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THE
 MOTHER-IN-LAW:
 OR, THE
 DOCTOR *the* DISEASE.
 A
 COMEDY.

As it is Acted

By the Company of COMEDIANS of
 His MAJESTY'S REVELS, at the
 New Theatre in the *Hay-Market*.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WARTS at the Printing-Office in
Wild-Court near Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

MDCCXXXIV.

[Price One Shilling and Six Pence.]



To the RIGHT HONOURABLE the
COUNTESS of HERTFORD.

M A D A M,



I HAVE now the Honour of presenting a **COMEDY** to Your Ladyship, which has not in it one indecent Expression, nor one immoral Thought. This, perhaps, may give it no Advantage on the Stage, since it happens to be so directly contrary to the usual Representations there; but (what is a much greater Glory) it will be the most powerful Recommendation to the Favour and Protection of Your Ladyship, and is a Circumstance without which I could never have presum'd to offer it to Your Perusal. Your Ladyship has too discerning and just a Taste

D E D I C A T I O N.

to approve even of the most witty Performances, if they have the least Tendency to corrupt the Mind; and Your Candor is sufficient to excuse a great many Defects in an Entertainment which employs no Arts to please, but such as are honest and innocent.

Moliere, M A D A M, is, properly, the Author of this Play: for most of the Scenes in it are translated from one or other of his *Comedies*; and the only little Merit I pretend to, is, that of having work'd them up into one Plot, and made them unite in carrying on the same Design. But, even this, I hope, may be of some Service towards restoring Good Sense and Decency, and help to prove that *Comedy* may be entertaining without the least mixture of Ribaldry or Profaneness.

That amiable Goodness and Humility, in the midst of Courts and Grandeur, for which Your Ladyship is so deservedly remarkable, have embolden'd me to make this humble Offering, and seek for Shelter under Your great Name. ----- Whither should the *Muses* fly, but to Those who know them, and love them because they know them? --- Few, indeed, have a Taste sufficiently delicate to find a Pleasure in their Acquaintance, or Greatness of Soul enough to give them
them

D E D I C A T I O N .

them Protection; and, amongst those Few, how justly do you stand the foremost! —

Titles, Riches, Dignities, are possess'd by many; but to wear them gracefully, to enjoy them truly, unenvy'd, belov'd, rever'd by all, is the peculiar Happiness of Lady HERTFORD, who, superior as she is in Honours and Personal Qualities, is still more superior in the Embellishments of the Mind, and in the Practice of every eminent and graceful Virtue.

That Heaven may long bless Mankind with so bright a Pattern of real Worth and true Greatness, is the zealous Wish of,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's most obliged and

most devoted humble Servant,



P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. *MILL S*, Senior.

IN some fair Garden, where the vernal Showers
Have bless'd the Soil, and rais'd the blooming Flowers,
The anxious Lover walks with curious Eye,
And marks and culls 'em as he passes by;
From each gay Border he selects the best,
And forms a Nosegay for his Flora's Breast.
With equal Pleasure, and with equal Care,
From the rich Treasures of the great Moliere,
The Author of To-night has bore away
The various Parts which form the following Play;
No Merit to himself he dares to claim;
And hopes you'll think that he deserves no Blame.

But O! 'tis bold, in this censorious Age,
To dare to bring pure Nature on the Stage;
When Taste and Writing both are sunk so low,
That nought's produc'd or lik'd but Song and Shew.
In Johnson's, Fletcher's, and great Shakespear's Days,
To Sense and Virtue Poets tun'd their Lays,
For Sense and Virtue then were sure of Praise:
Genius was then the Soul of Poesy;
Nature the Mistress, always in its Eye;
And Wit the Maid, whom it address'd her by.
But in this scribbling, Monster-breeding Age,
Nature and Sense are banish'd from the Stage;
To charm the Eye or Ear is made the whole,
And none or dares, or aims to touch the Soul:

For

P R O L O G U E.

*For This, our Bard assumes the Doctor's Part,
In hopes to reach that Gangrene of the Heart:
A Dose he brings, where every Drug finds Place,
That's judg'd of Service in the desp'rate Case.*

*In short, good Sirs, To-night we act a Play,
That's far, far diff'rent from the modern Way;
So very different, it has not got
One single Simile, and but one Plot;
No courtly Phrase to hide the want of Thought,
Nor dubious Jest, with meanless Meanings fraught;
Chaste Wit and solid Sense alone are join'd,
Fit for the modest Ear, and manly Mind.*

*Let others please at Modesty's Expence,
And barter Virtue for the Joys of Sense;
Such mean, pernicious Arts, we scorn, nor dare
Corrupt the Heart to gratify the Ear:
To make Instruction Partner with Delight,
Shall be our Care by Day, our Thoughts by Night;
This gladly we pursue — the only way
Your boundless Favours we can e'er repay:
Accept then, with a kind indulgent Smile,
This first-fruit Offering of our grateful Toil.*



Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

<i>Sir Credulous Hippish,</i>	<i>Mr. Griffin.</i>
<i>Heartwell, his Brother,</i>	<i>Mr. Mills, Senior.</i>
<i>Beaumont, a Young Gentleman of Fortune, in Love with Belina,</i>	<i>Mr. W. Mills.</i>
<i>Dr. Mummy, Physician to Sir Credulous,</i>	<i>Mr. Johnson.</i>
<i>Dr. Diascordium, another Physician,</i>	<i>Mr. Miller.</i>
<i>Looby Headpiece, Esq; Nephew to Dr. Mummy,</i>	<i>Mr. Cibber.</i>
<i>Mr. Galleypot, an Apothecary,</i>	<i>Mr. Harper.</i>
<i>Mr. Cranny, an Attorney,</i>	<i>Mr. Sheppard.</i>
<i>Joseph, a Country-Fellow, Servant to Headpiece,</i>	<i>Mr. H. Tench.</i>
<i>Poet,</i>	<i>Mr. Oates.</i>
<i>Constable,</i>	<i>Mr. Hallam, Senior.</i>

W O M E N.

<i>Lady Hippish, second Wife to Sir Credulous,</i>	<i>Mrs. Butler.</i>
<i>Belina, Daughter to Sir Credulous,</i>	<i>Mrs. Pritchard.</i>
<i>Agnes, younger Daughter to Sir Credulous,</i>	<i>Mrs. Robinson.</i>
<i>Primrose, Belina's Maid,</i>	<i>Mrs. Heron.</i>

S C E N E, *Grosvenor-Square.*

T H E



THE
MOTHER-IN-LAW:
OR, THE
DOCTOR *the* DISEASE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, Sir *Credulous Hippish's* House.

BELINA, PRIMROSE.

BELINA:



PRIMROSE!

Prim. Madam.

Belina. Look on me a little.

Prim. Well, I do look on you.

Belina. *Primrose!*

Prim. Well, what would you have with *Primrose*?

Belina. Can't you guess?

Prim. Some Talk, I suppose, of our new Acquaintance, Mr. *Beaumont*.

B

Belina.

2 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Belina. Since you knew that, *Primrose*, why did not you begin to talk of him first, and spare me the pains of forcing thee upon it?

Prim. You don't give me Time to do it: You are so very industrious in that Point, 'tis a hard Matter to be beforehand with you.

Belina. I own, that I can never be tir'd of such an agreeable Subject; and, as you are the only Person I dare discover my Inclinations to ———

Prim. True: Come then, you shall have a breathing Bout ——— begin presently tho', and be as short as possible, for your Father, you know, at this time of Day, is wanting some Slop or other every Moment; and if he were to take but a Basin of Gruel less than his Doctors prescribe him, the very Thoughts of it would kill him. Come, what would you say?

Belina. Tell me, *Primrose*, dost thou blame me for the good Opinion I have of him?

Prim. No, no, d'ye think I'm a Fool?

Belina. Would you have me insensible to all his Vows and Protestations of Affection?

Prim. Lack-a-day! No.

Belina. Pr'ythee tell me now, don't you really think there was something of Destiny in the odd Adventure that brought us acquainted?

Prim. Certainly.

Belina. Was there not something uncommonly genteel and brave in that Action of rescuing me, without knowing any thing of me?

Prim. True.

Belina. And was it possible for any one to make a more generous Use of it?

Prim. Agreed.

Belina. Then you can't but think him very handsome, *Primrose*?

Prim. Most certainly.

Belina. Then he talks, *Primrose*, he talks like an Angel.

Prim. Good. ——— But come, have you nothing new to say of him? I've had all this fifty times over already.

Belina.

The Doctor the Disease.

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Belina. But, my dear *Primrose*, dost thou believe he is so much in love with me as he pretends to be?

Prim. Um! Troth that's not absolutely to be depended upon: The Shew of Love is very like the Reality; and I've seen Actors of that Part who have perform'd it to a Miracle.

Belina. Well, I can't possibly suspect him of the least Deceit in the Manner he speaks.

Prim. In the Manner you hear, I believe not. But this Question will soon be clear'd up. The Resolution he hath taken, as he writ you Yesterday, to ask your Father's Consent, will soon discover if his Protestations be real or not. That will be a Proof indeed.

Belina. My Father can certainly have no Objection to the Proposal; he can never be against it, sure.

Prim. That's not as he will himself. You know how finely he's manag'd by his old Doctor, and young Wife. ——— Oh! that Mother of yours, Madam! that Mother-in-law, I mean, of yours, is a sad Jade, with Reverence be it spoken; her daily Business, ever since she came into the House, has been to wheedle and cheat the fond old Gentleman of all that he has; and her daily Prayers, that, as soon as she has got all, she may tumble him into his Coffin.

Belina. I'm as well convinced of her Prejudice to me, as of her Power over my Father; all my Hopes, therefore, are placed in you, *Primrose*.

Prim. We'll do our best. Her fawning Ladyship tries all ways to gain me over to her Interest, but she may spare her Pains; I don't care for cheating, except in Love and at Cards. ——— But we have staid tattling here too long, I shall be knock'd o' the Head.

Belina. But hold, *Primrose*, can't you by some means or other sound my Father, to find whether *Beaumont* has made any Application to him or not?

Prim. Bless me! what Haste you are in! Why, you had better send him word to come and do it immediately, if you can't live another Day without him.

4 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Belina. Sure, *Primrose*, you have never known what 'tis to be in Love!

Prim. Yes, yes, I have; and I know what 'tis to pity poor Souls that are — So come along with me into some Room where we may hear your Father's Bell, and there we'll talk a little more about him. Ha, ha, ha! [Exeunt.]

S C E N E II.

Sir Credulous discover'd in an Easy-Chair, by a Table, on which are Phials, Galleypots, Bolus's, &c. and a large File of Apothecaries Bills. — Sir Credulous having a long Apothecary's Bill in his Hand, which he is casting up.

Sir Cred. Three and two's Five, and five's Ten; Three and two's Five. [Taking off his Spectacles, and sighing.] O lack! O lack! I profess it is a grievous Fatigue to examine and cast up one's Apothecary's Bills. It does one almost as much harm as all the Physick in 'em did one good, and yet this is but of a moderate Length — But I've just got thro' it. [Putting on his Spectacles again.] — Item the 29th, an Aperient, Stomattick, Corroborative, Bolus, compos'd *secundum Artem*, to expel, dissipate and evacuate his Worship's ill Humours, 6 s. 6 d. There's one thing in my Apothecary which pleases me much, and that is, his Bills are always mighty civil: — His Worship's ill Humours, 6 s. 6 d. — Ay, but Mr. Galleypot, it is not enough to be civil, you should be a little reasonable too, and not flea your poor Patients; 6 s. 6 d. for a Bolus! your Servant for that; you never reckon'd me more in your other Bills than 5 s. and 5 s. in the Language of an Apothecary, is as much as to say half a Crown — there it is then, half a Crown. — Item the said Day at Night, an Hepatick, Soporifick, Somniferous Julep, compos'd to make his Worship sleep, 2 s. 6 d. — I don't complain of that, for it made me sleep well. — Item the 30th, a good detensive Clyster,

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ster, compos'd of double *Catholicon*, Rhubarb, *Mel Rosatum*, &c. according to Dr. *Mummy's* Prescription, to wash, scour, cleanse, and deterge his Worship's *Abdomen*, 4s. 6d. — What! 4s. 6d.! for a Clyster! You jest, you jest, Mr. *Galley-pot*; you should use your Patients with some Humanity: If this be your way of treating People, one would be sick no longer: Put down, put down 3s. if you please. — Three and two's five, and five's ten, and ten's twenty; twenty and ten's thirty, and five thirty-five. — Sum Total for the Month of *December* is Thirty-five Pounds seven Shillings and six Pence. — I'm glad we are so moderate. — Let me see then, in this Month I have taken but one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight Purgative Medicines; and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve Bottles of Cordial Julep; and last Month I took Twelve of the one, and Twenty of the other. I don't wonder that I'm not so well this Month as I was the last. Hah! I feel the Effects of my Omission already; I'm seiz'd all over with a shivering Fit. Where's *Primrose*? Where are they all? My speaking's to no purpose, I'm always left alone. [*Rings a Bell.*] They are deaf: *Primrose!* [*Rings.*] My Bell's not loud enough. [*Rings.*] Is it possible they could leave a poor sick Creature all alone in this manner? Oh miserable! O Heavens! they'll let me die here. [*Rings louder.*] Why, *Primrose!* I say.

Enter Primrose.

Prim. Here I am, Sir.

Sir Cred. Ah, you Slut! Ah, you Baggage!

Prim. [*Pretending to have hurt her Head.*] The Duce had your Impatience for me, ringing at such a rate — you have made me break my Head against the Window-shutter, I'm sure, hurrying one so.

Sir Cred. Ah, Traiteurs! —

Prim. Oh! Oh! [*Crying, to prevent his Scolding.*]

Sir Cred. 'Tis a —

Prim. Oh! Oh!

6 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Sir Cred. 'Tis an Hour —

Prim. Oh! Oh!

Sir Cred. Hold your saucy Tongue, that I may scold at thee, or I'll —

Prim. I like that indeed, after what I have done to my self.

Sir Cred. Thou hast made me bawl my Throat fore, Gipsy.

Prim. And you have made me break my Head; so set one against t'other, and we are quit.

Sir Cred. How, Confidence!

Prim. If you scold, I'll cry.

Sir Cred. To leave me, you Jade —

Prim. Oh! Oh!

Sir Cred. Again! I shall run mad! Why, you pert, brazen, abominable, provoking Monster, shan't I have the Pleasure of Scolding at thee neither?

Prim. If you have the Pleasure of Scolding, 'tis but fair that I should have the Pleasure of Crying; one's as reasonable a Pleasure as t'other.

Sir Cred. Well, well, ha' done — Take away these things here, and see you get me my Gruel ready.

Prim. Ay, this *Dr. Mummy* and *Mr. Galley-pot* divert themselves finely, at the Expence of your Carcase. They have a rare Milch-Cow of you; and I'd gladly know what Distemper you have, that your Maw must be thus perpetually stuff'd with Physick.

Sir Cred. Peace, Ignorance. 'Tisn't for you to contradict the Prescriptions of Art. Go, call my Daughter *Belina* here, I've something to say to her.

Prim. She's here already, Sir.

Enter Belina.

Sir Cred. Come here, *Belina*, I want to speak with you.

Belina. I wait your Pleasure, Sir.

Sir Cred. Why, I've a Piece of News to tell you, that perhaps you little expect, Girl. Here's a Match, you must know, propos'd to me for you — You smile

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smile at but naming Matrimony — Ah, Nature, Nature! By what I perceive then, Girl, I need not ask you if you are willing or not.

Belina. I'm ready, Sir, to submit to any thing that you shall command me. — I find *Beaumont* has been with him. [Aside to Primrose.

Sir Cred. I'm glad to find I've such a dutiful Daughter; for I have resolv'd on the thing, and given my Word for it.

Prim. Ay, this is something like now; 'tis the wisest Action you ever did in your Life.

Sir Cred. I have not seen the Gentleman yet, but I'm told that he'll be every way to the Satisfaction of us both.

Belina. That, Sir, I'm certain of; for I have seen him already.

Sir Cred. Seen him! why, I did not know he was come to Town yet.

Belina. Since your Consent, Sir, encourages me to discover my Inclinations, you must know that good Fortune hath lately brought us acquainted, and that the Proposal which has been made to you, is the Effect of that Esteem which at the first Interview we conceiv'd for one another.

Sir Cred. That's more than I knew; but I'm glad on't: so much the better that things go so smoothly. — He's a strapping jolly Youth, I'm told.

Belina. He's well made, Sir.

Sir Cred. Agreeable in his Person.

Belina. Most agreeable.

Sir Cred. Well accomplish'd.

Belina. In the highest Degree.

Sir Cred. Um! Why, that's surprizing in one that has been born and bred at the *Land's End*.

Belina. Born and bred at the *Land's End*, Sir!

Sir Cred. Ay, so Dr. *Mummy* tells me.

Belina. Does Dr. *Mummy* know him, Sir?

Sir Cred. A pretty Question indeed! He may well know him, I think, when he's his Nephew.

Belina. *Beaumont* Dr. *Mummy's* Nephew!

8 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Sir Cred. Beaumont! I'm talking of the Person you are to marry.

Belina. Very well.

Sir Cred. And that's the Nephew of Dr. *Mummy*, the young *Cornish* Squire; his Name is *Looby*, not *Beaumont*. Dr. *Mummy*, Mr. *Galley*pot, and my self, made up the Match; and this Afternoon he's expected in Town, when he will be introduced to me by his Uncle.——Hah! What's the matter? Why, you are surpris'd!

Belina. Why, to say the Truth, Sir, you have all this while been talking of one Person, and I of another.

Prim. Sure, Sir, you have no such ridiculous Intention. A Lady of her Education and Fortune, to be tied to a *Cornish* Numps!

Sir Cred. What Business have you to be meddling, Impudence?

Prim. Lard, Sir, don't fall immediately into your Invectives; can't we reason the Thing together without being in a Passion? Let us talk about it in cool Blood. What Reason can you give for this preposterous Match, pray?

Sir Cred. My Reason's this; That finding my self infirm and sickly, as I am, I would gladly have so able a Physician as Dr. *Mummy*, related to me, that I might have in my own Family some Assistance against my Maladies, and now and then make one at a Consultation my self.

Prim. Very well——But, Sir, tell me, are you upon Honour really sick?

Sir Cred. How Huffy! am I sick! am I really sick, Impudence!

Prim. Well, well, Sir, you are sick then; we won't quarrel about that. Yes, you are very sick, and more so than you think for, that's granted. But your Daughter is to marry for her self, and she not being sick, wants no Dr. *Mummy* for her Relation.

