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Malone. B. 64.

Nov. 1. 6 - bet by Owen for G.

[Giles] Note by Evans, July

92.

CHIT-CHAT.
A
COMEDY.

As it is ActED at the
THEATRE-ROYAL
IN
DRURY-LANE,
By His MAJESTY's Servants.

Written by Mr. KILLIGREW.

L O N D O N:

Printed for BERNARD LINTOT, between
the *Temple Gates.*

1719

COMEDY

A

COMEDY

AND

THEATRE-ROYAL



OF THE

By His Majesty's Servants

Written by Mr. Richard W.



L O N D O N

Printed for BERNARD LINTON, between
the Temple Gates.



To His G R A C E
T H E
Duke of *ARGILE*.

My L O R D,



W O undoubted Titles to Your Grace's Protection, are Merit and Necessity. The latter recommended me at once to You, my L O R D; and all I ever knew of good Fortune,

DEDICATION.

tune. This Play, like its Author,
has infinite Wants, and stands
in Need of such a Patron;
which is the only Excuse I can
plead for Dedicating it to Your
G R A C E: Except the Desire I
have of telling the World with
what Respect and Gratitude,

I am,

My LORD,

Your G R A C E'S

Most Obedient,

and most Faithful

Humble Servant,

T. KILLIGREW.

CHIT-CHAT.

ACT I. SCENE I.

St. James's Park, *Nine in the Morning.*

Bellamar and Marlove meet.

Bellamar. **G**OOD-Morrow, Madam; the Sun
and you are up Betimes to Day.

Marlove. Yes; but we did not
go to Bed together.

Bell. No, or he had not rose so
soon. But pray now was you any where late last Night?

Mar. At *Worthy's*.

Bell. He in Town, and I not know it!

Mar. You was not to be found. Had you come, you'd
been in Love with Matrimony, to have seen a Man of
Sense so happy in it.

Bell. Excuse me; 'twould rather have frightn'd me, to
have seen it able to impose upon the best Understanding.

Mar. He talks prodigiously of the *how much* he owes to
both our Friendships.

Bell. I owe more to your Friendship than he does, but
must show my Gratitude in Silence. [*Kisses her Hand.*]
Pray, does the Lady seem as much oblig'd as he?

Mar. 'Tis hard to tell. You know that Fop *Alamode*
had made great Impressions; and nothing is so difficult to
get rid of as a Fool.

B

Bell.

CHIT-CHAT.

Bell. Except the Passion fair Ladies have for keeping 'em.

Mar. That's civil. ——— But *Moderna* I fear will grow impatient. I've made her wait this Hour. ———

Bell. Hold, Madam! I'd forgot. ——— Is *Florinda* come with her Brother?

Mar. Is that all you stop me for. She is. [*Goes, but returns*] Pray, Mr. *Bellamar*, How come you to enquire after *Florinda*?

Bell. Only to know, if after her late Illness, she's as handsome as she was.

Mar. To other People she is: But I believe she won't seem so to you.

Bell. Why d'think so?

Mar. Because she is the same. And that is what has no Charms for you, I know.

Bell. In any Body but you, I hope you mean, Madam?

Mar. No Matter what you hope, my Meaning is as easily understood as yours, Sir.

Bell. I would always have my Meaning plain, Madam, that I might ever appear your Humble Servant.

Mar. And her Slave.

Bell. Do you Dream?

Mar. No, I am awake: Mine are Visions all. Come, come! Throw off the Mask. D'think I have forgot, when she was last in Town, how with an affected Negligence you Courted her, as Life; told her her Faults only to be thought sincere, when e'er you spoke your Love, and praised her Virtues; thou poor Dissembler!

Bell. You shall reform me then: I will dissemble no longer, since it displeases you. Pray, Madam, have you lately heard from Mr. ——— him, who won a Thousand Pounds at *Pickett* of you, and generously forgave the Debt.

Mar. Insulting Monster! To reproach me with what Necessity, Confusion, and Surprise subdu'd me too; when Love and Choice resign'd me up to you.

