this may damn his books:
But he makes feasts for friends, and not for cooks.
Tho' errant-knights of late no favour find,
Sure you will be to ladies-errant kind.
To follow fame, knights-errant make profession:
We damsels fly, to save our reputation:
So they, their valour show, we, our discretion.
To lands of monsters, and fierce beasts they go:
We, to those islands, where rich husbands grow:
Tho' they're no monsters, we may make 'em so.
If they're of English *growth, they'll bear't with patience:*
But save us from a spouse of Oroonoko's *nations!*
Then bless your stars, you happy London *wives,*
Who love at large, each day, yet keep your lives:
Nor envy poor Imoinda's *doating blindness,*
Who thought her husband kill'd her out of kindness.
Death with a husband ne'er had shewn such charms,
Had she once dy'd within a lover's arms.
Her error was, from ignorance proceeding:
Poor soul! she wanted some of our town-breeding.
Forgive this Indian's *fondness of her spouse;*
Their law no christian liberty allows:
Alas! they make a conscience of their vows!
If virtue in a heathen be a fault;
Then damn the heathen school, where she was taught.
She might have learn'd to cuckold, jilt, and sham,
Had Covent-Garden *been in* Surinam.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.