Sir Cred. But I do, Mistress; are you answer'd now? Besides, This Mr. *Looby* is Dr. *Mummy*'s only Heir, who'll

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who'll settle his whole Estate on him, in consideration of this Marriage, and Dr. *Mummy* has a good Five Thousand a Year.

Prim. Mercy on us! what a world of People must he have kill'd to get such an Estate!

Sir Cred. Why you horrible, impudent — hold your Peace. I'm resolv'd on this Match, and —

Belina. But, Sir, you won't surely —

Prim. O! don't mind it, Madam; your Father is but in jest.

Sir Cred. I am not in jest, Minx; I am resolv'd upon it.

Prim. O fy! don't talk so.

Sir Cred. Not talk so!

Prim. No.

Sir Cred. Why so, Huffy?

Prim. They'll say you don't know what you talk.

Sir Cred. They may say what they please, but I'll make her obey.

Prim. You won't indeed.

Sir Cred. Hey-day! this is pleasant enough! I shan't dispose of my own Daughter as I please!

Prim. No, I tell you.

Sir Cred. Who shall hinder me, Huffy?

Prim. Your self, Sir; you won't have the Heart to do it, your fatherly Tenderness won't let you.

Sir Cred. Don't let her depend upon that.

Prim. Ah! dear Sir; 'Tis but her shedding a few mollifying Tears, throwing her pretty Arms about your Neck, a dear Papa, with a Sigh, a Sob, and a Kiss — and the Business is done.

Sir Cred. I tell you I'm not to be mov'd.

Prim. Lack-a-day! don't I know you; you are naturally good-humour'd?

Sir Cred. I'm not good-humour'd, I'm ill-humour'd when I have a mind to't, and —

Prim. Softly, softly, Sir; you are sick, and should not be in a Passion.

Sir Cred. I command her absolutely to prepare to take the Husband I design for her.

Prim.

10 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Prim. And I absolutely forbid her to do any such thing.

Sir Cred. Why you insolent Baggage, I'll cane you heartily. [*Running after her.*]

Prim. 'Tis my Duty to oppose a thing that would make you ridiculous. [*Running from him.*]

Sir Cred. Come hither, come hither; I'll teach you to prate.

[*Running round the Chair with his Cane in his Hand.*]

Prim. No, she shan't marry this Squire Looby; she was never made for a *Cornish Hug*.

Sir Cred. *Belina*, hold that Jade for me.

Belina. Dear Sir, don't disorder your self, you'll increase your Illness.

Sir Cred. If you don't hold her, I'll not give you my Blessing.

Prim. And I'll disinheret her, if she does.

Sir Cred. Oh! Oh! I can hold no longer ——— I shall faint, I shall die.

[*Throwing himself into his Easy-Chair.*]

Enter Lady Hippish.

Ah! my Dear; come hither, come hither.

Lady Hip. What ails my poor Dear?

Sir Cred. Ah! my Love, come hither and help me.

Lady Hip. What's the matter, my dear Child?

Sir Cred. Love.

Lady Hip. Well, my Love.

Sir Cred. Oh! Oh! they have been teizing a poor infirm and weakly Creature here, out of the small matter of Life and Spirits he has left.

Lady Hip. Alas! my poor dear Chucky; and how pray, my Dove?

Sir Cred. Your Jade, *Primrose*, is grown more impudent than ever.

Lady Hip. Don't put your self into a Passion, my Life.

Sir Cred. She has made me mad, my Dear.

Lady Hip. Softly, my Child.

Sir Cred.

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Sir Cred. She has been contradicting me this Hour about things that ———

Lady Hip. So, so, softly, softly.

Sir Cred. And has had the Impudence to tell me that I'm not sick, when you know, my Heart, how it is with me.

Lady Hip. Yes, my Heart, I know that you are very feeble and weak.

Sir Cred. That Jade will kill me; she's the Cause of all the Choler I breed; and I have desired, I know not how often, that she might be turn'd away.

Lady Hip. Alas! Child, there are no Servants but have their Faults; we must endure their bad Qualities that we may have the Use of their good ones. ———

Primrose, come here; What's the Reason that you put your Master in such a Passion?

Prim. I Madam! alas! I don't know what you mean; I'm sure I think of nothing but to please him.

Sir Cred. Ay, my Dear, dost thou believe her? She's a dissembling Devil, she has said a thousand insolent things to me.

Lady Hip. I believe you, my Soul; but compose your self a little. Hark'e, *Primrose,* if you ever provoke your Master thus again, I'll turn you out of Doors. Here, give me his Fur Gown and his Pillows, that I may set him easy in his Chair. You sit I don't know how. Pull your Nightcap well over your Ears. There's nothing gives People cold so much as letting the Wind in at their Ears.

Sir Cred. Ay, my Love; I'm greatly oblig'd to you for the Care you take of me.

Lady Hip. Raise your self a little, that I may put this under you. ——— [*Adjusting the Pillows.*] ——— Let me put one to support you on this Side, and one on t'other ——— This behind your Back, and this to support your Head.

Prim. And this to comfort your Brains a little.

[*Clapping a Pillow hard on his Head.*]

Sir Cred.

12 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Sir Cred. Thou Fury! would'st thou stifle me?

[*Getting up in a Passion, throwing the Pillows at her, and drives her out of the Room.*

Lady Hip. Hold, hold, what's the Matter now?

Sir Cred. Ay, my Love, you don't know the Malice of that Wretch, she has quite put me beside my self; and 'tis more than a Dozen Juleps can do to recover me. — Oh! Oh! I'm faint! I die!

[*Sinking in his Chair.*

Lady Hip. There, there, my Jewel, compose your self a little.

Sir Cred. My Sweeting, you are the only Comfort I have; and that I may make some Requital for all this Goodness, I'm determin'd, my Heart, as I told you before, to make my Will.

Lady Hip. O my Precious! let's not talk on't I intreat you; I can't support the Thoughts of it: the very Name of *Will* makes me leap for — Grief.

Sir Cred. I desired you would speak to your Attorney about it.

Lady Hip. Why — why — I can't speak to him about it, 'twould cut me to the Heart to mention any such thing. But — but you might have been displeas'd perhaps, and discompos'd, if I had not in some way complied with your Request; so — so I have sent for him; and then you may speak to him your self, my Joy — O! here he comes.

Enter Cranny.

Sir Cred. Come in, Mr. *Cranny*, come in. Take a Chair, if you please: My Wife has told me, Sir, that you are a very honest Man, and one of her particular Friends; and I have order'd her to speak to you about making my Will.

Lady Hip. Alas! my Love, when one's so fond of a Husband, as I am of my Jewel, one's but in a poor Condition to think of such things.

Sir Cred. Be pleas'd, Sir, to inform me by what Method I may cut off my Children, and leave all to my Wife. — I have been to Counsel about it, but they —
Cranny.

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Cranny. The worst Persons you could have gone to: They are generally mighty rigid in these Points, and are for keeping close to the Letter of the Law. Your Attorneys are the only People to have recourse to in such Cases. We are always provided with Expedients to pass gently over the Law, and make that legal which is not just; we know how to smooth the Difficulties of an Affair; and study the Law for no other purpose, but to elude it. Without this, alas! where should we be? If we were not to make use of a little Dexterity now and then, our Profession would not be worth a Groat.

Sir Cred. Why truly, my Wife told me, Sir, that you was a very ingenious honest Man.

Cranny. Ay, ay, Sir, I am acquainted with the Back-Door of the Law; I know the By-ways there are of leading a Conscience; leave it to me, and I'll dispose Matters for you, any way you'd have 'em.

Lady Hip. Alas! my Dear, don't torment your self any more about it. If you should be taken away, my Child, I'll no longer stay in the World.

Sir Cred. My poor Dear!

Lady Hip. Life will be nothing worth to me then.

Sir Cred. My Soul!

Lady Hip. I'll follow thee to let thee see the Tenderness I have for thee. [Wiping her Eyes.]

Sir Cred. My Dove, thou breakest my Heart. Pr'ythee be comforted.

Cranny. These Tears are unseasonable, Madam; things are not yet come to that.

Sir Cred. All that grieves me if I die, my Joy, is that I never had a Child by thee — Dr. *Mummy* promis'd me that I should have one.

Lady Hip. Oh!

Sir Cred. Come, Mr. *Cranny*, let us proceed to Business. But by way of Precaution, my Love, I'll put into your Hands Five Thousand Guineas, and as much more in Notes, which I have hid behind the Wainscot.

Lady Hip.

14 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Lady Hip. Oh! Oh! I'll have nothing to do with them. All the Goods in the World are nothing to me in comparison of thee, my Love. ——— How much didst thou say there was hid behind the Wainscot.

Sir Cred. Five Thousand Guineas, my Life.

Lady Hip. Oh! don't talk to me about Money, I beseech you. ——— How much in Notes didst thou say, my Soul?

Sir Cred. As much more, my Precious. But come, let us go into my little Closet, and there we'll settle every thing. Come, my Love, pr'ythee support me.

Lady Hip. Come then, my poor little dear Child.

[*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter Belina, follow'd by Primrose.

Prim. I tell you, I'll have nothing more to say to you. — What, stand as if you had lost your Tongue! and hear such a foolish Proposal, without making any Answer! Must I be obliged to play your Part for you?

Belina. What could I have said, *Primrose*, when I found him so absolute?

Prim. Said! That you was to marry for yourself, and not for him; that you being principally concerned, your Inclinations ought to be principally consulted; and that if he was so fond of his Looby, he might marry him himself.

Belina. A Father has so much Power over one, that I could not say a Word.

Prim. Nay, you was in the right of it; I see you have a mind to be Mr. *Looby's*, and why should I oppose your Inclinations. I was much in the wrong, now I think better of it; the Match will be very advantageous to be sure. Madam *Looby* is a genteel Name, and the *Land's End* a fine Place to live at, that's certain.

Belina. Pray, *Primrose*, give over this Talk, and I'll do whatever you'll have me.

Prim.

The Doctor the Disease. 15

Prim. No, a Daughter must obey her Father; and indeed I know nothing you have to complain of; you'll be but too happy with such a Husband.

Belina. You kill me, *Primrose*; you ought rather to give me your Advice.

Prim. I'm your Servant for that — No, no, the Affair must go on.

Belina. Dear Girl!

Prim. No. *Looby's* your Man, and have him you shall.

Belina. Pray, *Primrose* — You know I always confided in you.

Prim. No, Faith, you shall be *Belooby'd*.

Belina. Well, since I can't move you, henceforth leave me to my Despair; I shall find a Remedy against this Match.

Prim. Why, what's your Design then?

Belina. To kill my self, if I am forc'd to it.

Prim. The Remedy's certainly wonderful — Bless me! how I hate to hear People talk at such a rate!

Belina. Take Pity on me then, *Primrose*, and lend me your helping Hand in the Affair.

Prim. Well, I am a compassionate Fool, and can't forbear assisting you, I find that. But let me tell you, I fear there's another scurvy Business on the Carpet; they are got together yonder, with a Rogue of an Attorney, and I heard 'em talk something about a Will: Your Mother-in-Law is not idle, she's certainly putting your Father upon something against your Interest.

Belina. Let him dispose of my Fortune, as he thinks proper, provided he'll leave my Heart at command. Thou seest, *Primrose*, the violent Designs they have against me, and if thou should'st abandon me in this Extremity —

Prim. Abandon you! I'll die first. However, that I may be able to serve you the more effectually, I intend to change my Battery, disguise my Affection for you, and counterfeit a Compliance with their Opinions.

Belina.

Belina. But be sure you some way or other give *Beaumont* Advice of this Match that's on foot.

Prim. I must employ your Uncle, Mr. *Heartly*, in that Affair; he's a great Crony of your Galant's, and loves you as much as he hates my Lady. — Our next Business must be to make your Father fall out with his Doctor, so as to break off this Treaty with his Nephew.

Belina. That, I doubt, *Primrose*, will be too great a Difficulty for all thy Wit and Cunning to master.

Prim. And what's as difficult as that, we must put him out of conceit with his Wife too, that she mayn't be able to break off our Treaty with *Beaumont*; and then —

Belina. And what then?

Prim. Why then it shall have its nown dear Love to it self, Ha, ha, ha! — Well, sure if People knew beforehand the Plague of being in Love, they would be choked before they'd have any thing to do with it. Pray, Madam, is there most of the Sweet or the Bitter in that same Passion?

Belina. Don't you remember, *Primrose*, what our last new Song says on that Subject?

Prim. True — Come let's have it then to chear up our Spirits, and fit us for the crabbed Business we have to go thro'.

Belina. With all my Heart.

A DIALOGUE SONG.

Belina. Tell me, Chloe, is Love Joy or Pain in the Breast?

Prim. Nay, do you tell me, Phillis, for you can tell best.

Belina. I have heard Cupid's Arrows dire Venom impart.

Prim. And I, a sweet Transport that thrills thro' the Heart.

Belina. What way shall we take this Dispute to decide?

Prim. What Clue in this Labyrinth choose for our Guide?

Both. { Why, let's both love, my Dear, and we quickly shall find,
 { If the God gives most Anguish or Joy to the Mind.

Belina.

Belina. *Gay Florimel loudly proclaims that Love's sweet;*

Prim. *But Celia's sad Silence betrays the Deceit.*

Belina. *If the God to his Followers gives so much Pain,
Why are any such Fools as to suffer his Chain?*

Prim. *But if the soft Conquest yields nothing but Joy,
Pr'ythee who would resist the dear amorous Boy?*

Both. *Then let us no longer unwisely decline
So gentle a Yoke, and a Flame so divine:
But let Sighs and soft Ardors our Moments employ,
For if Love has some Torture, it still has more Joy.*



A C T II. S C E N E I.

S C E N E, Beaumont's House.

BEAUMONT *solus.*

A MAN, I find, can't lie under a greater Misfortune, than having the Reputation of being a Wit or a Favourite; it makes him always surrounded with Fools and Scoundrels, and his Interest at Court gives him an Opportunity of doing every Body's Business but his own. This whole Morning, my dear *Belina*, have I been forc'd to throw away upon a Parcel of impertinent Puppies; which should have been employ'd in soliciting your Father's Consent. — But — my Hat and Sword there.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a Gentleman —

Beau. S'death, Sir, I'm not at home — I'll see no body —

Enter Poet.

Poet. I beg pardon, Sir, for this Intrusion; this is not a proper Hour to wait on you I must confess, the Morning is the fittest Time to perform that Duty; but,
C I find,

I find, Sir, 'tis not easy to come at you, unless by Surprise; for you are always either asleep or abroad—at least your People are pleas'd to tell me so.

Beau. Sir, have you any thing particular to say to me?

Poet. I came, Sir, to pay my Respects to you — Excuse, Sir, the Boldness that inspires me — if —

Beau. Dear Sir, without any Ceremony be pleas'd to inform me what you would have with me.

Poet. As the Rank, Wit, and Generosity, which you are every where famous for —

Beau. Yes, I am very famous — so let that pass.

Poet. 'Tis an extreme Pain, Sir, to a Man of Modesty, to be obliged to put himself forward, and acquaint People what he is. One ought always to be introduc'd to the Great by those who could give some Account of one's Character and Talents, and make one's little Merit seriously consider'd: For my part, Sir, I should have been glad if some Person of Taste and Understanding had told you what I am.

Beau. O Sir! that's visible in your Dress and Behaviour; you are a Poet I presume, Sir.

Poet. Yes, Sir, I am a Poet; but not a common Poet, let me tell you, Sir; I'm none of your Operatical, Farcical, Sing-song Scriblers; none of your little pitiful Rhymemongers, that pester the Town with occasional Poems, and live themselves by writing Elegies on the Dead. No, Sir; I am, in the genuine and sublime Sense of the Term, a Dramatick Poet.

Beau. Um — you are a Writer of Tragedy then.

Poet. True, Sir. — Yes, I wear the Buskin, and to some purpose, as you'll find, if you'll permit me to read you a Portion of my Piece. Here's a Scene, Sir, I'gad will make you melancholy for a Fort-night; my Grandmother has cry'd at it many a time.

Beau. I don't question, Sir, but 'tis extremely tragical; however, you'll excuse me at present, I'm a little in haste, and —

Poet.

The Doctor the Disease.

19

Poet. But, Sir, as I was saying before, Sir — you being a Person of Rank, Generosity, and Interest in the Drawing-Room, a few Tickets, Sir — a very few, Sir — lie in your Pocket, Sir.

Beau. Enough, enough, Sir; my Pockets won't hold so many. — Very well, I shall take care — to return them clean as they came. [Aside.]

Poet. [To Beaumont's Servant.] Sir, be pleas'd to accept of a Ticket to see my Piece. --- [To Beaumont.] In short, Sir, there's so much Trash daily brought upon the Stage, that a good Thing is stifled, if not properly supported; I hope therefore, dear Sir, you'll prevail on your Friends to do my Piece Justice, Sir — and so, Sir, I'm your very humble obsequious Slave. — I shall do you Justice, Sir, in my Dedication.

[Going.]

Beau. No, no, 'Slife! hold, Sir, no Dedication to me, I charge you.

Poet. O dear, Sir, that's your abundant Modesty, Sir, but —

Beau. No, faith, 'tis my Pride, Sir; and therefore at the Peril of your Play don't think on't.

Poet. No, Sir! Why then let me see — why then, suppose I was to write a Copy of Commendatory Verses in your Name, and prefix to my Tragedy.

Beau. 'Sdeath! that would be more Scandal than t'other. Look you, Sir, you shall make use of my Interest only on condition that you make no use of my Name.

Poet. Lack-a-day! Sir, you'd have no reason to repent of permitting your Name to be prefix'd to my Piece, it will be follow'd by the whole World, I assure you, Sir; and I shall make at least a Thousand Pounds of it.

Beau. So much the better, Sir. But —

Poet. But Sir — if you could lend me a couple of Pieces for the present — you may repay yourself, you know, Sir, out of my Tickets.

Beau. With all my Heart, Sir ——— and glad to get rid of thee at so cheap a rate. [Aside.]

Poet. Sir, I'm your most obedient, most submissive, and most devoted humble Servant. [Exit.]

Beau. How supple this buskin'd Thunder-monger is; at another Time I should have diverted myself with the Fool, but now ———

Enter Heartly.

Dear *Heartly!* I am as glad to see thee, as to get rid of the Coxcomb that's just gone out.

Heart. To find you at home at this time o' Day, is no small Miracle, *Ned*; as 'tis no small Happiness to find you alone at any time.