Bell. Your Love resign'd to me no more than your Want did to him. And I'm not Casuist enough to decide which is best, between Two Things that generally produce the same Effect.

Mar.

Mar. Then there is no deciding which is worse, the Devil or you. Since Ingratitude and Mischief, Falshood and Ruin, proceed alike from both, thou Faithless, Base, Perfidious Man.

[Exit *Marlove*.]

Bell. Thou very very — true Woman !

Bell. [Solus.] I begin to wish I'd had no Hand in this Marriage ; but he forc'd me to use my Interest with *Marlove*, to influence *Moderna* ; 'twas never my Judgment : But here he is.

Enter *Worthy*.

Wor. *Bellamar*, welcome, welcome to the Man that owes his Peace and Happiness to you ; say, how can my Gratitude repay the Joy you gave me with *Moderna*.

Bell. Why, just the Way you do, by being happy with her. Believe me, Friend, I am as glad to see thee pleas'd, as Knaves wou'd be to have thee griev'd. — I need not ask how your Wife does, since your Joys seem without Al-
lay.

Wor. They are indeed, *Bellamar*. And — /

Bell. Hold, I guess what you would say ; Rapturous Love, *Elizium* Fields, and all the Joys that Poets ever dream'd of, are much surpass'd by yours.

Wor. *Bellamar*, thou art in the Right ; I am happier if possible than thou hast spoken ; and what's impossible to her ?

Bell. That's hard to say. In the mean Time, Is it possible for you to tell me where you was a-going.

Wor. No farther, now I've met you ; though I had a Compliment this Morning from my Rival *Alamode*, to tell me, even the Plague, much less the Summer, cou'd not empty *London*, whilst my Wife and I were here. — What do you think of visiting him ? His Lodgings are hard by. 'Twill amuse an idle Hour.

Bell. I should readily consent, if I was not sure he had a Thousand idle Ones to be reveng'd on us.

Wor. You continue still most implacable to him, and poor *Lurcher*.

Bell. Because they are most monstrously Incorrigible. — The Foppery of *Alamode* puts one out of Countenance Ten Times a Day. You are as dear to him one Moment as his own Affections ; and the next, he's as great a Stran-

ger to you as to true Sense or good Breeding : Then his Conversation is a perpetual War with Words, which the Ladies and their Favourites not understanding, admire for Wit. In short, he's a meer Perspective, pleases at a Distance, but when you are near, you'll find the Colours are upon an insensible Wall. ——— However, if you've a Mind, I'll go, though Fifty to One he'll not be at Home.

Wor. I shou'd have thought for that very Reason, you would have gone. But how come you to fancy a Man of his Fashion shou'd be Abroad so early ?

Bell. Such a one would be most likely, for want of Entertainment at Home, and a Desire to trouble other People: But I have another Reason to think so; the Coxcomb, ever fertile in Poppery, has taken lately into his Head a Fancy of changing his Name, and seeing none on certain Days, but some particular People. I luckily call'd one of those Times, and his Servants told me that his Master went by the Name of *Le bel Esprit*, and that Day saw none but Courtiers.

Wor. He was in the right, or he would have got a new Name.

Bell. I thought so, and forgave all his other Follies for the Sake of this one, since it hinder'd my seeing him.

Wor. This is strangely absurd, and wou'd seem monstrous even upon the Stage, where 'tis lawful to represent Figures larger than the Life.

Bell. In my Opinion the Poets have no great Obligation to Mankind for that Liberty; 'tis no more than granting them what's impossible: I've seen more Gigantick Fools upon the Theatre of the World, than were ever shewn at the *Theatre-Royal* ——— What do you think of a Coxcomb walking over an intimate Acquaintance of Six Foot High, and bowing to a Dwarf with a Nick-Name, at the further end of a Gallery; and then excusing himself to the Man he trod upon, by saying he did not see him? There is another Species not unlike these Things, who look as saucily upon you when they are in Power, as on their Footmen when they ask their Wages; and the Moment they are turn'd out, ready to go of your Errand, and professing Friendship to a Doorkeeper: Is not this as prodigious as a Man's changing his Name? Death! changing one's Nature, or having no Nature at all,

is

is being more a *Caliban* than ever Fiction dream'd on—Wretches without Honour or Sense!