Beau. Faith, Sir, I'm very sorry you do find me at home, 'tis much against either Inclination or Intention; but I have been hemm'd in with such Shoals of impertinent Rascals ———

Heart. Hark ye, Sir, don't you pretend to have some Affection for my Niece?

Beau. Yes, Sir, and hadn't I been maliciously detain'd, I should have prov'd it something more than a pretended Affection, by applying to your Brother for his Approbation.

Heart. Why then, Sir, I desire that from this Moment you will look upon those impertinent Rascals, as you call 'em, to have been the best Friends you ever met with.

Beau. Why so, pr'ythee?

Heart. Because if you had gone to make the Proposal you talk of, or I had fail'd finding you here, *Belina* had been irrecoverably lost. ——— But there's no Time to be spent in talking: In short, Sir *Credulous* has fix'd on a Husband for his Daughter, and is determin'd to marry her this very Evening.

Beau. Confusion! to whom? ——— This Evening! impossible!

Heart. To a *Cornish* Squire, one *Looby*, a very great Fool, with a very great Estate, Nephew to Doctor *Mummy* his Physician, who has made up this Match,

it seems, and brought his Squire from the *Land's End* to consummate.

Beau. 'Slife, *Heartly!* what's to be done? Can't you prevent, at least defer this preposterous Business? Your Interest with your Brother——

Heart. Will do nothing at all, I fear. A Man that's rode by his Doctor, must go as he spurs. Besides, he's naturally positive, and is so bent on this Project, that his Daughter opposing it in favour of you, was the Cause of his resolving to have it executed this Evening.

Beau. This Squire *Looby* is in Town then?

Heart. Just arrived. I luckily saw him as he enter'd the Inn, and guessing at him by his Equipage, had the Curiosity to follow, and make a few Observations on him as he was eating his Afternoon's Luncheon in the Kitchen. As for his Figure, you may have an Opportunity of seeing him *in puris Naturalibus*; and the Fancy of his Dress you'll find every way answerable. Then for his Wit, I could see nothing at all of it; 'tis so close shut up in his incommunicable Skull, that his Tongue is never a Jot the wiser for't. So that if your Brains can invent any Stratagem to snare him with, his won't be able to find the way of opposing it.

Beau. Say'st thou So, *Heartly?* •

Heart. If I have any Skill in Men.——

Beau. Why, that's some Comfort. I'll warrant thee we find some Trick or other to trap the Woodcock.

Heart. But you must be speedy then, and set about him before 'tis known that he's in Town.

Beau. Come, shew me quickly where he's hous'd, and I'll tell you as we go what way I've hit on to dispose of him at present; while I'm engag'd there, I must depend on you, dear *Heartly*, to do what you can for me with your Brother, and to contrive some way of letting me see *Belina*, that we may consult together on this Exigency.

22 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Heart. That Particular I must leave to her Maid *Primrose*; 'tis a crafty Gipsy, and will be a useful Instrument in this Business.

Beau. She shall not want Encouragement. — But now to Action. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II. *The Square.*

Enter Looby, and his Man Joseph.

Looby. [*Turning himself back, as to some People who seem to follow him and laugh at him.*] Hey-day! what's here to do? What would they be at? A Murrain take the foolish Town, and all the Fools that live in't. Can't a Man walk the Street without having a Pack of Simpletons staring and gigling at him?

Jos. Why, what the Deauce can these Volk vind to laugh at now in my Maister?

Looby. True, *Jo.*

Jos. There's noathing ridiculous zure in his Worship!

Looby. Right — am I crooked? am I hump-back'd?

Jos. I'facks! you ha' need of better Monners here; his Worship is hugely respected in the *West*.

Looby. Why true, *Jo*; S'bud, we do 'em too much Honour to come into their City.

Jo. My Maister is not a Mon to be jok'd upon.

Looby. No indeed.

Jo. Odzooks! the next that shews his Teeth, I'll fairly knock 'em down his Throat.

Looby. Well said, *Jo.*

Enter Beaumont and Heartly, behind.

Beau. This is our Chap then?

Heart. The same.

Beau. And a pretty Stick of Logwood it looks like.

Heart. Go to work upon it then, whilst I prepare Matters a little at home. [*Exit Heartly.*]

Beau.

Beau. [*Making up to Looby, and pretending to know him.*] Hah! who do I see? Squire *Looby!* Sir, I'm your very humble Servant; I'm sorry to see a Person of your Appearance, Sir, so scurvily receiv'd; and I ask your Pardon in behalf of the Town.

Looby. Sir, I'm your Servant. — Mayhap then, Sir, you may be of Kin to my Lord-Mayor.

Beau. Bless me, Sir! is't possible that you should not know me? Can five or six Years Absence make you forget the best Friend to the Family of the *Loobies?*

Looby. I beg Pardon, Sir. — S'bud! I don't know him. [*Aside.*

Beau. There's not a *Looby* in *Cornwal* but I know 'em, from the highest to the lowest; I visited no body else all the time I was at the *Land's End*, and had the Honour of seeing you, Sir, almost every Day.

Looby. The Honour was mine, Sir.

Beau. Can't you recollect my Face?

Looby. Oh! — Oh! — I don't know him, *Jo.* [*Aside.*

Beau. Don't you remember I had the Pleasure of drinking with you at our jolly Landlady's at *Pensanze?* What was her Name?

Looby. *Dame Blouze.*

Beau. Ay, ay, the same. — Ah! we hum'd it off, half Seas over, I'faith. — Don't you remember me yet?

Looby. Yes, yes, I remember you now. — The Duce take me if I do tho'. [*Aside.*

Beau. My dear Friend, let us embrace then, and renew the Ties of our former Friendship.

Jos. Odd, Maister, this Gentleman loves your Worship mightily.

Beau. Come, let us have some News of our Friends. How does the good Gentleman your — he that — the honestest Man in the World?

Looby. My Brother the Counsellor you mean.

Beau. Ay, the same.

Looby. Well and lusty, as jolly and jocund as ever.

24 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Beau. I'm sincerely glad of it. — And your Uncle, how does he do?

Looby. Sir, I have no Uncle; I have only an Aunt.

Beau. Your Aunt, I mean — a good Woman as ever liv'd; so pious and devout!

Looby. Ah! she has been dead this long while; and my Cousin the Vicar has been nigh his Departure too, with a Brandy-Fever, as we call it.

Beau. That's a Pity; he was a brave, jolly —

Looby. No, no, not jolly.

Beau. Well made, I would say. S'life I have smok'd many a Score good Pipes with him. He was Vicar of — what d'ye call it — a — a —

Looby. St. Stephens.

Beau. Right, right, St. Stephens.

Looby. He names all the whole Family, you find, *Jo.*

Jos. He knows your Worship better than you think for.

Beau. Well, Sir, as 'tis plain we're old Acquaintance, I hope you'll make my House your Home, while you continue in Town.

Looby. Sir, I'm your Servant — but I —

Beau. Not a Word, I beseech you; I insist upon it.

Jos. Why, zince the Gentleman zeems so zet upon't, e'en vrankly accept of his Kindness, Maister.

Beau. Where's your Baggage? I'll send my Servants. — Here *John! Richard! Thomas!*

Looby. No, no, I forewarn'd the Inn-keeper not to let them go till I call'd for 'em my self, for fear of some Roguery in this waundy Town, you know.

Beau. 'Twas prudently caution'd. — Well, Sir, I shall only give a few necessary Orders, and then expect you at that corner House yonder.

Jos. We'll be wi'ye out o' Hond, Sir.

Looby. This is an Acquaintance I did not dream of, *Jo.*

Jos. Why fecks, Maister, no more did not I, but a talks like a mighty honest Gentlemon.

[*Exeunt* Looby and Joseph.
Beau.

Beau. I'faith, Squire *Laoby*, we shall shew you something of the Town very quickly — we shall not be wanting in our Civilities to you.

Enter Galleypot.

Oh, Sir! I believe you are the Doctor I sent to speak with. Don't you live at yon corner House?

Gall. No, Sir, I have not the Honour to be a Doctor, I'm only his Apothecary; an unworthy Apothecary, at your Service, Sir.

Beau. Isn't the Doctor at home then?

Gall. Yes, Sir, he's a little busy at present, dispatching a few Patients, but will be ready to wait on you instantaneously.

Beau. I want to put a certain Relation of mine into his Hands, who labours under a melancholy Indisposition, which we would willingly have him cur'd of before he were married.

Gall. O' my Word, Sir, you could not have apply'd to a more able Physician; he's a Man that understands the Fundamentals of his Art, the whole Christercross-Row of Physick — then he does every thing by Form and Method; he'd sooner let a Patient die than cure him with any other Medicine than the College prescribes.

Beau. That's very right; a Patient should not desire to be cur'd, if 'tis not agreeable to the College.

Gall. O Sir! there's a Pleasure in being his Patient, and I'd rather die of his Physick, than be cur'd of another's; for come what will, one's sure that things have gone on methodically; and that if you die under his Directions, your Heirs could not possibly have any thing to find fault with.

Beau. Why, that's a great Comfort to a dead Man.

Gall. Then he's not a Man like some, who makes the most of Diseases; he's expeditious, very expeditious; and if his Patients are to die, 'tis over with them in a Trice. But, Sir, I hope you don't think that I say this out of any Principle of Interest; or that I recommend him for a Doctor, because he recommends

26 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

mends me for an Apothecary; not in the least, upon my Credit, Sir; but if you please to step to him, Sir, you'll be better convinc'd.

Beau. Sir, your Servant, I'll wait on you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Room in the Doctor's House.*

Enter Doctor Mummy, follow'd by a Countryman, and Countrywoman.

Countryman. Zir, my Father can hold it no longer, his Head rages at the most grievous rate!

Mummy. The Patient's a Fool; the Distemper, according to *Galen*, does not lie in his Head, but in his Spleen.

Countryman. Howsomever that may be, Zir, I'm zure a has a violent Purging upon him.

Mummy. Good, that's a sign his Body's open. — Well, I'll visit him in two or three Days time, but if he should die before, be sure you send me word of it, for 'tis not proper that a Physician should visit the Dead.

[*Exit Countryman.*

Countrywoman. What shall I do, Maister? my poor Husband grows worse and worse.

Mummy. That's not my Fault, good Woman, I give him Medicines, why won't he be cur'd? why won't he be cur'd? How often has he been blooded?

Countrywoman. Fifteen times, Zir, within this Fort-night.

Mummy. Fifteen times blooded within this Fort-night!

Countrywoman. Yes.

Mummy. And doesn't he mend?

Countrywoman. No, Sir.

Mummy. Um — that's a sign his Distemper is not in his Blood; we'll purge him as many times, to see if 'tis not in his Humours; and at last, if nothing will do — why, we'll send him to the Bath.

[*Exit Countrywoman.*

Enter

Enter Beaumont and Galleypot.

Mummy. Mr. *Galleypot*, your Servant. — Your Pleasure, Sir? [*To Beaumont.*]

Beau. I have a Relation, Sir, a little disorder'd in Mind, whom I would be glad to lodge in your House, that he might be the more conveniently cur'd, and with the greater Secrecy.

Mummy. I shall take all the Care imaginable, Sir.

Beau. I desire above all that you'll not let him escape, for he'll often be endeavouring at it.

Galley. Oh! you may trust Dr. *Mummy* for that, Sir; 'tisn't an easy matter to get out of his Hands.

Beau. [*Aside.*] Dr. *Mummy*! I'm thunderstruck! why this is his Uncle; here's a fine Trick of Fortune, truly — We are all blown up i'faith! — Pray, Sir, is your Name *Mummy*?

Mummy. Dr. *Mummy*, at your Service, Sir.

Beau. And is not one Squire *Looby* of *Pensanze*, in the County of *Cornwal*, your Nephew?

Mummy. He is, Sir, and I expect him in Town this very Evening, to consummate a Match which I have concluded for him?

Beau. So! — Pray, Sir, what sort of a Gentleman is he, for if I'm not deceiv'd, I had once some Acquaintance with him.

Mummy. *In bona fide*, Sir, I can't tell you; I have not seen him this Fifteen Year, and then he was but a mere Stripling. I don't in the least expect to know him when I see him.

Beau. So much the better, troth; it may do yet then, for a little while. [*Aside.*] — O! here comes the Gentleman I spoke to you of. But take care your Name is not mention'd before him, for if he knows you are a Physician, we shan't get him to stay. — And another Caution I must give you, never to ask his Name neither, for it throws him into such violent Disorders, that he may do you some Mischief.

Mummy. I shall regularly observe all Precautions, Sir; and it fortunately falls out, that I have an ancient
Friend

Friend of the Faculty within, with whom I shall be glad to consult on this Distemper.

Enter Looby.

Beau. My dear Friend, I'm glad you're come; here's a little Business fallen out, which obliges me to leave you for to-night; but I have appointed this Person to attend you, who has Orders to treat you in the best manner possible.

Looby. This is his Steward, to be sure; he's certainly some Lord or other.

Mummy. You may be assur'd, Sir, I shall treat the Gentleman methodically, and with all the Nicety and Regularity of Art.

Looby. S'nigs, Sir! there's no Occasion for so much Ceremony. I hope, Sir, you'll use me with all Freedom.

Beau. I intend it, upon my Honour, Sir. — I beg you'll pardon my Incivility in leaving you; but Business, Sir — — and so your most obedient.

[*Exit Beaumont.*

Looby. You do me too much Honour, Sir. — Well, Mr. *Steward*, we'll take a Cruft and a Bottle together, and then I'll e'en go look out my Uncle, and hear when this same Match is to be made up.

Mummy. I am very much honour'd, Sir, in being made choice of to serve you.

Looby. Your Servant, Sir.

Mummy. Brother *Diascordium*, will you walk this way?

Enter Diascordium.

Here's a learn'd Brother of the Faculty, with whom I shall consult in what manner to treat you, Sir.

Looby. No Ceremony, Gentlemen, pray now. I'm one that am easily satisfied.

Mummy. Chairs here.

Looby. These are sorrowful kind of Domesticks for a young Gentleman, tho'.

Mummy.

The Doctor the Disease. 29

Mummy. Come, Sir, take your Place, Sir.

[The two Physicians sit down on each side of Looby, and take hold of his Hands to feel his Pulse.]

Looby. Your very humble Servant. *[Giving his Hands.]*
What does this mean now? I suppose 'tis the Fashion here. *[Aside.]*

Mummy. Do you eat well, Sir?

Looby. Yes, and drink better.

Dias. So much the worse; that great Appetition of Frigid and Humid, is an Indication of Heat and Aridity within. Do you sleep much?

Looby. Yes, when I have made a good Supper.

Mummy. Do you dream?

Looby. Sometimes.

Dias. Of what Nature are those Dreams?

Looby. Of the Nature of all Dreams, I think —
S'bud! I'm in a Dream now, by what I can find.

[Aside.]

[All thro' this Scene Looby looks with Amazement and Terror, first on one Doctor, then on t'other.]

Mummy. Is your Body open, Sir?

Looby. Hoop, hoop! the Men are mad, I think —
my Body's empty, Sir, and I want a little Victuals and Drink, with your Leave.

Dias. A little Patience, Sir, we are going to reason upon your Case, and then —

Looby. Hoity, toity! there does not want much Reasoning to eat a Bit.

Mummy. As it so is, that no Malady can be cur'd, unless we are acquainted with it; and as we cannot be acquainted with it without establishing an Idea of it, by Symptoms Diagnostick and Prognostick; permit me, my ancient Friend and Brother, to observe, that our Patient here present is unfortunately affected, possess'd, and oppress'd with that sort of Madness which we justly term Hypochondriack Melancholy; so call'd not only by the *Latins*, but also by the *Greeks*, which is very necessary to be taken notice of in this Case.

Loob. Sir! What! How!

Mummy.

Mummy. No Interruption, Sir, I crave. — Now the Cause of this Distemper lies chiefly in the Spleen, the Heat and Inflammation of which conveys to the Brain abundance of crass and fuliginous *Effluvia*, whose black and malignant Vapours obscurify, mudify, and infest the Animal Spirits, and cause a Depravation of the Functions of the cogitant Faculty. And for an incontestable Symptom that our Patient here is tainted with that Distemper, you may only observe that Sadness of Countenance with which he beholds us; that Sorrowfulness of Face, accompanied with Fear and Distrust; that haggard Physiognomy, and those rolling Eyeballs: All this being premis'd, and taken for granted, let us proceed to the Remedies necessary to Curation.

Looby. Where the murrain am I! and what the Plague are they going to do to me!

Mummy. Good Sir, be silent. — First of all then, I'm of opinion that he should be copiously *Phlebotomis'd*, especially in the *Jugular*, where the Orifice ought to be sufficiently large; in the next Place, some potent *Catharticks* may safely be administer'd; and lastly, an *Emetick* or two of the roughest kind may rationally take place — *dixi* — Brother.

Dias. Heaven forbid, Brother, that I should add any thing to what you have said. The Arguments you have us'd are so weighty and learned, that 'tis impossible but his Distemper must be what you have pronounced; or if it were not, it must necessarily become so for the Beauty and Justness of your Ratiocination. Nothing therefore remains to be done by me, but to compliment the Gentleman upon being so happy as to be out of his Wits, that he may experience the Efficacy and Gentleness of your Medicines.

Looby. Gentlemen, 'tis an Hour since you began, and so long I have hearken'd to you; be pleas'd to satisfy me if you ben't acting a Comedy here?

Mummy. Heaven forbid, Sir. — No, no, we are not in jest. No body ever found us so yet, nor is Physick a thing to be jested with.

Looby.

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Looby. What the murrain d'ye mean by all this then? And what the Devil would you be at with your *Hog-nosticks* and *Dognosticks*?

Mummy. Good. Injurious Language; this is a Symptom we wanted for a Confirmation of his Malady. This may turn to Phrensy.

Looby. Who the Duce have they put me among here?

Dias. Another Diagnostick, frequent Soliloquy.

Looby. No more of this — but let's be gone.

Mummy. Another — Inquietude to change Place.

Looby. In one Word, Friend, what's the Meaning of this Affair? What would you have of me?

Mummy. We would make a Cure of you, as we were desired to do.

Looby. Cure me!

Dias. Yes.

Loob. S'blood! I an't sick.

Mummy. A bad Symptom — A Patient not to be sensible of his Illness. Look ye, Sir, we know how ye are, better than you do your self; we are Physicians that can see clearly into your Constitution.

Looby. If you are Physicians, avant! I abominate all Doctors and Apothecaries.

Mummy. Um! — the Man's more mad than we imagin'd.

Looby. I never took so much as a single Pill in my Life. My Father and Mother were o' the same Mind, and died both o'em without the Help of a Doctor.

Mummy. I don't wonder then they got such a Fool of a Son.

Looby. No, no, the Family of the *Loobies* had always more Sense than to deal in Drugs.

Mummy. What do I hear!

Dias. Brother *Mummy*, you have the Symptoms of Amazement upon you!

Looby. Who! Brother *Mummy*! this is not my Uncle, sure!

Mummy.

32 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Mummy. Mercy o' me! is it my Cousin *Looby* that I have been treating as a Madman all this while?

Looby. Yes, yes, 'tis your Cousin *Looby* indeed.

Mummy. Nephew, I beg your Pardon sincerely. --- How did this come? How did this happen?

Looby. Why, it happen'd that that pretended Friend of mine, who would needs scrape an Acquaintance with me, is a little, nasty, rascally Dog, and brought me here on purpose to abuse me. — But with your Leave, Uncle, I'd rather tell you the Story over a Bottle, for I'm plaguy thirsty with being so devilishly frightned.

Mummy. This is astonishing, Brother *Diascordium*. It must certainly have been some Contrivance to balk the Match I have concluded for the Squire, with my Patient Sir *Credulous Hippish's* Daughter; but we'll probe it to the bottom. However, Nephew, for the present, be pleas'd to walk in and take some Repast; you shall repose in my House to-night, and early in the Morning I'll introduce you to your Mistress, and have the Nuptials solemniz'd at once.

Looby. Ay, ay, Uncle, no Nuptials to-night, I beg of ye. I have more Stomach for Repast and Repose, as you call 'em.

Mummy. 'Tis prudently said, Nephew. I'll wait on you, Brother *Diascordium*.

[*Exeunt Mummy and Looby.*]

Dias. In Verity, I don't understand this Proceeding. It is by no means agreeable to Practice and Form, to let a Patient slip thro' one's Fingers at this rate. When once we get anyone under our Regimen, we never fail either to kill him or cure him.

When Skill we want to conquer the Disease,
We're sure by Death to give the Patient Ease:
For Save, or Slay, this Privilege we claim,
Tho' Credit suffers, still the Fee's the same.

The End of the Second Act.

A C T



A C T III. S C E N E I.

S C E N E, *Part of the Square before
Sir Credulous Hippish's House.*

B E A U M O N T and H E A R T L Y.

Beau. **W**AS ever so fair a Project so foolishly baffled? Had there been any Counterplot in the Case, or any Opposition on his Part, it would not have vex'd one so much; but when the Booby perfectly prevented us in our Design, and jump'd into the Net before 'twas well spread for him, then to have all blasted by a scurvy Accident, to be outwitted by mere Chance, was insupportable.

Heart. 'Twas provoking enough. ——— However, it did not prove altogether in vain, we have gain'd another Day by it, which we must take care to make use of.

Beau. True; but did not you give me Hopes, *Heartly*, that I should see the dear Girl?

Heart. Yes, and there wants only a little of your own Dexterity to bring it about immediately.

Beau. How? which way? tell me quickly, dear *Heartly*.

Heart. Why, my Brother, you must know, suffers no Male Creature to come nigh her, but her Musick-Master who teaches her to sing, whom *Primrose* has prevail'd on to send you as his Deputy, under Pretence of being ill himself. She's now waiting for you in the Hall, in order to give you your proper Credentials; and then you have nothing more to do than to be cautious how you play your Part, and to take care that your Passion does not run away with your Reason.

D

Beau.

34 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Beau. Dear *Heartly*, thou best of Friends, let me embrace thee for this Goodness.

Heart. Nay, pr'ythee keep thy Raptures for thy Mistress. Have your Wits about you a little at present, and let's go in and set to Business.

Beau. With all my Heart——lead the way then.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Sir Credulous's Chamber.*

Sir Cred. Dr. *Mummy* order'd me every Morning to take twelve Turns in my Chamber; but I profess I forgot if I was to take 'em the long way, or the broad way of the Room; that was forgetting a material Point.——Um——Um——What shall I do in this doubtful Case?——I believe I had best ev'n keep to my Chair 'till farther Orders, for the Doctor is mighty rigid in these things; and if I should take but one Turn more or less than he prescrib'd, I should be severely reprov'd——A very punctual able honest Man in truth. I am mighty happy in a Physician, I must needs say, and have one that knows how to manage me to a Hair.

Enter Primrose.

Prim. Sir, there is——

Sir Cred. Speak softly, you Slut, thou stun'st my very Brains; dostn't consider that sick People are not to be bawl'd to at such a rate?

Prim. I came to tell you, Sir.

Sir Cred. Speak softly, I tell thee.

Prim. Sir.

[*Whispering very low.*]

Sir Cred. Hey!

Prim. I came to tell you, Sir.

[*Whispering.*]

Sir Cred. Hey!——Speak a little louder, Hussy.

Prim. Here's one wants to speak with you.

Sir Cred. Let him come in.

Enter Beaumont.

Beau. Sir ——

Prim.

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Prim. Don't speak so loud, you'll stun my Master's Brain.

Beau. I'm glad, Sir, to find you out of Bed, and to see that you're so much better than you was.

Prim. Better! 'tis false, my Master's always ill.

Beau. I beg Pardon, I only judg'd from the Gentleman's Looks — He looks very well.

Prim. What do you mean with your Looks well? He looks very ill; he never was worse in his Life I tell you.

Sir Cred. She's in the right.

Prim. He walks, sleeps, eats, and drinks indeed, like other Folks; but that does not hinder him from being very ill.

Sir Cred. She says true.

Beau. I'm very sorry for't. — I come, Sir, from the young Lady your Daughter's Musick-Master; he was suddenly taken very ill, and has sent me to practise over some Lessons with the Lady in his Absence.

Sir Cred. Very well. — Call *Belina*.

Prim. I believe, Sir, 'twill be better to shew the Gentleman into her Chamber.

Sir Cred. No, no, bid her come hither.

Prim. He can't teach her as he ought to do unless they are alone.

Sir Cred. Go call her hither, I tell thee.

Prim. Why, Sir, you are not in a Condition to be disturb'd at present. They'll only stun your Brains.

Sir Cred. No, no, I love Musick, and I shall be glad to hear my Daughter sing. — O, here she comes! Go you and see if my Lady's drest. [*Exit Prim.*]

Enter Belina.

Sir Cred. Come here, Child. Your Musick-Master, it seems, is taken ill, and has sent this Gentleman to teach you in his stead.

Belina. 'Tis he indeed. [*Aside.*] — If the Gentleman, Sir, will be so kind as to shew me what he'd have me do, I'll comply with his Instructions as well as I can.

Beau. Charming Creature! [*Afide.*] — My good Fortune would be extraordinary, Madam, if I could inform you of any thing that might be of the least Advantage; and I'll spare no pains —

Sir Cred. Very well, Sir, but will you be pleas'd to let me hear my Daughter sing?

Beau. I waited your Commands, Sir. — I have just recollected the Scene of a little Opera, lately compos'd, which the Lady and I will sing together. — Here Madam's your Part.

Belina. My Part, Sir?

Beau. Pray make no Difficulty, Madam, but permit me to instruct you in the Nature of the Scene we are going to sing. I have a very indifferent Voice, but 'twill be sufficient if I can make my self understood; *Sir Credulous* will have the Goodness to pardon me —

Sir Cred. Ay, ay; are the Verses fine?

Beau. 'Tis a little *Extempore* Opera; so that what you hear sung will be a kind of numerous Prose, such as the Passion and Exigency the two Persons were in, inspir'd 'em with off-hand.

Sir Cred. Very well, begin then.

Beau. The Subject of the Scene is this. — A young Shepherd being debar'd the Sight of the Fair he ador'd, by the Confinement she was under from the Moroseness of a Father, the Violence of his Passion made him speedily resolve to apply for Consent, which he obtain'd her Permission to do; but at the same time is inform'd that another Match was concluded on for his Charmer, and all things prepar'd to celebrate the Ceremony; thus stung with Anguish and Despair, he resolves on a Stratagem to introduce himself into the House of his Shepherdess, that he might learn from her own Mouth, her Sentiments, and his Destiny. There he meets with Preparations for all that he fears. Judge you, Sir, judge you, Madam, what a cruel Stroke this must be to the Heart of our Shepherd. He casts the most languishing Looks on the Beauty he adores, till the Transport of his

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his Passion makes him break thro' all Constraint, and address her in this manner. [Sings.

A DIALOGUE SONG.

Beau. *Oh! Silvia, 'tis too much to bear;
Break cruel Silence, and reply;
Your Love, or your Disdain declare;
Say, must I live, or must I die?*

Belina. *In this Extremity of Pain,
When Looks and Sighs my Passion prove,
To strive to hide it is but vain,
Ah Thyrsis! need I say I love?*

Beau. *Oh! what transporting Words I hear!
Once more, and all my Doubts remove:
Ah Silvia, I but dreamt I fear.*

Belina. *Yes, Thyrsis, I must own I love.*

Beau. *A thousand times those Words repeat.*

Belina. *Yes, Thyrsis, thee alone I love.*

Beau. *Did ever Musick sound so sweet!*

Again —

Belina. — *Yes, Thyrsis, thee I love.*

Belina. *But, Shepherd, say, may I believe
That you will ne'er my Heart deceive?*

Beau. *No, let Experience be the Test,
Which loves the longest and the best.*

Both. $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{'Tis done — and may the Powers above} \\ \text{Blast those who first prove false to Love.} \end{array} \right.$

Sir Cred. And what says the Father to all this?

Beau. Nothing at all.

Sir Cred. Why then, let me tell you, Sir, the Father was a Fool to bear with such Impertinence, and say nothing. In short, your Play is of very ill Example. The Shepherd *Thyrsis* is an impertinent Cox-

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comb, and the Shepherdess *Silvia* a saucy *Minx*, to talk at that rate before her Father: — Let me see that Paper there? Heyday! where are the Words you have been finging all this time? Here's nothing but Notes!

Beau. Oh Sir! — as for that — they — they have lately invented a way of writing down the Words in the Notes themselves.

Sir Cred. O! have they so? Your Servant for that, Sir —

Enter Primrose.

Prim. I'faith, Sir, I'm o' your Side now, and renounce all that I said Yesterday. Here's Squire *Looby* come with his Uncle to make you a Visit. You'll have a charming Son-in-Law! 'tis one of the genteelst wittiest Mortals that ever was seen. He spoke but two Words, and they quite transported me. Oh! Madam, you'll be in love with him at once.

Sir Cred. [*To Beaumont, who is going.*] Won't you stay and see the Gentleman that is to marry my Daughter, Sir? He's the Nephew of my Physician, and a very wealthy Gentleman of *Cornwal*.

Beau. My Company, Sir, mayn't be so proper at present; so I'll wait in the Hall to give the young Lady another Lesson when the Interview is over.

[*Exit Beaumont.*]

Sir Cred. Your Servant, Sir — O! here they are. Come, put your selves in Order.

Enter Dr. Mummy and Looby.

Sir Cred. You'll excuse me, Gentlemen, from uncovering my Head; you know the Consequence, Sir, 'tis by your own Orders.

Mum. We are in all our Visits to consult the Welfare of our Patients. — My Nephew and I, Sir, are come here to express the Ecstasy we are in for the Favour you design us, of admitting us into your Alliance.

Sir Cred.

Sir Cred. I receive the Honour you do me, Sir, with a great deal of Satisfaction; and nothing which a poor sick Man can do to return the Obligation, shall be ever omitted.

Mum. Come, Nephew, advance, and make your Compliments.

Loob. Must not I begin with the Father?

Mum. Yes.

Loob. I wish I may remember all my Speeches. [*Aside.*]
— Sir, I salute, acknowledge, cherish, and revere you as a second Father; but a Second Father to whom I may justly say, that I'm more indebted than to the first: I was his Son by Necessity, but am yours by your own Free-will. And as much superior as the Faculties of the Mind are to those of the Body, so much more valuable do I esteem this future Filiation.

Mum. My Nephew, *Sir Credulous*, has been at Oxford.

Prim. Ay, Heavens bless him! he talks as if he had.

Looby. I think that was pretty well done, now.

Mum. *Optimè!* to the Lady, to the Lady.

Looby. Madam, 'tis with much Justice that Heaven has bestow'd on you the Name of Mother-in-Law —

Sir Cred. Hold, hold, Sir, that's not my Wife; 'tis my Daughter you are talking to.

Looby. Say you so? Where's my Lady then?

Sir Cred. She'll wait on you presently.

Looby. Shall I stay 'till she come, Uncle?

Mum. No, no, make your Compliments to the young Lady first.

Looby. Madam, I feel my self animated and enliven'd by the Sunshine of your Beauty. Permit me therefore, Madam, at the Altar of your Charms, to make an Offering of my Heart, which aspires to no other Glory than that of being your most humble, most obedient, and most faithful Servant, Slave and Husband.

Sir Cred. Well, Madam, and what say you to this now?

Belina. I say, Sir, that the Gentleman does Miracles.

Prim. Ay, if he proves but as good a Lover as he is an Orator, and makes as handſom Presents to me as he does Speeches to my Lady. — He's a wonderful Galant, that's all.

Sir Cred. My Easy-Chair here, quickly — and Chairs for the Company. — Sit you there, Daughter. — You hear, Sir, how every body admires your Nephew.

Mum. Sir, 'tis not becauſe he's my Nephew, but I think I may ſay that I've Reason to be ſatisfied with him; and all that ſee him ſpeak of him as a Perſon that has no Unluckineſs in him. He never indeed had ſuch a Livelineſs of Imagination, or Readineſs of Wit, as may be obſerv'd in ſome People; for which Reason I would have had his Father made him o' the Faculty. When he was little, he never was what they call Roguiſh or Waggiſh, but was always cloſe, quiet, and taciturn. 'Twas with the utmoſt Difficulty they taught him to read, for he was nine Years old before he knew his Alphabet. Good, ſaid I to my ſelf, your Trees that grow the ſloweſt, bear the beſt Fruit; that Backwardneſs to comprehend, that Heavineſs of Imagination, are ſure Preſages of a future good Judgment. He was then ſent to the College, ſince which I have never ſeen him till laſt Night; but I find, to my Comfort, that he's turn'd out according to what he promis'd.

Looby. Yes, Madam, for you muſt know I'm a Juſtice of Peace in my own Country.

Prim. That's charming indeed, Madam. Why, you have met with a Benefit-Ticket here, truly — What, to be the Juſtice's Lady, and be coach'd down to his Worſhip's Borough Town, which you'll find moſt fruitful in Aunts and Couſins. Then to be introduc'd into the *Beau Monde*, and viſit the Bailiff's Lady and the Excife-man's Wife, who will do you
the

the Honour of the Elbow-Chair, and Upper-end of the Table. — Then at *Christmas*-time you'll have a Ball in his Worship's great free-stone Hall, accompany'd with a fine Concert of a Dulcimer, a Bass-Viol, and two Pair of Bagpipes.

Looby. Ay, ay, ay, ay, she'll want for no kind of Recreation for that matter, for we have the Players there too in the Summer-time, and the *Merry-Andrews*, and your Leatherdeman Folk. And — Whu! let us alone for jovial Doings, I warrant ye.

Prim. That's pure, I'll swear. There's no withstanding such a Match, Madam.

Sir Cred. But see, here comes my Wife.

Enter Lady Hippish.

My Love, this is Dr. *Mummy's* Nephew.

Looby. Madam, 'tis with great Justice that Heaven has bestow'd on you the Name of Mother-in-Law, for by all Laws, both Divine and Human, you are —

Lady Hip. You are welcome to Town, Sir, and I'm glad we have the Honour of seeing you here.

Looby. Because by all Laws, both Divine and Human — both Divine and Human, you are — Madam, you interrupted me in the middle of my Speech, and made me quite forget what I had to say.

Mummy. Reserve it, Nephew, for another Opportunity.

Sir Cred. I wish, my Life, you had been here just now.

Prim. Ah, Madam! you don't know what you have lost by not being here at the *Second Father*, the *future Filiation*, and the *Offering up of the Heart*.

Sir Cred. Come, *Belina*, give the Gentleman your Hand, and plight your Troth to him.

Belina. Sir!

Sir Cred. Sir! — What d'ye mean by that?

Belina. I beg, Sir, you won't think of hurrying things at this rate; give us time at least to know one another, and see if our Inclinations are mutual or not.

Looby.

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Looby. Look'e, Madam, for my Part, I've no Oc-
casion for waiting any longer, I'm ready, if you are—
and so let's see your Hand.

Belina. But I am not, Sir; your Merit, tho' 'tis
very extraordinary, has not made sufficient Impression
on me yet.

Looby. S'nigs! why so waundy coy now! — [*Afide.*]
These *Londoners* have a power of Modesty, I find
that.

Prim. Lack-a-day! Madam, why should you make so
much Resistance? Sure, 'tis a most desirable Alliance—
Law and Physick — Physick and Law — they are both
such honourable honest Professions, that I don't know
which ought to stand first.

Lady Hip. Why, Miss has fix'd her Inclination per-
haps somewhere else, and modestly made a Choice for
herself.

Belina. If I had, Madam, it should be such a one
as might be warranted both by Reason and Honour.

Sir Cred. Hey-day! I make a very pleasant Figure
here!

Lady Hip. If I were in your Place, Child, I should
be apt to dispute the Election with her tho', and ei-
ther make her take the Person I thought proper, or—
I know what I'd do.

Belina. Oh, Madam! I'm sensible of your Affection
for me; but perhaps your kind Endeavours may not be
fortunate enough to succeed.

Lady Hip. Perhaps not, for such prudent well-bred
Daughters as you, Madam, whose Actions are all war-
ranted by Reason and Honour, make a Jest of the O-
bedience they owe to a Father, and scorn to take
Counsel from any but their own Heart.

Belina. The Duty of a Daughter is not unlimited,
Madam, and neither Law nor Reason makes it extend
to some Cases.

Lady Hip. That's to say, you are very willing to be
married, but you are not willing your Father should
have any hand in the Match. — The young Lady,
you find, my Dear, has a mind to choose for her self,
so

so you must not presume to interpose; to say the Truth, you have no Occasion, Miss is certainly come to Years of Discretion.

Belina. If my Father can't approve of the Person I like, I conjure him at least not to force me to take one that I never can like.

Sir Cred. Gentlemen, I beg your Pardon for all this.

Belina. Every one, Madam, has their End in marrying. As mine is to give my Heart where I give my Hand, I think there's great Precaution requir'd in the Choice. There are some who marry only to be free from their Parents Restraint; then there are others, you know, Madam, who make Wedlock a Trade, who marry only to get good Jointures, and pass without Scruple from Husband to Husband, with no other View but to bury them all, and make up a Fortune out of the Ruin of their Families; such indeed stand little on Ceremony, the Person of the Man is the least thing they consider.