Wor. You must confess this in Honour to their Sense, they all suspect one another.

Bell. And you must allow, in Reproach to it, they all trust one another.

Wor. Your Satyr turns extreamly upon great Men; 'tis lucky for the Crowd, they pass by uncensur'd.

Bell. Because little Villains are meer *Irish* Vermin, carry no Venom in 'em; but the Crimes of Great Men, like the poisonous Serpents, conceal Destruction under their exterior Lustre: Their Examples are so many Commands to the inferior World, and the heedless Herd are caught as Apes and Monkeys are, by an ignorant Admiration and Propensity to mimick those who only make Slaves and Jest of 'em——But does your Indulgence for an Ass continue still? Won't this Fop cure you of your Charity for the Fool *Lurcher*?

Wor. Nothing can cure me of the Value I have for his Truth.

Bell. Yes: Believing him will; I'll answer for it, the Rogue is as unsincere as a First Minister, and would lie as fast, if he had Language enough to be Intelligible; but want of that makes all he says neither true nor false; for Giberidge cannot properly be called either.

Wor. Fie, Fie; *Lurcher* is a well natur'd honest Fellow; and let me tell you, good Nature and Complaisance will atone for the want of infinite good Qualities, that are requisite to excuse the Defect of them.

Bell. Pox of his Complaisance and good Nature; 'tis the Effect of Idleness, and want of Inclinations of his own: Then for being honest, 'tis Fear keeps him so.

Wor. Nay, you must allow him Courage.

Bell. Yes. If you'll try it as you do Gold, by the Weight, he'll turn the Scale against *Alexander*.

Wor. There's a surer way of trying Gold, by Fire.

Bell. Which to my Knowledge he can't stand on a Training Day. I've seen him start and look Pale at a Squib at my Lord-Mayor's Show.

Wor. Involuntary Motions——*Cesar*, we are told, would often faint.

Bell. Ay. But *Cesar* was a Lion when he came to himself; and then 'tis the other's most an Ass. To be sincere, I hate this Fool worse than *Alamode*.

Wor. Come, you're too severe upon poor *Lurcher*, in preferring *Alamode* to him.

Bell. I differ with you; I can forgive a Coxcomb sooner than a Fool. Fops are like those Insects that fly about in hot Weather, rather troublesome than hurtful: Creatures that in common Justice must be annihilated, for they have not Virtues enough to save 'em, nor Vices enough to damn 'em.

Wor. I always thought Coxcombs less pardonable than Fools, because their Faults are generally of their own acquiring, and the others impos'd by Nature.

Bell. So is the Cruelty of Tygers, Wolves, and Mountain Cats, natural too, and therefore in my Opinion the more to be fear'd, by as much as 'tis harder to change Nature than reform Custom. As to the Coxcomb, amuse 'em with Women; take all the Letters they receive from their Creditors for *Billet-Deux*; Give 'em Ribbons, Essence, fine Cloaths and Flattery, and you may sooth the harmless Things into doing any Good that does not interrupt their Folly. But a Fool is a very *Englisb* Bull-dog, you may injure, but can't oblige him; they are despis'd as Dull and Little, and Men never know their Strength and Activity, till they feel it at their Throats.

Wor. Coxcombs have a slower, but full as sure a way of killing, by torturing of your Ears; though I confess bad is the best. But I've forgot, How does my Friend *Townly*? He's no Fool, I hope.

Bell. No; but he makes a great many by passing upon them for a Wit.

Wor. Poh. He cou'd not do that if he had not Wit.

Bell. Pardon me; 'tis but resolving, and by the help of Party, you may have a good Character as easy as a bad one: You're a Patriot at *St. James's* Coffee-House, and a Rebel at the *Cocoa-Tree*; Fool in one Company, and a Philosopher in another. But don't imagine from this, that I think he wants plain Sense and Honesty.