Lady Hip. Good lack! Miss, why, you harangue finely to-day; but I would willingly know, methinks, what you mean by all this?

Belina. I, Madam! I mean what I say.

Lady Hip. You are such a Fool, Child, that positively there's no enduring of you. — You have a lovely forward Girl, here, my Dear; nay, her Modesty is remarkable every where; for when we were at the Play last, there was some beastly Speeches which made all the rest of us cover our Faces, and stop our Ears; but Miss sat as calm and barefac'd all the while, as if she had been at a Sermon, and did not so much as blush at the abominable Leudness.

Belina. You perhaps, Madam, are better skill'd in Leudness than I am; for my Part, I saw none at all in it. I always consider things on the Side they are shewn me, and never turn 'em to look for what's not fit to be seen.

Lady Hip. But a Woman's Modesty and Virtue —

Belina,

Belina. A Woman's Modesty and Virtue don't lie in Grimace, Madam; that affected Niceness which is so much shock'd at the Shadow of things, will often bear with the Reality. Don't you remember, Madam, that the very Footmen cry'd out, That your Ears were more chaste than all the rest of your Person?

Lady Hip. Your Insolence is not to be equall'd, Child —

Belina. I know, Madam, you want to provoke me to make you some impertinent Answer; but I tell you beforehand you shall not have that Advantage over me.

Lady Hip. You don't know, my Dear, how silly you are.

Belina. No, no, Madam, 'tis to no purpose.

Lady Hip. You have a ridiculous Pride, an impertinent Presumption, which make you odious to every Creature.

Belina. That won't do; I'll be discreet in spite of you; and to deprive you of the Hopes of succeeding in your Design, I'll instantly remove my self out of your Sight — and so, Madam, your most obedient.

[*Exit Belina.*]

Sir Cred. Hark'e, *Belina*, there's no Medium in this; either resolve within these six Hours to marry this Gentleman, or go seek your Fortune, which you please.

Mum. Well, Sir, my Nephew and I will take leave of you for the present.

Sir Cred. But stay, Sir, and tell me a little how I am first.

Mum. [*Feeling his Pulse.*] Um — all is not right here, we are a little too much upon the Hurry still. This capricious Pulsation shews the Machine to be much out of order, and indicates a Defect in the *Parenchyma Splenicum*, that's to say, the Spleen.

Sir Cred. Ha! Dr. *Opium* was with me this Morning, and told me my Distemper lay in my Liver.

Mum. Ay, ay, when you say the *Parenchyma*, you mean

mean both one and the other, because of the strict Sympathy there is between 'em, by means of the *Vas Breve*; he ordered you no doubt to eat all your Meat roasted.

Sir Cred. No! all boil'd.

Mum. Ay, ay, roasted, boil'd — 'tis the same thing — he order'd right.

Sir Cred. But Sir, be pleas'd to tell me how many Grains of Salt I may put into an Egg.

Mum. Six, eight, ten, by equal Numbers, as we prescribe in Medicines by unequal Numbers.

Sir Cred. Sir, your Servant. — Well, Gentlemen, I shall expect you again in the Evening, when every thing shall be ready to solemnize the Nuptials.

Mum. Your Servant, Sir.

Looby. Your Servant till then, Sir; your Servant till then. [Exeunt Mummy and Looby.]

Sir Cred. My Life, what ails thee? Why dost thou look so concern'd, my Dear? I pr'ythee give thyself no Uneasiness for the Behaviour of that Minx. I'll humble her, I warrant thee.

Lady Hip. Oh! my Dear, you little know what Anguish I feel.

Sir Cred. Lack! lack!

Lady Hip. To be accus'd of Ingratitude and want of Love for thee, my Soul — Oh! — the bare Thought of it is Horror inconceivable. My Heart is so swol'n that I cannot speak, and I believe 'twill kill me.

[Cries aloud.]
Sir Cred. [Running towards the Door his Daughter went out at.] Oh! Baggage, I would I had thee here, I'm sorry I kept my Hands off the Gipsy, and did not break her Bones on the Spot. Come, my Chuck, dry thy Eyes, dry thy Eyes. Ods heart! I'm ready to weep my self to see thee take on so. I have a good mind to turn the Slut out of my Doors.

Lady Hip. No, no, Sir *Credulous*, 'tis I that must put an End to these unhappy Diffensions. I see what Uneasiness

Uneasiness I occasion here, and find there's a Necessity for my leaving the House.

Sir Cred. How, my Life! what's that thou say'st?

Lady Hip. I'm envy'd and hated, and all Endeavours us'd, I see, to make you suspect me.

Sir Cred. But you find, my Love, what heed I give to 'em.

Lady Hip. They'll not stop here, you may be sure; and those very Stories which you now reject, may one Day possibly meet with Credit; and then—Oh!

Sir Cred. Never, my Soul, never.

Lady Hip. Ah! my Dear, a Daughter may easily mislead her Father. We had better therefore part at once, my Soul, which will remove the Cause of these Family Discords, and prevent any farther Assaults on my Reputation—and yet 'tis Death to me to think of parting from thee too. [Cries.

Sir Cred. Oh dear! Oh dear! if thou talk'st at this rate any longer, thou wilt break my Heart. Part from thee! No; but I'll part from the Hussy that's the Occasion of this; and if she makes the least Difficulty to marry the Gentleman to-night, I'll send her into the Country to-morrow, and confine her there for Life.

Lady Hip. Alas! my Heart, not on my Account; I forgive her every thing, bear her no Ill-will, nor lay any thing to her Charge; I wish I could do her any Service, with all my Soul.

Sir Cred. Generous Creature!

Lady Hip. But to live with her after this, is what I can't—Heaven knows what the malicious World would immediately think on't; they'd say that I did it out of nothing but Policy; and, because I knew my self guilty, pretended a charitable Zeal for my Accuser.

Sir Cred. No, no, my Life, she shall be kept at a distance, I promise thee.

Lady Hip. Well, my Dear, I must leave thee for the present, I have a little Business in the City which must not be neglected; and I shall go by Mr. Cranny's, if you have any thing to say to him.

Sir Cred.

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Sir Cred. Yes, my Heart, call on him then be sure, and bid him make haste with you know what, for I'll sign and seal this very Night.

Lady Hip. Alas! my Soul, all the Riches in the World have no Charms for me, unless I enjoy them with my Jewel; and if I do receive of you the Gift you design me, 'tis only because I'm afraid the Estate will fall into Hands that will make an ill Use of it.

Sir Cred. I know it, my Dear, I know it very well.

Lady Hip. Stay, my Love, you forget you can't walk without your Cane. [Going out.]

Sir Cred. That's true indeed, my Life. — This Woman loves me strangely! 'tis incredible how much she loves me! [Going for his Cane.]

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *Belina's Chamber.*

Beaumont, Belina, and Agnes.

Belina. For Heaven's sake, let us take care we are not surpris'd; if we should be seen together now, all would be ruin'd. — Dear *Naggy*, have an Eye, and tell us if you see any body.

Agnes. Yes, Sister, I have look'd in every Corner, there's not a Mouse stirring.

Beau. Dear *Belina*, how great is my Pleasure! and what a Loss am I at to express my Affection! Whilst I had nothing but the Language of Looks in my Power, I thought I had a thousand things to say; but now I've obtain'd the wish'd-for Liberty, Joy stifles my Words, and I'm silent.

Belina. But tell me, *Beaumont*, have you thought of any thing to favour our Designs? Shall we be able to set aside this hateful Match?

Agnes. Sister, Sister, here's my Mama!

Belina. Undone! you that way, and I this, quick, quick.

Agnes. No, no, stay, she's gone down another way.

Belina.

Belina. I wish she has not seen or overheard us.

Beau. Yes, *Belina*, we have several Stratagems in hand, all ready to produce upon occasion, which your Uncle and *Primrose* have engag'd to execute: But, as in Comedies 'tis good to defer the Pleasure of a Surprise, and not anticipate what will be afterwards seen, so yours be the Diversion, without inquiring into the Springs we shall cause to play.

Enter Primrose.

Prim. Come, han't you done yet?

Beau. But, dear *Belina*, suppose all our Endeavours should fail? which Heaven forbid! —

Belina. What shall I say to you?

Beau. What shall you say to me!

Belina. Ay.

Beau. What any one would say who really loves — That in spite of all your Father's Power you'll resolve to be mine.

Belina. Oh! *Beaumont*, tempt not my Duty with the Proposals of a terrible Extremity, which I hope we never shall come to; but this be assur'd of, That as I'll never be forc'd to give my Hand against my Inclinations, so I will never give it against the Obedience which is due to a Father.

Beau. How *Belina*!

Belina. No, so well as I love *Beaumont*, I would not even for him throw off my Sex's Modesty, and a Daughter's Duty.

Beau. Very well, Madam, I perceive what your Affection is by your Resolution.

Belina. Why, what would you have me to do, *Beaumont*?

Beau. Do, Madam! why accept of this Husband by all means.

Belina. You advise me to it?

Beau. Yes, the Choice is glorious, I think.

Belina. Very well, Sir, I'll follow your Advice.

Beau. Very readily, I don't question, Madam.

Belina. As readily as you gave it, Sir.

Beau.

Beau. I gave it to please you, Madam.

Belina. And to please you I take it, Sir.

Prim. So! what will this come to?

Beau. Is this your Love then, *Belina*?

Belina. Pray let us talk no more of that; you told me freely, that I ought to accept of the Man my Father propos'd, and I declare I intend to follow your wholsom Advice.

Beau. Don't excuse your self, Madam, upon my Intentions; that's only catching at a frivolous Pretence to authorize your Infidelity.

Belina. You may think so, if you please.

Beau. Yes, yes, I know I may.

Belina. The Loss is not great, you'll soon make your self easy under it.

Beau. If I can, I will, you may be sure of it, Madam; if I can't effect it, I'll at least feign it; for 'tis an unpardonable Baseness to testify Love for one that abandons us.

Belina. The Sentiment is certainly noble and sublime, and I would have you follow it by all means.

Beau. I am sufficiently insulted, Madam, and will immediately content you. [Going.]

Belina. Very well.

Beau. [Returning.] Remember, however, that I only follow your own Example.

Belina. My Example! Be it so.

Beau. Enough; you shall be punctually obey'd.

[Going to the Door.]

Belina. So much the better.

Beau. [Returning.] Hey?

Belina. What?

Beau. Did not you call me?

Belina. I! — you dream sure!

Beau. Well, I'll be gone then. — Farewel, Madam.

Belina. Farewel, Sir.

Prim. O' my Conscience, you are both of you raving mad! I had only a mind to see how far it would go. — Hark'e, Sir. [Taking Beaumont by the Hand.]

E

Beau.

50 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Beau. What would you have, *Primrose*?

Prim. Come hither.

Beau. No, I'm resolv'd —

Prim. How!

Belina. My Presence drives him away, I'll leave the Place. [Going.]

Prim. Where are you running?

[Leaving Beaumont, and running to Belina.]

Belina. Let me go.

Prim. You must come back, I tell you.

[Bringing her back.]

Beau. The Sight of me, I find, disturbs her; I had better make her easy. [Going.]

Prim. [Leaving Belina, and running again to Beaumont.] Again! give over this Folly, and come here both of you. Are you mad to have this Quarrel, when you ought to be consulting your mutual Safety?

Beau. Did not you hear how she talk'd to me?

Prim. Are you turn'd Fool?

Belina. Did not you see how he us'd me?

Prim. Fools alike! She has no other Desire than to keep herself for you. He loves you alone, and wishes only to be yours. — Come, give me both your Hands. — Yours.

Beau. What does this signify? [Giving his Hand.]

Prim. Oh! — Come, yours.

Belina. To what End is all this? [Giving her Hand.]

Prim. Come, come, quickly. — You both of you love more than you imagine.

Beau. Don't do things with Uneasiness. Look on me without Hatred, Madam. [Belina turns her Eyes on Beaumont, and smiles.] — That Look has stung me to the Soul! Oh, *Belina*, forgive the Rashness of my Passion; 'twas nothing but Excess of jealous Fondness.

Prim. Come, none of your silly Excuses to waste more time; 'twould be mighty proper you should be seen together now. — Go you immediately and inform Mr. *Heartly* of the Part he's to play. Get you into your Closet, and be ready to fall sick at a Moment's

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Moment's Warning if it should be necessary, whilst I play the Duce and all below Stairs.

Beau. Whatever may be the Consequence, *Belina*, my greatest Hope is in your Constancy.

Prim. Lud! what silly Creatures Lovers are! I shall now have more Difficulty to part 'em, than I had just now to bring 'em together. — Go, I say.

Belina. You may depend, Sir —

Prim. What a Clack yours is! — Be gone, I say; this way, this way. [*Pushes off Belina.*]

Beau. Well, *Primrose*, I don't know how we shall reward thee for this Industry.

Prim. Oh, Sir! I desire no other Return but the Pleasure I take in doing it; Virtue, you know, is its own Reward.

Beau. Yes, a Chambermaid's Virtue is most literally so; for if she can get nothing by keeping it, she'll be sure to part with it for something.

Prim. Ay, Mr. *Beaumont*, but the World's to blame in placing all Virtue in one foolish Thing. — Why, there's my Lady *Hippish*, now, is a perfect She-Devil in every thing else, but still she's a Woman of Virtue. She robs her Husband, and ruins his Children; but she's a Woman of Virtue. — Defames her Friends, and pays her Servants no Wages; but because she has not Good-nature enough to give any Satisfaction to another, she's a Woman of most strict Virtue, forsooth. When such an honest Gipsy as I, must be vilify'd and despis'd, only for having too much Humanity to let a young Fellow die at one's Feet; well, 'tis not right, I say; 'tis my Opinion;

That she's with most heroick Virtue blest,
Who spares no Pains to succour the Distrest,
Nor spares no Cost to heal the Love-sick Breast. }

The End of the Third Act.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Sir Credulous Hippish's House.**Sir Credulous in his Easy-Chair.*

MERCY on us! why does not this Mr. *Galley-pot* come? [*Looking on his Watch.*] Oh shameful! Here's a whole Morning has been thrown away, without so much as taking one single Medicine. — These Apothecaries are bewitch'd sure! 'Tis a horrible thing a poor Creature must be left to die for want of a Bolus. — Oh here. — No, 'tis my Wife. — I thought, my Love, you had been gone into the City.

Enter Lady Hippish.

Lady Hip. I was prevented, my Life, by an Accident, I thought it my Duty to inform you of before I went. As I pass'd by *Belina's* Chamber, just now, I saw a young Fellow in earnest Conference with her.

Sir Cred. How! a young Fellow with my Daughter!

Lady Hip. Yes. The Regard I have for you and your Family, my Dear, made me endeavour to learn what they were talking of, but I could hear nothing to the purpose — only a few luscious Expressions, and a Contrivance how to cheat the old Gentleman, as they call'd him.

Sir Cred. Luscious Expressions, d'ye say? — The old Gentleman! What old Gentleman? — Who?

Lady Hip. I can't guess, Child: Not you, to be sure, my Dear — one should think not. But your little

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little Daughter, *Agnes*, was with 'em, and can tell you all.

Sir Cred. Send her to me here, my Love; send her to me here.

Lady Hip. I will. ——— Good by t'ye, my Love, for a little while; I'll see thee again as soon as possible.

Sir Cred. Goodby to thee, my Life. [*Exit Lady Hippish.*] Ah, that impudent Minx, *Belina!* I don't wonder now at her Obstinacy.

Enter Agnes.

Agnes. What would you have, Papa? My Mama told me that you wanted to speak with me.

Sir Cred. Yes, come here ——— nearer — turn this way — look up — look upon me.

Agnes. Well, Papa.

Sir Cred. So!

Agnes. What So, Papa?

Sir Cred. Have you nothing to tell me?

Agnes. Yes. I'll tell you the Story of the *A/s's Skin*, or the Fable of the *Crow and the Fox*.

Sir Cred. That's not what I ask you.

Agnes. What then?

Sir Cred. Ah! you cunning Gipsy ——— you know well enough what I mean.

Agnes. Indeed, Papa, but I don't.

Sir Cred. Is this the way of doing what you was bid? Did not I order you to come and tell me immediately every thing that you saw?

Agnes. Yes, Papa.

Sir Cred. And have you done so, pray?

Agnes. Yes, I am come to tell you every thing I have seen.

Sir Cred. Very well; and what have you seen to-day then?

Agnes. Nothing, Papa.

Sir Cred. Nothing!

Agnes. Nothing at all.

54 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Sir Cred. O! I shall make you see something presently. [*Shaking his Cane.*]

Agnes. O dear, Papa!

Sir Cred. You little Counterfeit, you did not tell me you saw a Man in your Sister's Chamber.

Agnes. Why, my Sister forbid me, Papa; but I'll tell you every thing.

Sir Cred. Take care you tell me the Truth then; for here's my little Finger that knows all, will tell me if you lye.

Agnes. But, pray, Papa, don't let my Sister know that I told you.

Sir Cred. No, no.

Agnes. Why then, Papa, there came a Man into my Sister's Chamber as I was there; I ask'd him what he wanted; and he told me that he was her Musick-Master.

Sir Cred. Oho! the Matter's out now. This is the Opera-monger, with his Shepherd and Shepherdess! — Well, and what then?

Agnes. My Sister came in after, and cry'd, Be gone, be gone; for Heaven's sake, be gone; I'm in Pain for you; and we shall certainly be catch'd.

Sir Cred. What then?

Agnes. Why, he would not be gone.

Sir Cred. What did he say to her?

Agnes. He said I don't know how many things to her.

Sir Cred. Ay, but what?

Agnes. He said This, and That, and T'other; that he lov'd her mightily; and that she was the prettiest Creature in the World.

Sir Cred. And then?

Agnes. Why, and then he fell upon his Knees to her.

Sir Cred. And then?

Agnes. Why, and then he kiss'd her Hands.

Sir Cred. And then?

Agnes. Why, and then he swore to be true to her, and she swore to be true to him.

Sir Cred.

Sir Cred. And then?

Agnes. Why, and then they quarrell'd a little.

Sir Cred. Quarell'd, did you say?

Agnes. Yes, Papa.

Sir Cred. Very well, I like that. And what then?

Agnes. Why then they grew more loving than ever.

Sir Cred. How! and what then, Huffy? and what then?

Agnes. Why, and then — they parted.

Sir Cred. And this is all?