Wor. Well, an useful Understanding passes most current in the World.

Bell.

Bell. Ay: As Farthings do in a Market, they're the ready Change for Things of least Value there.

Wor. I grant you, Wit, like Painting, is valuable, as it entertains us; but whoever gazes all his Time away upon Pictures, or spends it on the other, will be left Naked, Dry and Hungry.

Bell. I'm glad Wit has any Thing in common with Virtue. But in the Pleasure of meeting you, I forgot a little Business I had to do. [Pulls out his Watch.

Wor. Shall I see you at Dinner?

Bell. Most certainly. I intended if I had not met you,

[Exeunt severally.

Scene changes to Worthy's Lodging.

Enter Moderna and Marlove.

Moderna. Dear Marlove! What has kept you so long? I waited for you as impatiently as the Country Ladies do for the Assizes or a Horse-Race; you must expect for the first Month nothing but rural Similies.

Marlove. For the first Month? For your whole Life, I hope; since I would always have you bring your Images from the Seat of Innocence and Quiet.

Mod. O, Yes! they're as innocent as Adam and Eve without their Aprons: But then, believe me, they're as ignorant too.

Mar. I'm glad to find neither Marriage, nor the Country, have been able to spoil thy Gaiety. You stand a little indebted to me; for sure, had you had that Creature of some Twenty several Shops, that Fop *Alamode*, you wou'd have been a miserable Woman.

Mod. Perhaps not.——I can't tell whether 'twould not have been better if I had Married him, for then Fifty to One I should have dislik'd him by this Time.

Mar. And don't you, as it is?

Mod. What if I did not?

Mar. If you didn't, I should think you in the Green-Sickness, and pin'd for Trath, whilst the Luxurious *Autumn* offer'd you his Luscious Store.

Mod. Shu! 'tis but a lusty Surfeit, and one's well for ever. Prithee, dear *Marlove*,--Why so severe? You over-rul'd my Inclinations in this Match: Besides, you know, Child, our Affections are no more in our Choice than our natural Complexions, therefore we are no more accountable for loving a Fool, than liking an ill Face; we'll be judg'd by my Sister.

Enter Florinda.

I was just defending the Cause of Fools; What is your Opinion?

Flor. That 'twas generously done, Madam, to defend your greatest Enemies.

Mod. Pish!--But what do you seriously think, are they really despicable or no?

Flor. Not in their own Opinions; I'll answer for 'em, or they were not Fools.

Mod. Horrid! But answer me directly, is not a Fool as entertaining as a Farce.

Flor. I grant you. But wou'd you, because a Farce diverts you for half an Hour live with *Harlequin*?

Mar. Nay! I vow she's in the Right on't. One goes to see Monsters or the Tombs for Amusement; but I should be sorry to be lock'd up with them.

Mod. Because they can't talk to one.

Flor. In that, I think 'em preferable to Fools.

Mod. O fye, Sister! Never go about to persuade me, that a living Fool has not more Merit with us, than the Seven Wise Masters of Greece. [Knocking at the Door.

Flor. Lord! here's the more fashionable Drums and Trumpets coming in the Name of Congratulatory Visits, *Marlove*. Let us be gone.

[Exeunt *Flor.* and *Mar.*

Enter Bellamar.

Bell. To give you Joy upon your Marriage, Madam, were needless. All I can wish you, is, May your Happiness know no Change.

Mod.

Mod. For Heavens sake ! Why, confine me ? What if I shou'd change my Inclinations ?

Bell. Why, 'twoud be as unpardonable in you, as to change your Face, since you must do both for the worse.

Mod. But without changing one's Inclinations, one might be as well Ugly as Handsome ; as they who have no Variety of Passions, may as well be Poor as Rich.

Enter Alamode.

Sir, your humble Servant !

Alam. Madam, your Slave ! You've left the Country Desert in Spight of Spring, and Winter flourishes now you are here.

Bell. It does not seem so by your Shoes.

Alam. Shoes ! What do you mean ?

Bell. They are not Dirty, that's all.

Ala. O ! I never walk, but at Chapel, the Drawing-Room, or the House of Commons.

Bell. I thought the Members sat at the House of Commons.

Ala. Admirable ! But 'tis cruel to rob me of a Pun : You might as well disrobe me, Ha ! I think that was well enough.

Enter Townly.

Town. Madam, I'm extreamly glad to see you so well in Health, and with a Husband !

Mod. I'm oblig'd to you, Sir. I'm happily possess'd of both.

Ala. O dear Townly, I joy to see thee !

Town. You do ! ——— Gad, I met you just now, and you did not know me.

Ala. I ask Ten Thousand Pardons. I was thinking, and did not see you.

Town. I believe the latter, because you trod upon me. Prithee, What was you thinking on ?

Enter

Enter Maid, whispers Moderna:

Mod. Gentlemen, you'll excuse me. We all dine together, I hope. *[Exit Moderna.]*

Town. As I was a Saying, What was your Thoughts employ'd on?

Ala. Why? ——— A Criticism on one of Mr. *Congreve's* Plays, where he exposes Men of Quality, by making 'em Fops and Fools.

Bell. I have heard Judges say, he drew exactly after Nature.

Ala. Good, *Bellamar*; very good. ——— *Townly*, when shall I hear thee say such a Thing? Thy Wit is like a certain Friends of ours, who to be very sharp, bids you kiss his A ---, and laughs. You know him, *Bellamar*?

Bell. Yes, to have no Sharpness, but what he owes to his Amours. And tho' his Satyr comes from his Mouth like other Men's, 'tis not from his Brain.

Ala. But his Stomach; sweetly intimating his Breath is sowre. ——— Sweet and Sowre. ——— You know.

Town. I perceive, *Alamode* is as well pleas'd with *Antithesis* as Mr. *Bayes*.

Bell. He's as pleas'd with a Fool as Mr. *Bayes*.

Town. What's that, *Alamode*?

Ala. Why, as much as to say, *Townly*, I am very well pleas'd when thee and I meet. Ha! *Bellamar*.

Bell. A fair Hit. But I thought every Body knew a Jest and you were inseparable; and that 'twas impossible to find the one without the other.

Ala. I'm sure one can never find you without the obliging'st Things in Nature. I'll tell you, *Bellamar*, a Pun I made t'other Day: I was maintaining at *White's*, that the *Czar's* Troops were the bravest Fellows in the World. Why so, Sir? says the Brigadier. Why so, Sir, says I, the Reason's plain, for they always Rush-on when they must go fight: So I went Abroad and told it; and Folks made me blush, by saying I had too much Wit.

Enter Lurcher.

O *Lurcher*, I'm sure thou art no Cheat!

Bell.

Bell. I wish he is not, for he looks like a Man.

Ala. And what then?

Bell. Nothing. But that they are too often Cheats!

Ala. Cry you Mercy! that Turn escap'd me.

Lur. No Matter what I look like, I know what you talk like.

Bell. Prithee now, What?

Lur. Why, like one that hates ev'ry Body who have not as much Wit as your self.

Bell. You wrong me, my Quarrel was only with those who have so little, that their going upon Two Legs looks like playing of Tricks. How long have we been Foes, *Lurcher*?

Town. I'll tell you, if you won't think me a Fool for repeating his Words.

Lur. Ay, tell him, tho' he was the only Man I desir'd you not to tell.

Bell. Then I am the only Man he ought to tell, for I hope thou never spok'st well of me.

Town. If you're grave, I'm dumb. — 'Twas the simplest Thing in the World: The Day we din'd last together, *Bellamar* negligently went into the Room before *Lurcher*, sat upon his Right Hand at Table. — And worst of all, took the Glas of Wine he call'd for, and with it his Stomach; for he cou'd not eat out of Anger.