Agnes. Yes, indeed, and indeed, Papa.

Sir Cred. Ay, but my little Finger mutters as if there was something else. — Hold, ay, ay, so, so; ay, my little Finger tells me that you've seen something you've not yet told me of.

[*Putting his Finger to his Ear.*]

Agnes. Ah, Papa, your little Finger is a Story-teller.

Sir Cred. Have a care what you say.

Agnes. Pray don't believe it, Papa, for it tells Fibs, upon my Word.

Sir Cred. Very well, very well, we shall find that. — Get you gone, and be sure you take notice of every thing you see.

Agnes. Yes, yes, Papa, I'll be sure to mind what you say. [Exit Agnes.]

Sir Cred. Lack-a-day! how do these Businessses distract me! I have not so much as Leisure to mind my Indisposition. In truth, this is insupportable.

[*Sitting down in his Chair.*]

Enter Heartly.

Heart. Brother, how is it? How d'ye do?

Sir Cred. Very ill, Brother, very ill.

Heart. Very ill!

Sir Cred. Yes, I'm so very faint, you'd hardly think it; I have not Strength so much as to speak.

Heart. Good lack! that's hard indeed. — I am come hither, Brother, to propose a Match for my Niece *Belina*.

Sir Cred. [*Rising out of his Chair in a Passion.*] Brother, don't speak to me of that Baggage; she's a base impertinent, saucy Quean, and I'll make her know that I am her Father.

Heart. So, so, this is mighty well; I'm glad to find your Strength return a little, and that my Visit has done you so much good. But now, Brother, I desire you'd inform me, for what Reason you would force your Daughter upon this Match, which she's so averse to?

Sir Cred. For what Reason, Brother, am I Master of my own Family, but to do what I please in't?

Heart. My Lady, I suppose, does not fail advising you to get rid of your Children at any rate.

Sir Cred. Ah, there's the Thing. — My Lady, poor Woman, is sure to be brought on the Stage; 'tis she that does all the Mischief, for certain; and all the World will have it so, I suppose.

Heart. No, no, Brother, we'll leave her out of the Question then. She's a good Woman, that has the best Intentions in the World for your Family; is free from all manner of Self-Interest; has a marvellous Tenderness for you; and shews an inconceivable Affection to your Children, that's certain. — We'll say no more therefore of her, but return to your Daughter. With what View would you marry her to this Nephew of Dr. *Mummy's*?

Sir Cred. With a View of having so skilful a Physician as Dr. *Mummy*, related to me.

Heart. Is it possible you should always be so bewitch'd with your Doctors and Apothecaries, and resolve to be sick, in spite of the World, and Nature it self?

Sir Cred. What d'ye mean by that, Brother? I have been under the Doctor's Hands here, and taking Physick, for these Twenty Years, and yet I'm not sick, I warrant.

Heart. I mean, Brother, that 'tis a plain Sign you have a strong Constitution, when, with all the
Physick

Physick you have taken, you've not been able to destroy it.

Sir Cred. But do you know, Brother, 'tis that keeps me alive? *Dr. Mummy* has assur'd me that I should absolutely go off, if I were but three Days from under his Hands; but this *Dr. Mummy* knows nothing, I suppose, in your Opinion.

Heart. Oh! yes, he can talk good *Latin*; call all Distempers by their Names, in *Greek*; knows how to define 'em and distinguish 'em. — But how to cure 'em, is what he doesn't know.

Sir Cred. But, Sir, with Submission; there are People as wise and clear-sighted as your Worship, that in case of Sicknes have Recourse to him for Cure.

Heart. There are a great many Trades, you know, that take Advantage of the Frailty of Mankind, and get their Bread from the lucky Prepossession of Error. And as the greatest Weakness Men have, is the Fear of Death, upon That the Quack builds his Fortune and Reputation.

Sir Cred. Yes, Sir, but *Dr. Mummy's* no Quack; he's a regular Physician, and one that has not the least Artifice or Craft, but deals sincerely and conscientiously by his Patients.

Heart. Right; so far from meaning ill in what he prescribes, that he dispatches you out of pure Principle; and does no more in killing you, than what he has done by his Wife and Children, and what upon occasion he would do by himself.

Sir Cred. Hold, Brother, say no more against *Dr. Mummy*, I intreat you, for it raises my Choler, and will bring my Distemper upon me.

Heart. I've done, Brother; and to change the Discourse, I must tell you; that you ought not to take such a barbarous Resolution with regard to your Daughter.

Enter Galleypot, with a Bolus and Draught in his Hand.

Sir Cred. Hold, Brother, a little, with your Leave.
Heart. What are you going to do?

Sir Cred. To take this Bolus and Draught from Mr. Galleypot, I shall have done it presently.

Heart. You jest, sure! Can't you be one Moment without swallowing some Drug or other? Put it off till another time, and let Nature have a little Respite now.

Sir Cred. Well then, to-night, Mr. Galleypot, or to-morrow Morning.

Galley. What Business have you, Sir, to oppose the Prescriptions of the Faculty? The Physick is prepar'd, and won't keep, Sir. — And since you hinder his Worship from taking my Bolus, I'll come upon you, and you shall take it for him.

Heart. Be gone, Sir. — You are not us'd, I see, to talk to People's Faces.

Galley. Medicines are not to be jested with, Sir, nor my Time to be lost. I came here by Dr. Mummy's Order, and shall acquaint him how I have been hinder'd in the Performance of my Function.

[*Exit Galleypot.*

Sir Cred. Brother, you'll be the Cause here of some Mischief.

Heart. A great Mischief indeed! spoiling a Bolus of Dr. Mummy's Prescription. — Once more, Brother, Is it impossible to cure you of the Doctor, for that's your Disease, and nothing else?

Sir Cred. Brother, you'll make me mad. — I wish you had my Distemper, and then we should see if you would rattle at this rate. — Hah! here comes Dr. Mummy, and Fury in his Face too; Heaven preserve us!

Enter Mummy and Primrose.

Mummy. Very fine! this. — I have heard a very pleasant

pleasant Story from Mrs. *Primrose* here; my Prescriptions contemn'd, and my Medicines rejected.

Sir Cred. Indeed, Sir, it was not ——

Mummy. Sir, 'tis a very great Insolence, a rank Rebellion in a Patient against his Physician.

Prim. Horrible!

Mummy. A Bolus that I took the pains to make up my self!

Sir Cred. 'Twas not me.

Mummy. Invented and compos'd according to the nicest Rules of Art!

Prim. Monstrous!

Mummy. And which was to have wrought Miracles upon the Animal Spirits!

Sir Cred. 'Twas my Brother ——

Mummy. To send it back contumaciously.

Sir Cred. 'Twas he ——

Mummy. 'Tis an enormous Insult on the Faculty.

Sir Cred. He was the Cause ——

Mummy. Such a Crime against the Profession as can never be enough punished.

Prim. Right, Doctor.

Mummy. I therefore declare, that from this time forth I break off all Correspondence with you.

Sir Cred. 'Twas my Brother ——

Mummy. I'll have no Alliance with you.

Prim. You'll serve him right, there, Doctor.

Mummy. And to prevent any Relation between us, I thus destroy the Deed of Gift I made to my Nephew in favour of the Marriage.

Prim. I'm glad o'that; let him take it for his pains.

Sir Cred. 'Tis my Brother has been the Occasion of all this Mischief; let it be brought again, and, to make you amends, I'll take double the Quantity.

Mummy. I should have set you to rights in a very little time.

Prim. He does not deserve it.

Mummy. I wanted but a Score or two of Medicines more, to have done your Business effectually.

Prim.

Prim. He's unworthy of your Care.

Mummy. But, since you refuse to be cur'd by my Hands —

Sir Cred. Ah! Brother, Brother!

Mummy. Since you have withdrawn from me the Obedience a Patient owes his Physician —

Prim. That cries for Vengeance.

Mummy. And have declar'd your self rebellious to my Regimen and Prescriptions —

Sir Cred. Not at all, not at all.

Mummy. I abandon you to your evil Constitution, to the Acidity of your Stomach, the Alkalescency of your Blood, the Acrimony of your Bile, and the Feculency of your I'll-humours.

Prim. Well said!

Mummy. And my Will is, That within these four Days you enter on an absolutely incurable State.

Sir Cred. Ah, Mercy! Mercy!

Mummy. That you fall immediately into a *Dispepsia*.

Sir Cred. Good Doctor!

Mummy. From a *Dispepsia* into an *Apepsia*.

Sir Cred. Doctor!

Mummy. From an *Apepsia*, into a *Lienteria*.

Sir Cred. Dr. *Mummy*!

Mummy. From a *Lienteria*, into a *Dysenteria*.

Sir Cred. Spare me, good Doctor!

Mummy. And from a *Dysenteria*, into a *Privation of Life*, the Condition your Folly has brought you into. — And so, Good by t'ye, Good by t'ye.

[*Exit Mummy.*

Sir Cred. O Heavens! I'm dead. — Brother, you have been the Ruin of me; I feel the Faculty taking Vengeance of me already.

Heart. In good troth, Brother, you are out of your Senses, and I would not for any thing you should be seen in these Fits. Pr'ythee feel your own Pulse a little, and don't give up your self to such wild Chimeras. Here's a lucky Opportunity now, of getting rid of your Doctors; or, if you are born to be a Slave

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to 'em, you may easily procure another, with whom you'll run less Hazard than with this.

Enter Primrose.

Prim. Joy, Joy, Sir.

Sir Cred. What now?

Prim. Rejoice, Sir.

Sir Cred. For what?

Prim. Rejoice, I say.

Sir Cred. Why, you impertinent Huffy, won't you tell me for what, first?

Prim. No; I'll have you rejoice beforehand; sing and dance.

Sir Cred. Was there ever such a Slut?

Prim. You are cur'd, Sir.

Sir Cred. Cur'd!

Prim. Ay, there's a Doctor come to see you, that will cure you of all your Distempers at once.

Sir Cred. Heaven forbid! — Pr'ythee who is it?

Prim. I don't know him; but He and I are as like one another, as two Drops of Water, all but his Beard; and if I were not sure that my Mother was an honest Woman, I should swear she had play'd the Wag before she married my Father.

Sir Cred. Desire him to walk up. [*Exit Primrose.*]

Heart. This happens to your Wish — one Doctor leaves you, and another immediately comes in his room.

Sir Cred. Ay, but Doctor *Mummy* was perfectly well acquainted with my Constitution, and knew the way to deal with me exactly. — Oh! Oh! I feel at Heart all those — I don't know what to call 'em — those strange Distempers he threaten'd me with.

Heart. One would think Dr. *Mummy* held in his Hands the Thread of your Life, and by a supreme Authority, could shorten or prolong it as he thought proper: Reflect a little, that the Principles of your Life are in your self, and that Dr. *Mummy's* Anger is as incapable of killing you, as his Medicines are of keeping you alive.

Sir Cred.

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Sir Cred. Oh lack! Oh lack! And pray, wise Sir, what would you, out of your profound Knowledge and Skill, advise one to do when one happens to be sick, then?

Heart. Nothing.

Sir Cred. Nothing!

Heart. No, nothing, but keep your self quiet. Nature herself, if we'd let her alone, would gradually throw off the Load she labours with. 'Tis our own Impatience spoils all; for when we have but just Strength enough to struggle with our Distemper, we must take Loads of Drugs to burden us the more. Believe me, Brother, it must be a wonderful robust Constitution that is able to bear both the Physick and the Disease.

Sir Cred. Mighty well, Sir, with your Nature and you. — But is not this Nature to be assisted by Art, Pray?

Heart. Lud! Lud! Brother, how you are impos'd on! When a Physician talks to you of assisting, relieving, and supporting Nature; when he talks of sweetning the Blood, strengthening the Nerves, and restoring the Lungs, 'tis nothing but a specious way of prating, which gives you Words instead of Reasons, and Promises instead of Effects: For when you come to make Trial, you find it a mere Dream, which leaves nothing but the Regret of having ever thought it real.

Enter Primrose, dress'd as a Physician.

Prim. Sir, your Servant.

Sir Cred. Your Servant, Sir. ——— By my Troth, *Primrose* herself!

Heart. They are very like one another, indeed; but 'tis n't the first time we've seen such sort of things.

Prim. I hope, Sir, you'll pardon my Curiosity in visiting a Person of so famous an Indisposition as your self, and offering you my small Services in relation to what Bleedings and Purgations you may have occasion for.

Sir Cred.

Sir Cred. Sir, your Servant.

Prim. I observe, Sir, that you look very earnestly at me, pray how old d'ye think I may be?

Sir Cred. Old! why Thirty, belike.

Prim. Ha, ha, ha! why, I'm above Fourscore, Sir.

Sir Cred. Fourscore!

Prim. Yes; you see an Effect of the Secrets of my Art, that preserve me thus lively and vigorous.

Sir Cred. I profess, a jolly Youth, for one o'Fourscore, if he could but have hinder'd the Growth of his Beard, Brother.

Heart. O! by no means; a Physician's Skill lies chiefly in his Chin.

Prim. I am, Sir, an Itinerant Physician, who travel from Town to Town, from Kingdom to Kingdom, to find out Patients worthy of my Practice, and fit to exercise the great and noble Secrets of my Art upon. I scorn to amuse my self with the little Fry of common Distempers, the Trifles of Rheumatisms, Scurvies, Vapours, and Megrims. Give me your Diseases of Importance, good Purple-Fevers, good Plagues, good confirm'd Dropfies, good Pleurifies, with Inflammation of the Lungs. These are what please me; these are what I triumph over; and I wish with all my Heart, Sir, that you had a Complication of 'em all upon you at once; that you were given over by all the Physicians, and at the very Point of Death, that I might demonstrate to you the Excellency of my Medicines, and the Desire I have to do you Service.

Sir Cred. I am very much obliged to you, Sir, for your kind Wishes.

Prim. Let me feel your Pulse. ——— Come, beat as you should do. — Hey! this Pulse plays the Fool. — Ye don't know me yet, I find. — Who is your Physician?

Sir Cred. Dr. Mummy.

Prim. Dr. Mummy! Who is he? I have not his
Name

64. *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Name in my List of eminent Physicians. Where does he say your Distemper lies?

Sir Cred. He says in the Spleen; others in the Liver.

Prim. They are all of 'em *Ignoramus's*; I say, that it lies in your Lungs.

Sir Cred. In my Lungs!

Prim. Yes; where's your Pain?

Sir Cred. I have every now and then a Pain in my Head.

Prim. The Lungs exactly.

Sir Cred. Sometimes a Mist before my Eyes.

Prim. The Lungs.

Sir Cred. Sometimes a violent Palpitation of the Heart.

Prim. The Lungs.

Sir Cred. At other times I am taken with a violent Pain in my Belly, as if it was the Colick.

Prim. The Lungs again. You have a good Appetite to what you eat?

Sir Cred. Yes, Sir.

Prim. The Lungs. You love to drink a Glass of Wine?

Sir Cred. Yes.

Prim. That's the Lungs. You take a comfortable Nap after Dinner.

Sir Cred. True, Sir.

Prim. The Lungs, the Lungs, I tell ye. What does your Physician order you to eat?

Sir Cred. He orders me Broth.

Prim. Ignorant!

Sir Cred. Chicken.

Prim. Ignorant!

Sir Cred. New-laid Eggs.

Prim. Ignorant!

Sir Cred. And above all, to drink a good deal of Water in my Wine.

Prim. *Ignorantus, Ignoranta, Ignorantum!* — You must drink good, unmix'd, *Spanish* Wine, to thicken your

your Blood, which is too thin. — You must eat good fat Beef, good fat Bacon, good *Dutch* Cheese, Rice-Gruel, and Craw-fish Soup, to corroborate and conglutinate. — Your Dr. *Mummy* is an Ass, and knows nothing of his Business; I'll send you a Physician of my own bringing up, and will visit you sometimes my self, whilst I stay in the Town.

Sir Cred. Sir, you'll oblige me extremely.

Prim. What the Duce d'ye do with this Arm?

Sir Cred. Do with it?

Prim. Cut me off this Arm immediately.

Sir Cred. Why so, pray?

Prim. Don't you see that it draws all the Nourishment to it self, and hinders the other from thriving?

Sir Cred. Ay, but I've occasion for my Arm.

Prim. Here's an Eye too, which I'd have instantly pluck'd out, were I in your Place.

Sir Cred. Pluck out my Eye!

Prim. Don't you perceive it injures the other, and occasions those Mists you complain'd of but now? Be guided by me, and have it taken away directly; you'll see the better with your Left.

Sir Cred. There's no haste for that, Sir; 'tis as well let alone.

Prim. But hark'e, Sir, is there not a certain Gentleman, one Squire *Looby*, that is to marry your Daughter?

Sir Cred. Yes, Sir, he is just arriv'd from *Cornwal* for that Purpose.

Prim. The same. — 'Twas there he was constituted and inducted my Patient, but feloniously withdrew himself from the Remedies I had prepar'd for him.

Heart. Why, ay, Doctor, your Physick is Money at any time; so that he has actually stole your Cash.

Prim. Pardon me; I don't intend to lose him so neither; he's tied and bound my Patient, and I'll have him seiz'd wherever I find him, and either cure him, or be the Death of him.

Sir Cred. Has he any Distemper on him, then?

Prim. Yes.

Sir Cred. What Distemper, pray?

Prim. No matter: Physicians are oblig'd to Secrecy. 'Tis enough that I injoin you not to celebrate the Nuptials, without my Consent, under pain of incurring the Resentment of the Faculty, and bringing the worst of Maladies into your Family.

Sir Cred. Nay, if it be so with him, I shall be in no Hurry for the Match.

Prim. Be sure you don't. — He may run away as much as he pleases; but I'll get a Decree against him, and force him to be cur'd; yes, tho' there were a Complication of Distempers, thirteen to the Dozen: His Body is mortgag'd to my Conduct; and it shall never be said, that a Patient got the better of his Doctor.

Sir Cred. You have my Consent, Sir, to physick him your Belly-full.

Prim. Farewel, Sir. I am sorry I must leave you so soon, but I'm oblig'd to be at a great Consultation to-day, upon a Person that dy'd Yesterday.

Sir Cred. A Person that dy'd Yesterday!

Prim. Yes; to consider what ought to have been done to have kept him alive — and so your Servant, Sir.

Sir Cred. Sir, your Servant. — Sick People, you know, are excus'd from Ceremony. [*Exit Primrose.*]

Heart. This is a thorough Doctor now, and talks like himself.

Sir Cred. Yes, but he goes a little too fast, tho'.

Heart. Oh! that's the way of all your eminent Physicians.