Bell. Is that all, I'm sorry for it, dear *Lurcher*: To make thee amends, thou shalt go to Heaven before me, if thou canst.

Lur. Well then, Are we Friends?

Bell. Entirely. What think you of a Turn in the Park till Dinner?

Ala. Agreed. — I find we all dine together.

Town. Don't you come, *Lurcher*, *Bellamar* will go in to the Room before you, and take your Glas again.

[*Exeunt all but Lurcher.*]

Lur. *Worthy* is my good Friend, I will stay and Dine, for all them. — Beside, I have a Design to ask him for his rich Sister: I know he loves me; but then he loves *Bellamar* better. I wish I cou'd make 'em fall out, then shou'd I have her snug to my self.

Enter Marlove.

Mar. How comes this Fool to stumble on this frightful Probability? I am alarm'd! And something must be done, for shou'd it be a Match, *Bellamar* is lost! For his Behaviour just now sufficiently confirmed me, if she gives her Consent, his will not be wanting.

[Coming towards Lurcher.

What's that you are resolving to try, *Lurcher*?

Lur. To vex 'em that vex me.

Mar. Who are they?

Lur. No Matter. But mayhap I may fit 'em as well. Will you carry me up and introduce me to Mr. *Worthy's* Sister?

Mar. With all my Heart. *[Aside.]* Fools are often lucky at guessing. ——— I must improve this Hint, tho' the Fancy of a Fool; for shou'd it be Real, I am lost.

Enter Moderna and Florinda.

Moderna repeating Verses.

*She made it plain, that human Passion
Was ordered by Predestination:
That if weak Women go astray,
The Stars are more in Fault than they.*

Mod. What think you, *Florinda*?

Mar. Ladies, your Servant! ——— I was just coming up to you. This honest Gentleman, Madam, is a Friend of your Husband's; and desires to be known to you and your Sister.

Mod. Recommended by you, and my Husband's Friend, are Merits will always make him welcome here.

Lur. O Lord! Madam, I am welcome where-ever I go. All People love honest *Lurcher*: I am known every where by the same Name.

Flor. That proceeds from your being every where the same Thing, I dare say, Sir.

Lur.

Lur. Yes, Madam; for I am the same I was the Hour I was Born; never have any Thing to do, but to go to Plays and Opera's, or where People ask me: 'Twould kill another Man to do as I do.

Flor. No, sure, for he would die first.

Lur. D'you think so; thank God I'm as healthy as a Horse; pardon the Comparifon.

Flor. If the Horse does, I do. But pray, Sir, Was you never in Love? That wou'd try the Strength of your Heart, more than all you have mentioned.

Lur. She likes me, I fee——She talks of Love, [*Aside.*——Never but with a Cousin of my own, who is as like me as ever she could Stare; just such a Face for all the World, and such a Humour; every-body said we shou'd have made a charming Couple; but she was my Second Cousin; had she been my First, I might lawfully have married her.

Flor. It is unlucky for the rest of Womankind——You'll never love so truly again; our first Passion is ever the sincerest.

Lur. She's at it again. [*Aside.*] Not so neither, Madam; your Ladyship methinks is as like her in Person as any Thing, only indeed you are not so facetious. Gemini, the Jokes we used to crack upon our Neighbours, and upon one another: I shall never forget one she made upon me at a Christning; said she, I believe your Father and Mother were both Maids when they were married; because when Two Maidenheads meet they always get a Fool. Ha! ha!

Mod. I believe by that your Cousin's Father and Mother were not Maids when they married, for she was no Fool.

Lur. How come you to know that? No more they were; and that broke off the Match, for they say she was a Bastard.

Flor. I thought, being your Relation made it impossible.

Lur. Not so neither: For by paying so much Yearly to the Poor, I was told the Spiritual Court would wink at it.

Mar. This must break her Heart sure?

Lur. No; that was too tough, as they say, but it did turn her Brains.

Flor.

Flo. Then she was cured of her Passion, I suppose, Sir?

Lur. No, Madam; I told you Truth, I never tell any Thing else: Your Brother always said I was too honest to live in this World.