Sir Cred. To cut off an Arm, and pluck out an Eye, in order to make the other better! I'd rather 'twas not quite so well. A pleasant Operation truly, to make me at once both blind and lame. — But you'll excuse me, Brother, if I go to my Couch and take a Nap, for I'm so fatigu'd with these Affairs. If you have a mind to sit by me a Quarter of an Hour,

The Doctor the Disease. 67

you'll meet with some very good Books in my Study: There's a Treatise upon the Virtues of Water-Gruel; another against eating Fish or Flesh; and another to prove, that we ought to eat both.

Heart. Very well, I'll attend you, Brother.

[*Exeunt Sir Cred. and Heart.*]

Enter Primrose, as having just thrown off her Doctor's Dress, and pulling off her Beard.

Prim. So far, so good: I have look'd out sharp to all things yet; the Doctor's Business is done, I believe; and now I'll so fatigue our Country Squire, that he shall make more haste back again than ever he did to come. O! here's my Chap, dress'd Bridegroom-like.

Enter Looby.

Looby. Mrs. *Primrose*, your Servant.

Prim. Sir, Your Servant.

Looby. You seem, Mrs. *Primrose*, to look at my Clothes: I was desirous to put my self into the Court Fashion; for the Credit o' my Country.

Prim. O' my Word, Sir, you make another-guise Figure than any of our Courtiers.

Looby. Ay; why so my Tailor told me: The Suit is rich, and proper for him that wears it, and will make no small Show and Noise here; Hey? — But, pray, can you bring one to the Speech of your Lady?

Prim. No, Sir.

Looby. Is she gone out, then?

Prim. No.

Looby. Busy, belike?

Prim. No.

Looby. In Company, may be?

Prim. No.

Looby. Um, um, that's strange indeed!

Prim. Why, look ye, Sir, my Lady is often abroad and at home, at the same time; engag'd, and yet doing nothing; in Company, and yet no Body with her:

her: In a Word, my Lady's an Oracle, and I am her Priest.

Looby. Then you must be brib'd, I suppose. [*Aside.*]
 — Give me your Hand, Mrs. *Primrose*; let you and I shake Hands a little, and then, belike, we shall be better acquainted.

[*Taking her Hand, and putting a Purse in it.*

Prim. Psha! be quiet. Why, what a Fool 'tis!
 [*Aside; seeing the Money.*] — Um, no, Troth, the Man has more Wit than I thought he had.

Looby. When I'm marry'd to your Lady, Mrs. *Primrose*, you shall have an excellent Place on't.

Prim. You marry my Lady, Sir?

Looby. Why ay, I'm come on purpose to marry her, now.

Prim. To — to marry her?

Looby. Yes.

Prim. In Marriage, say ye?

Looby. Yes, to be sure; how else can it be?

Prim. Um — I'm sorry for it.

Looby. Sorry for it!

Prim. Ay, I was thinking — but 'tis no matter, I beg your Pardon.

Looby. What d'ye mean by that?

Prim. Nothing, nothing.

Looby. But, pray now —

Prim. Nothing, I tell you; I spoke too hastily.

Looby. Nay, but I must know what's at the bottom of all this.

Prim. No, no, 'tisn't at all necessary you should.

Looby. Ods my Heart! but it is tho'.

Prim. Well, if it is, you must excuse me there.

Looby. By what you said o' me, this Morning, Mrs. *Primrose*, I took you for my Friend.

Prim. Ay, marry, no body can be more so; from the Moment I saw you, I felt an Inclination for you; I saw something of Ingenuity —

Looby. Your Servant.

Prim. Something lovely —

Looby. Oh, Mrs. *Primrose*!

Prim.

Prim. So majestick —

Looby. Ay, something manly, as one may say.

Prim. So cordial —

Looby. Ah, sweet Mrs. *Primrose!*

Prim. This is all true. — But here is a Thing that one's Neighbour's Interest is concern'd in.

Looby. Hark ye, Mrs. *Primrose*, here's this Ring you must wear for my sake. — Nay, 'tis in vain to say, No; for wear it you must. — And this, I hope, will oblige you to open your Heart to me.

Prim. Let me see, I'll consult my Conscience a little on the Case. — In the first Place, here's my Master pursuing his own Interest, and endeavouring to provide for his Daughter as advantageously as possible, and we ought to do no Man an Injury in such an Affair. — Not that the thing is any manner of Secret; but shall I go discover it to one who's ignorant of it? No, we are forbid to speak Evil of our Neighbour, that's true; but then on the other side —

Looby. Ay, now for t'other side!

Prim. Here's a worthy Gentleman, who's a Stranger to the Town —

Looby. And has been strangely us'd in it.

Prim. Who comes thro' Thick and Thin, with an honest Intention to marry a Woman he knows nothing of — an open-hearted Gentleman —

Looby. And a Man of Parts, too.

Prim. Who places a Confidence in me as his Friend, has presented me with a Purse most curiously wrought.

Looby. Of Twenty Guineas.

Prim. And a Ring to wear for his Sake.

Looby. Which cost Twenty more.

Prim. And shall I see this courteous generous Gentleman abus'd and impos'd on, without so much as telling him of it?

Looby. No, to be sure.

Prim. Well, I find I may let you into Matters, without wounding my Conscience; but let us endeavour to tell 'em in the gentlest way possible, and spare People as much as we can — To say that this young

Lady o' mine leads a dishonourable Life, would be a little too harsh; let us therefore seek some milder Terms to express our Meaning by. The Word, *Gay*, perhaps may do it; no, that doesn't quite come up to't — that of compleat *Coquette* seems to hit our Purpose the best.

Looby. Cocket! Cocket! What are your Cockets?

Prim. Oh! your Coquets, Sir, are your prancing, prattling, gaming, galloping, witty, wanton, fine Ladies; who rail at their Friends, jilt their Lovers, and cuckold their Husbands; and are true to nothing but Scandal and Strong-waters.

Looby. Oho! are they so? are they so? I am not such a Coxcomb then, as to have any Business with a Cocket.

Prim. Why so? there's not so much Harm in't as People imagine, perhaps.

Looby. O! isn't there so? I'm your Servant for that; I'll put no such Cap on my Crown, I assure ye; the Brows of the *Loobies* are not made to bear Branches.

Prim. Pooh, Pooh! 'tis what Husbands now-a-days sit down satisfy'd under. If you can't so well bear to see it done under your very Nose, why, you have nothing to do but, when the Galant comes, to take your Cane and Gloves, and very civilly walk off.

Looby. Good, good! Ha, ha, ha! I am a very proper Person to be made a Stalking-Horse of, no doubt. They fancy'd, I warrant ye, that *Leonard Looby*, Esq; had no Guts in his Brains, to inform himself how the World went, and to see his Honour well secur'd in a Wife. — But I'll go and ferret out old *Night-Cap*, and let him see, i'cod! that a *Cornish* Man is not so easily to be bubbled. [Exit *Looby*.

Prim. Ha, ha, ha! a rare Gudgeon, truly!

Enter Servant, *who whispers* Primrose.

Prim. Very well; bid 'em go up one after another, the *Scotch* Woman first.

Enter

Enter Beaumont.

Beau. Hift! Primrose, is the Coast clear?

Prim. Yes, yes, old Argus is employ'd above.

Beau. Well, and how are we? how came you off with your Scene of Quackery?

Prim. As Quacks of all sorts do, Sir; with flying Colours. I soon routed the Doctor, and run away with his Business.

Beau. Bravely said! But where's our Squire? what's doing with him?

Prim. Oh! we are doing very handsomly by him above Stairs.

Beau. Is the Farce we contriv'd, in Action now, then?

Prim. Yes; Ha, ha, ha! He'll have enough of Wives, I'll warrant him.

Beau. Well, but what have you for me to do now?

Prim. Let it be your Business to contrive the Winding-up of the Play, while I play my Scenes with him. — You understand.

Beau. Ay, ay.

Prim. And as soon as I have planted him as I would---
[Whispers Beaumont,

Beau. Very well; that will do the best of any thing in the World.

Prim. But here he comes. — Get you gone quick, for we mustn't be seen together. [Exit Beaumont.

Enter Looby.

Looby. What the Murrain can all this mean? Are the People in this Town all stark mad?

Prim. What's the matter, Squire?

Looby. I shall certainly be murder'd here in this cursed Place! — jabbering Jades! brazen Whores!

Prim. How! What's that?

Looby. Why, a couple of foul-mouth'd Carrions have been abusing me at such a rate, within; and pretend that I am marry'd to 'em both.

Prim. Marry'd to 'em both!

Looby. Ay, and threaten me with Justice, and swear they'll have me hang'd.

Prim. Mercy on us! an ugly Business! a very ugly Business, and Justice here is as rigorous as Vengeance against that sort of Crime.

Looby. Ay; but I am as innocent o' the Matter as you be, Mrs. *Primrose*.

Prim. No matter for that; if you are accus'd of it, 'tis enough. You have nothing for't, but to make your Escape as soon as you can; there's an Army of Constables after you already, I warrant 'em.

Looby. O Lud! O Lud! O Lud! for Goodness sake, what shall I do, Mrs. *Primrose*? Have you ne'er a dark Room you could hide me in? ne'er a Cupboard that you could ram me into?

Prim. Um! I have hit on't. Come along with me quickly; I'll tell you the best way to get off, without being known.

Looby. Dear Mrs. *Primrose*, let us be gone then, directly, for this Town rains nothing but Plagues. What the Murrain had I to do, to come to *London*?
[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E *changes to Sir Credulous's Chamber.*

Sir Credulous and Heartly.

Sir Cred. Was ever the like seen? I hope they'll have him hang'd.

Heart. You had like to have been finely fitted with a Son-in-law.

Sir Cred. 'Tis very true, that I had so. What shall I do in this perplexing Affair? I am so confounded, I can fix on nothing.

Enter Primrose laughing, and rubbing her Hands.

Prim. Well, Sir, I have been making Preparations for the Wedding that's to be to-night.

Sir Cred. What Wedding, Hussy?

Prim.

Prim. Why, Madam *Belina* and Squire *Looby's*, Sir. And, as my Lady is out of the way, I have taken upon me to order a handfom Supper, a Concert of Musick, and a —

Sir Cred. Why, you meddling *Baggage*, there's to be no Wedding, nor no Supper, nor no —

Prim. No Wedding! ay, but there is, tho'.

Sir Cred. I tell you, there is not.

Prim. Lack-a-day! Sir, you forget your self; didn't you say that it was to be to-night?

Sir Cred. If I did say it, I unsay it again.

Prim. You may do as you will; but marry'd they shall be, now things are gone so far, that's positive.

Sir Cred. Heyday! whereabouts are we? — Why — why —

Prim. I have more Love for you than to suffer you to make your self laugh'd at, for saying and unsaying in this manner.

Sir Cred. I want none of your Love.

Prim. But I will Love you, in spite of your Teeth.

Sir Cred. Will you hold your Tongue, Serpent? I'll make you be silent, or I'll —

Prim. Be it so. But if I don't speak, I'll think.

Sir Cred. Think as much as you will; but take care you don't speak. [*Turning to his Brother.*] Brother, I am almost mad. What must be done?

Prim. I wish I might speak.

[*She's silent when he turns his Head.*]

Sir Cred. What must be done, Brother?

Prim. Why, they must be marry'd.

Sir Cred. Then what I say, signifies nothing? Hey! *Baggage*, Hey!

Prim. What ails you, Sir? I don't speak to you.

Sir Cred. What then?

Prim. I talk to my Self.

Sir Cred. Very well. [*Putting himself in a Posture to strike her; and Primrose, at every Cast of his Eye, standing silent.*] I have thought seriously of it, Brother [*T. Heartly*] Why don't you speak?

Prim.

Prim. I have thought seriously of it, and it must be so. [*Half aside.*]

Sir Cred. Why, you tormenting Beast!

[*Goes to strike her.*]

Prim. [*Running out.*] And therefore I'll go send for the Parson this very Moment. [*Exit Primrose.*]

Sir Cred. Her Insolence has put me mad! How am I tormented on every hand!—Ah! Brother, let me advise you never to marry.

Heart. Never a second time, Brother; and a young ravenous Widow, too.

Sir Cred. That's not the Thing; I don't speak of my Lady; she's all the Comfort I have — but, Children, Children, Brother, they are the Bane of Matrimony; they are so many Serpents, which a Man hatches and breeds up only to sting him to Death for his pains.

Heart. We only think 'em so, by not considering 'em as what they are. The little Gaieties and Excesses of Youth, are as much the Beauty and Perfection of that State, as Care and Policy are of Age; and yet because they an't immediately grave and gray-headed, we are dissatisfy'd and offended.

Sir Cred. Ah! Brother, no body knows the Cares, the Anxieties, the Pangs of a Parent, but those who feel 'em; I profess, I am quite oppress'd and bore down by 'em. Ah! *Belina, Belina!* [*Wiping his Eyes.*]

Heart. Come, come, Brother, this is all Distemper; we'll talk more of these things by and by: In the mean time I have order'd an Entertainment below, which will dissipate your Concern, and dispose you to judge the better of what's proper to be done. Things won't appear so dismal, after a Song and a Dance; 'twill do you more good than all the Drugs in Mr. *Galleypot's* Shop.

In social Mirth, and gay Delights, we find
The truest Cure for a distemper'd Mind.

The End of the Fourth Act.

A C T



A C T V. S C E N E I.

S C E N E, *The Square.*

Beaumont and Primrose meet.

Beau. WELL, *Primrose*, how go we on?

Prim. With Wind and Tide, and Fortune herself sits smiling at the Helm.

Beau. Blessings on her for it!

Prim. I have put our Chap into such a terrible Fright, about the Severity of the Law here against having two Wives, that he's resolv'd to fly for't; and that he may escape more easily from the Constables, which I've told him are plac'd in every Corner to apprehend him, he's gone to disguise himself in Woman's Habit.

Beau. Ha, ha, ha! I should be glad to see him in that Equipage. — But now, *Primrose*, what have we to go upon next?

Prim. Why, we have nothing now to do, but to sow the Seeds of Discord betwixt Husband and Wife, and the Day's our own.

Beau. That will be a difficult Task, I fear; she's a sly Beast, and won't easily be trap'd.

Prim. Courage, Man; I have Snares for Foxes, as well as for Woodcocks.

Beau. Thou art a dear, charming, courageous Wench, and shalt be rewarded accordingly.

Prim. But see, here comes our Lads — away, quick, that he mayn't see us together; as soon as I've got him fairly pack'd off, I shall go to work upon the old Gentleman within; and be you ready to appear upon proper Notice.

Beau. Success attend you.

[*Exit* Beaumont.

Enter

Enter Looby, in Woman's Clothes.

Prim. So, Squire, why you make a very graceful Figure! You've the perfect Air of a Woman o' Quality. I defy them to know you in this Equipment.

Looby. 'Tis strange, tho', Mrs. *Primrose*, that the Forms of Law should not be observ'd in this Town!

Prim. But 'tis as I told you; they hang a Man here, first, and try him afterwards.

Looby. But when a Body's innocent ———

Prim. They never trouble themselves about that. — Then they have an intolerable Hatred for People of your Country, and nothing can please 'em more than to see a *Cornish* Man hang'd.

Looby. Why, what have the *Cornish* Men done to 'em?

Prim. Oh! your *Londoners* are mere Brutes, and Enemies to the Gentility and Merit of other Places. For my part, I protest I am in a terrible Fright for you, and should never have any Comfort if you should come to be hang'd.

Looby. 'Tisn't so much the Fear of Death, as that 'twould be such a Blot in one's Scutcheon.

Prim. Right, I don't know if you wou'dn't lose your Title of Squire by it. — But come, give me your Hand now, and walk like a Woman; and talk, and give yourself all the Airs of Quality.

Looby. Let me alone, I have seen People of Fashion; all the Mischief is, I have somewhat of a Beard.

Prim. Pho! your Beard's nothing; I have known many Women of Quality have a great deal more. — Come, let us see a little how you behave yourself. — Good.

Looby. [*Mimicking a Woman in his Walking and the Tone of his Voice.*] Why, my Cauch, there! Where is my Cauch? Lard! what a miserable thing it is to have such Servants as these! Must I wait all Day on the Pavement, and will no body call my Cauch for me?

Prim. So.

Looby. What, no Cauchman to be found, no Page? I'll break the Neck of these Doings. — Why Page!
Little

Little Rascal! — Isn't the little Fool to be found?
— Is there no Page there? — Have I no Page in the
World?

Prim. Admirable!

Enter Constable and Attendants.

Const. Who have we here that makes this Outcry?
Hah! here's a Face that much resembles what was de-
scrib'd to us.

Looby. 'Tis not me, I assure you.

Const. How! how! What's that?

Looby. I can't tell.

Const. There's some Meaning in what you said, and
I take you Prisoner.

Looby. Nay, nay, good Gentlemen!

Const. No, no, by your Manner and Disguise, you
must needs be Squire *Looby*, whom we are in quest of;
let's away with him to *Newgate*.

Looby. Oh sad! Oh sad! I'm doom'd to be hang'd
then, at last.

Prim. Mr. *Constable*, for my sake, I conjure you not
to carry him to Prison.

Const. 'Tis impossible ———

Prim. Come, I know you're a Man that will harken
to Reason. Is there no way of adjusting this Matter
with a few Guineas, or so?

Const. Stand off a little. [*To his Attendants.*]

Prim. You must give him some Money ——— quick,
quick. [*To Looby.*]

Looby. O cursed Town!

[*Pulling up his Peetticoats to get at his Breeches.*]

Prim. Hold your Hand, Sir.

Const. How much is there?

Prim. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight,
nine, ten.

Const. No, I can't do't; my Orders are positive.

Prim. Lard! stay. [*To Looby.*] Quick, quick, give
him as much more.

Looby. But ———

Prim.

78 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Prim. Lose no time, I tell you. — Sure, you have a mind to be hang'd! — Here, Sir, here.

Const. I must run away with him, and live with him, then; for I durst not shew my Head again here.

Prim. Then, pray, take great care of him; I beg you will.

Const. I promise you that.

Prim. Be gone then, quickly, Squire. — I love you so much, that I wish you a hundred Miles off.

Looby. Good by t'ye, dear Mrs. *Primrose*. — That's the only honest Body I have met with in this Town.

[*Exeunt Looby and Constable.*]

Prim. By t'ye, Bubble, and Fortune blefs thee, for thou art one of her own Dotard Brood. — But I'm wanted by this time somewhere else. [Exit *Prim.*]

SCENE II. *Sir Credulous's Chamber.*

Enter Sir Credulous and Heartly.