Flo. But happily you have another Quality, that always thrives, though Honesty don't.

Enter Maid, whispers her Mistress.

Lur. If it is any Errand, Madam, I'll go. I've nothing to do.

Mod. I thank you, Sir, 'tis what I hope will employ us all. The Company and Dinner wait.

The End of the First Act.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Worthy, Bellamar, and Lurcher, as just risen from Dinner.

Wor. IF I am not mightily mistaken, *Bellamar*, your Inclinations are not different from mine; here is none but my Friend, honest *Lurcher*; I may speak freely of a Design I long have wish'd to execute, by binding of our Friendships by the Name of Brother: Tell me; Do you like my Sister well enough to say that seriously which you have so often spoken to her in Gallantry?

Bell. I like her, as one that has her Sexes Beauties with her Brother's Mind; so well, that I conjure you by our Friendship, put not the least Constraint upon her Actions: Let her make me happy; or at least leave me the Pleasure of reflecting I have not made her miserable.

Wor.

Wor. 'Tis generously answer'd. You have my Consent; now gain her your own way.——But shall we go in? The Women talk'd of Tea.

[*Wor. and Bell. Exeunt.*
[*Manet Lurcher.*

Enter Marlove hearkning.

Lur. 'Tis so; just as I expected, they are to be married I find.

Mar. To be Married! then his Suspicions and my Fears are true——But stay, I'll hear more. [*Aside.*

Lur. Her Sexes Beauty with her Brother's Mind; those were his Words.

Mar. Then Hell's blackest Falshood was in them. [*Aside.*

Lur. He is in Love, I see——But I may spoil his Sport. If I could make him banish *Bellamar* his House——For she seems to like me——I'll try.

Mar. Leave that to me, *Lurcher*, for I've overheard all you've been saying, and will join my Interest to advance you in her Esteem; and for your Comfort, know *Worthy's* Sister hates *Bellamar*: Yet further for your Hopes, if you can keep a Secret, she is, I know, in Love with you. Her Brother will, she tells me, this Day force her to marry *Bellamar*, if some Means are not found out to avert the Blow.

Lur. What d'you think of making *Worthy* jealous of *Bellamar* with his Wife?——If you'll tell me what to say,——I'll swear any Thing.

Mar. That won't do——Her Passion lies so much another Way;——besides, he is so indifferent in his Behaviour, the Malice will appear.

Lur. I know well enough who you mean, 'tis *Alamode*.——I saw him Whisper, and put a Note into her Hand rising from Table, and went away immediately.

Mar. No; I have a better Prospect——But let us be gone,——they'll miss us else——How quick to fear is Guilt!——Go wait for me at my House.

[*Exeunt Lurcher.*

Scene

Scene opens.

They all come forward from the Tea-Table, Moderna Fanning, and speaking as out of Humor.

Mod. Nay, 'tis endless to dispute, you are a Wit, and will always be in the Right.

Wor. That I am both, appears in nothing so much as admiring you.

Mod. Flattery, after one is married, is downright Abuse, because we know 'tis Flattery.

Bell. And yet 'tis then we want it most.

Mod. How so, pray?

Bell. Because we generally discover Faults that won't bear Truth, which we conceal'd before.

Mod. Ay, but the Disease is then grown desperate, and Sleeping Draughts are best to quiet what's incurable.

Bell. I'm of your Opinion; and it shou'd go near to quiet, if I prepar'd it.

Mod. Monster! but tell me *Bellamar*, what wou'd you say if a Woman shou'd endeavour to make a Fool of you?

Bell. Why, that she was inclined to love me, and so endeavour'd to make me what was most agreeable to her.

Flor. Your Wit, Sir, makes you forget here are Women in the Room.

Bell. You and your Sister's always does, Madam—herefore—

Mod. Prithee hold your Tongue, and keep your Compliment, for I wou'd not be a Wit for the World.

Bell. Why, Madam—'tis the best Security against Envy.