Heart. So, Brother, what think you of my Entertainment? Isn't it as good as a Dose of *Assa-fœtida*?

Sir Cred. Ho! good *Assa-fœtida* is a good thing.

Heart. Well, Brother, since this Match is now at an End, and you and your Doctor are at Variance with one another, I hope I may have the Liberty to propose the Person I was speaking of for my Niece.

Sir Cred. No, Brother, I'm resolv'd to send her into the Country, and there confine her, for offering to oppose my Will and Pleasure. I find there's a Love-Affair under the Rose, and have discovered a certain private Interview, which they don't think I have.

Heart. Very good, Brother; and suppose there should be some little Inclination in the Case, where would be the Harm of it? You have no reason to be displeas'd, since nothing's intended but what's honourable.

Sir Cred.

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Sir Cred. Be that as it will, she shall go into the Country, that I'm resolv'd on.

Enter Primrose.

Heart. I can guess, Brother, who put you on that Resolution. There's one Person in the World you'll please by it, I'm certain.

Sir Cred. I understand you, Sir; you are always touching on that String. My Wife is a great Heart-burn to you.

Heart. Yes, Brother, since 'tis necessary to be plain with you, 'tis your Wife that I mean; and I can no more bear your ridiculous Fondness for her, than that you have for Phycick; nor endure to see you run hand-over-head into all the Snares she lays for you.

Prim. Ah! dear Sir, don't speak so of my Lady; she's a Woman that no body can say any thing against; a Woman without the least Grain of Artifice or Design, and loves my Master — there's no saying how much she loves him.

Sir Cred. Ay, ask but her now, how excessive fond she is of me.

Prim. Most excessive!

Sir Cred. How much Concern my Illness gives her.

Prim. True — she's always praying that she might see an End of it.

Sir Cred. And the Care and Pains she takes about me.

Prim. Right. — Shall we convince you now, Mr. Heartly, and shew you directly what a surprising Affection my Lady has for my Master? — Permit me, Sir, to undeceive him, and let him see his Mistake.

Sir Cred. As how, *Primrose*?

Prim. Hark, my Lady is just return'd. Do you, Sir, but stretch your self out in your Chair, and feign your self dead, you'll then see the violent Grief, she'll be in, when I tell her the News.

Sir Cred.

Sir Cred. Hey! — Um! — I profess I've a mind to take her Advice. — No, no, I can never bear to hear the Shrieks and Lamentations she'll make over me; and yet 'twill be a Comfort to me to hear them, too; to feel her virtuous Tears bedew my Face, and her sweet Lips kissing my Cheeks a thousand, thousand times, to bring me back again to Life and her. — Ah! Ah! verily, I'll do it; verily, I'll do it. And then, Sir, what will become of your fine Surmises? — But, *Primrose*, ar't thee not afraid that her very thinking me dead, will break her Heart?

Prim. To be sure, Sir, if you should keep her in her Fright too long.

Sir Cred. Oh! let me alone for that; I'll make the Experiment this very Minute, this very Minute. — Reach my Chair, here. [*Settling himself.*] So, so.

Prim. Do you hide your self in that Closet, Sir.

[*To Heartly.*]

Sir Cred. But is there no danger' in feigning one's self dead?

Prim. No, no; what Danger should there be? 'Tis only shutting your Eyes, and stretching your self out. — [*To Heartly.*] Now, now, Sir, we shall shew you your Error, with a Witness, and convince you how much you have injur'd the best of Wives. [*To Sir Cred.*] 'Twill be pleasant enough afterwards, Sir, to see how blank your Brother will look. — Here's my Lady! Close, close, you've no Business with your Cane; hang your Arms a little more dangling; and look more dismal, than ordinary, if possible.

Enter Lady Hippish.

Prim. Oh Heavens! Oh fatal Misfortune! What a strange Accident is this!

Lady Hip. What's the Matter, *Primrose*?

Prim. Ah! Madam. Ah! Ah!

[*Crying.*]

Lady Hip. What is it? What dost thee mean by this Blubbering, pr'ythee?

Prim. My Master's dead, Madam. Oh! Oh!

Lady Hip.

Lady Hip. Dead!

Prim. Ay, alas! quite defunct.

Lady Hip. Art thou sure of that?

Prim. Too sure, alas! No body yet knows any thing of this Accident; there was not a Soul but my self to help him; he sunk down in my Arms, and went off like a Child. — See there, Madam, how he lies stretch'd out in his Chair!

Lady Hip. Now, Heaven be prais'd for the Sight. — *Primrose!* what a Simpleton art thou, to cry?

Prim. Cry, Madam? Why, I thought we was to cry.

Lady Hip. A great Loss indeed, to cry for! What good did he do above Ground? — A grunting, grumbling, ill-shap'd, filthy Fellow; never without some poisonous Slop in his Maw; always coughing, hauking, and spitting; for ever dying, and yet too much alive to get him under Ground. — Thou poor, pitiful, credulous Fool, farewell. — Sweet, charming, wanton Widowhood, thou only Recompence for Marriage Slavery! thou only End and Aim of prudent Wives! once more, thou'rt welcome.

Prim. A very excellent Funeral Oration. [*Aside.*]

Lady Hip. Oh! how my Heart exults at Thought of Liberty, and long neglected Joys! — Alas! poor Dear, thou hast lost, then, the small matter of Breath thou wer't Master of. O' my Conscience, he looks better than when he was alive. This is the only time, *Primrose*, I ever beheld him with Pleasure. — But, come, thou must assist me in executing my Design; and, depend on't, that in serving me, thou wilt most effectually serve thy self. Since then, by good Fortune, no body's yet acquainted with the Thing, let us carry him to his Bed, and keep his Death conceal'd 'till we have thoroughly settled our Affairs; and then, *Primrose*, I'll enjoy the Pleasure of Revenge too, in its turn, and make Miss *Belina* pay swingingly for her
G Insolence.

82 *The Mother-in-Law; or,*

Insolence. Hah! here she comes, and her Fellow with her; this is a little unlucky.

Prim. [*Aside.*] Confusion! What brings them here now? What can be the Meaning of this? or, what will be the Consequence of this critical Scene? — I wish I could give them Notice, that they might know how to behave — but 'tis impossible; we must stand it, now.

Enter Beaumont and Belina.

Beau. [*As he enters.*] Yes, *Belina*, your Uncle has, by this time, made my Proposal to your Father; I'll therefore no longer trust my Passion to precarious Artifice, but make my Claim with Openness and Honour.

Belina. What ails thee, *Primrose*? Why those Tears? How does my Father do?

Prim. Ah! Madam.

Belina. What's the matter?

Prim. Alas! he's dead, Madam.

Belina. My Father dead! *Primrose*?

Prim. Yes, you see him there; he expir'd this Moment in a Fit.

Belina. Oh!

[*Faints.*

Beau. Hah! help her, *Primrose*, she faints.

Prim. Tender Creature! — But see, she recovers.

Belina. This is a cruel Stroke, indeed! to lose my Father, who was every thing in the World to me; and to lose him at a Time too, when he had conceiv'd a Displeasure against me! the Thought of this adds Stings to my Affliction.

Beau. Be comforted, Madam, nor strive to aggravate your Grief by such Reflexions; *Beaumont* will supply the Loss of a Father.

Belina. No, *Beaumont*, let's talk no more of any such thing; I'm determin'd to retire into the Country, and be no longer conversant in this World. — Yes, my

my dear Father, if I have formerly oppos'd your Inclinations, I'll now execute one of your Intentions at least, and atone by that for the Disquiet I have given you.

Lady Hip. You have Liberty to go, Child, as soon as you please. — I have a Will in my Pocket, here, which takes all manner of Trouble off your Hands; and you may soon pack up, I believe, all that belongs to you.

Prim. Yes indeed, Madam, your Father has left the sole Disposal of every thing to her Ladyship.

Belina. Then my Calamity's compleat, indeed. — My Father! No, he did not, could not do it; 'twas that artful, wicked Wife, who seduc'd him into an Action so contrary both to his Reason and Nature.

Beau. Let not that Particular, Madam, add any thing to your Distress; you have still an affluent Fortune at command, and I rejoice at this Opportunity of adding some little Merit to my Passion.

Lady Hip. Why, you both act your Parts miraculously well!

Belina. Act, do you say? No, Madam, I'm no more a Countefeit in Grief, than you are in Joy.

Lady Hip. Why, really, Child, we have both reason enough to be in earnest.

Beau. Barbarous Monster! to insult a Poverty, her own Treachery was the Cause of.

Belina. But I shall not resign my Right so tamely as you may think; the World shall be made acquainted with the Story, Madam. — Yes, Madam, it shall know by what scandalous Methods you practis'd on my Father's easy Temper, to ruin, most unnaturally ruin his own Children, to glut your Appetite for Wealth — and then, how ungratefully, how savagely you revell'd at the Death of this good deluded Husband, whose only Crime was being fond of such a Wife.

[Wiping her Eyes.

Lady Hip. Whilst you entertain yourself with these fine Reflexions, Child, I'll beg leave to go and settle

settle a little necessary Business. [*Going out, returns.*] But hold, in the first Place, let me search for his Keys, for there's Money and Papers I ought to secure.

[*Going to his Pockets.*

Sir Cred. [*Starting up.*] Softly, softly, Madam.

Omnes. Hah!

Sir Cred. So, Mrs. Wife, is this your Extreme Love and Fondness for me?

Prim. Bless us! the dead Man alive again!

Sir Cred. [*Looking for some time scornfully on his Wife, and then running to Belina.*] Ah! my dear Girl, come to my Arms, let me embrace thee, my Child. Thou art my own Daughter, my own Flesh and Blood, and I'm overjoy'd to discover so much Good-nature in thee.

Belina. How welcome and agreeable is this Surprise!

Sir Cred. [*To Lady Hip.*] I'm very glad, Madam, I've discover'd your Affection, too, and heard the fine Panegyrick you made upon me. — A grunting, grumbling, filthy Fellow; always hauking, coughing, and spitting. — Hey! Mistress. Ah! this is such a Lesson as will make me wiser for the future, I believe.

Lady Hip. 'Tis such a Lesson, Fool, as I shall make thee repent having ever got from me. Thou shalt pay so dear for thy Wisdom, as shall make thee wish thy self in easy Delusion again.

Sir Cred. Mercy o' me! What a Woman 'tis! — Hark ye, Madam, don't threaten, for I shall now make you go seek your Fortune, instead of my Daughter.

Lady Hip. Wilt thou so, Man?

Sir Cred. I shall procure a Will to take all manner of Trouble off your Hands; so you may soon pack up, I believe, all that belongs to you.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Hip. Say'st thou so, my Soul? Hast thou forgot, then, the Five Thousand Guineas, and as much

much more in Notes, that were hid behind the Wainscot?

Sir Cred. Ods my Heart! what a Fool have I been!

Lady Hip. And now, thou shalt be altogether as great a Wretch; for I'll so chastise thee for this Curiosity! I'll so trample on thee, Worm!

Sir Cred. Out o' my House, I say.

Lady Hip. Ha, ha, ha! You talk wildly, my Dear; you are light-headed, and don't know it.—To bed, to bed, Child, and send for a Doctor and Nurse, in an Instant.

Belina. How, Madam! I can no longer bear to see my Father abus'd in this manner; and must tell you —

Lady Hip. Peace, Peace, Child, and shut your Mouth again; you'll say some foolish thing else, that will make one blush for you.

Belina. Blush! Fy on you! you are an audacious wicked Woman.

Beau. Hold, Madam, 'tis in vain to make any Opposition; where all Sense of Shame and Decency is lost, Reproof is but thrown away.

Lady Hip. Oh! your Servant, Sir! by your sage Looks and profound Silence, I really mistook you for a rational Creature; but an Ass is soon known when he offers to bray.

Prim. I'gad, she'll prove too many for them all.

Sir Cred. Was there ever such Impudence! I shall go mad indeed! I — I — I'm all on Fire!

Lady Hip. Then set open the Windows, and cool your self, my Love, whilst I go abroad in pursuit of Pleasure. I have been coop'd in an Hospital long enough; 'tis but just I should now enjoy the Fruit of my Labour. — Oh! I shall so harass you, my Dear, that you shall wish your self as dead as you pretended to be.

[*Exit Lady Hip.*]

Sir Cred. [Following her to the Door.] Will you so, Mistress? Will you so, Mistress? I'll take care how

you make use of your insolent Tongue in this House any more, tho'. — I — I — [Returning.] Why, why, what a shameless, terrible Tigress, am I yok'd to?

Heart. [From the Closet.] So, Brother, now you see —

Sir Cred. Yes, yes; and hear too with a Vengeance.

Prim. I swear solemnly, I could never have imagin'd this.

Heart. However, Brother, the Stratagem has not been amiss, since by this means you have discover'd the real Sentiments of your Family, and learnt where to place your Affection and Favours.

Sir Cred. My dear Girl, how shall I requite thee for all thy Goodness?

Belina. By suffering me, Sir, to ask one Blessing of you — That if you can't approve the Inclination of my Heart, if you reject the honourable, generous *Beaumont*, I may at least live single with my Father; that Favour's all I beg.

Prim. Nay, Sir, can you hold out against all this?

Heart. Brother, can you be unmov'd by so much Duty and Love!

Sir Cred. Well, let the Gentleman turn Physician, and I'll consent to the Match; turn but Physician, Sir, and I'll give you my Daughter.

Beau. I'd undertake much greater Difficulties on that Condition, Sir.

Heart. But, Brother, I have a Thought come into my Head — ev'n turn Physician your self; the Conveniency will be still greater, to have within your self every thing you want.

Sir Cred. I fancy, Brother, you only jest with me. Am I of an Age fit to apply my self to Study?

Heart. Pooh! Study! you are learn'd enough in Conscience. 'Tis but putting on the Doctor's Gown and Cap, and you'll have more Knowledge in an Instant, than you'll know what to do withal.

Prim.

Prim. Besides, Sir, if you had no other Qualification than this Muff of yours, 'twould go a great way. A Muff is more than Half in Half in the making of a Doctor.

Heart. True.

Prim. And when once you are a Doctor, you'll be well in a Trice; for there's no Distemper so saucy as to meddle with the Person of a Physician.

Heart. Nay, he has so much Skill already, that he has cur'd himself of the worst Distemper he had.

Sir Cred. What Distemper, Brother?

Heart. Your *Wife*, Brother. You have nothing more to do, but to purge off the *Doctor*, and you are a sound Man again.

Sir Cred. I hear you, Sir.

Heart. But now, Brother, give your Blessing here.

Sir Cred. I do, and my Fortune along with it, as a Recompence for so much Duty and Affection in my Child.

Heart. 'Tis generously done. — Thus you have made the Story of To-night, a most instructive Lesson to the World. This just Reward of Duty in a Daughter, and Disappointment of a wicked Wife, will teach Mankind,

That tho' awhile, with Grief and Cares o'ercast,
Virtue still shines triumphant at the last:
Whilst Vice, like Meteors, with a sickly Flame,
Glares for an Hour, then sinks in endless Shame.





E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. CIBBER, Mr. GRIFFIN,
and Mrs. HERON, in the Characters of
HEADPIECE, HIPPISH, and PRIMROSE.

Mrs. Her. **T**HE Epilogue —
Mr. Cib. — *There's none.*

Mrs. Her. ————— *Psha!*

Mr. Cib. ————— *Nay's no Joke,*
The Author won't permit one to be spoke.

Mrs. Her. *No Epilogue! the Man's a Fool, I'll swear;*

Mr. Cib. *Right, else he had not been a Wit, my Dear.*

[Addressing himself to the Audience.]

Howe'er, he begs this Business I'd excuse;
And gives these Reasons why he did refuse:

First, to the Modest and the Fair, he says,
The Epilogues in vogue to modern Plays,
Are such flat, nauseous, witlefs, meanless Cant,
He's sure they'll gladly overlook the Want;
And to that Sex such Reverence he does bear,
He scorns to write what they must blush to hear.

As for the Criticks — he can ne'er think fit,
Tho' they should damn his Play, to damn the Pit:
But, should they condescend to smile — why then,
To shew his Gratitude, he'll write again.

Mrs. Heron advancing, and taking Mr. Cibber by
the Sleeve.

Mrs. Her. *But bold, Sir, since the Poet's such an Elf,*
I'll venture to say something for my self.

This Moment I was whisper'd by a Smart,
Gad's Life! my Dear, you've play'd an Under-part.
But he's mistaken — mine's the noblest Post,
In each great House in Town we rule the Roast:

For

EPILOGUE.

*For tho' my Lady-Wife may bounce and hector,
And for a misplac'd Pin, or Patch, correct her;
Yet still, to make amends for this Disaster,
The Maid is always Mistress of her Master:
This the great Dames with so much Envy view,
They dress like us, to rob us of our Due;
In round-ear'd Coif, white Apron, and stuff Gown,
Your Lady Betties trip about the Town;
Whilst nice Sir Fopling, and his Brother Beaux,
Transported, step into their Footmen's Clothes;
Proud of the Oaken Club, and tuck'd-up Hair,
They then, first, really are what they appear:
Thus none, I'm sure, who are true Friends to Love,
But must my modish Character approve.*

Mr. Griffin advancing.

*Mr. Grif. And sure, Sir Hip can never fail to please,
The Doctor now is the polite Disease;
That Beau, or Belle, is judg'd unread, who doth not
At ev'ry Meal quote Cheney and Arbuthnot;
Applaud fair Water, with Champaign replete;
And, after six full Courses, rail at Meat.
Therefore we humbly hope, tho' now-a-days
A sudden Death's the Fate of most new Plays,
Since from the Doctor's fatal Clutches got,
A longer Life will be our sick Man's Lot.*

Mr. Cibber advancing again.

*Mr. Cib. Poor I, an Essex-Calf, and Headpiece, play;
That's no new Character for me, you'll say,
I act the Calf and Headpiece every Day. }
I own the Charge with Pride, since by that means }
I better could divert you in these Scenes:
For all the Fame we aim at, is to raise
Smiles from such Beauty, from such Judgment Praise.*

F I N I S.

A very curious Edition in QUARTO, of

The BEGGAR'S OPERA. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Written by Mr. GAY. ----- *Nos hac novimus esse nihil.* Mart. With the OVERTURE in SCORE, the SONGS and the BASSES, (the OVERTURE and BASSES Compos'd by Dr. PEPUSH) Curiously Engrav'd on COPPER PLATES.

* CHIRON to ACHILLES. A POEM. By Hildebrand Jacob, Esq;
Res est severa Voluptas.

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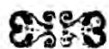
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