Wor. Ay, but 'tis not the best Security against Hatred, *Bellamar*.

Bell. I wonder it shou'dn't,—'tis the harmlessest Thing upon Earth, it never infects any Body.

Flor. You're intolerable; I'm surpriz'd you escape.

Bell. If you mean the Power of your Eyes, Madam, I have not escap'd?

Flor. Ridiculous Creature; I would rather hear you rail than praise, because I'm sure you're sincere then.

Bell. Nay, I'm Dumb, Madam; I say nothing.

Flor. You need not be Dumb to say that.

THE P R O L O G U E.

THE ugly Beau by frequent Use of Glafs,
Instead of hating, comes to like his Face,
And grows the Plague of every publick Place.
Just so it fares with Fops of Phæbus Strain,
They read their Nonsense o're and o're again,
And find strange Charms in what gives others Pain.
This from our Author I am bid to say,
As some Excuse for his first Coup d' Essay.
At once he boldly soars to highest Life,
And paints a very, very modish Wife:
In whose Example this sad Truth appears,
The Husband's hated for his Worth, not Tears.
They crave for Fops, as Girls green Fruit devour,
Not that 'tis young, but that they love what's sower.
But one Word more for these loose following Scens;
Ye all will ask what 'tis the Scribbler means?
Where is the Order, Method, the Design,
And all that makes a well-wrought Drama shine?
Why, if his Conduct merits not Applause,
Consider, Sirs, they are your Lives he draws.
As for his Wit, if that be under-grown,
Make it not less, by making it your own.
And then for Moral: Faith, like you, he has none.
His Plot he's sure will plead for every Fault,
Such deep Designs no Spanish Priest e're thought,
Nor darker Machiavel to Borgia taught.
Observe him well, ye learn'd in State Intrigues,
Who deal in Politicks, and powder'd Wigs:
Your Schemes, as soon as form'd, are all reveal'd;
But here the Action's done, and yet the Plot's conceal'd.

Persons of the Drama.

M E N.

Worthy, Husband to *Moderna*. Mr. Booth.

Bellamar, his Friend. Mr. Wilks.

Alamode, a Fop, Lover of *Moderna*. Mr. Cibber.

Lurcher, a Fool, with the Reputation of good Nature and Honesty, but a Knave to his Power. } Mr. Miller.

Townly, a common Acquaintance. Mr. Mills.

W O M E N.

Moderna, Wife to *Worthy*, in love with *Alamode*, but overpersuaded to marry, by *Marlove* her Confident. } Mrs. Thurmond.

Marlove, her Friend, and secretly kind Mistress to *Bellamar*. } Mrs. Porter.

Florinda, Sister to *Worthy*. Mrs. Oldfield.

Mrs. Commode, an India Woman. Mrs. Baker.

S C E N E, *London*.

C H I T

Mod. Nay, if you begin to be severe on one another, do it to some Purpose, e'en marry and be heartily reveng'd; so I leave you to decide the Quarrel — *Marlove* we must go into the City.

[*Exit Marlove and Moderna.*]

Wor. Townly, thee and I will make a Visit — Sister, you'll entertain *Bellamar*. [*Exit Worthy and Townly.*]

[*Manet Florinda and Bellamar.*]

Bell. Now I find myself in earnest, I'm as awkward as *Sir Wiltfull Witwou'd* — how near are Sincerity and Dullness allied! full as near as strong Desire and Impotence. I'm so Silly and so Serious, that I'm downright Speechless — [*Aside*] I wonder, Madam, where your Brother is gone.

Flor. Wou'd you have me go and inquire, Sir — He looks shamefully Guilty, and I'm glad to see it. [*Aside.*]

Bell. For God's sake, Madam, I only ask'd *pour passer le temps*.

Flor. A most happy Expedient truly; but I interrupted some Jest, I fear — You seem to be in a most pleasant Humour.

Bell. That's pardonable in you, Madam, who can make such good ones of your own.

Flor. I'm oblig'd to you, Sir, for that Power.

Bell. You are, but 'tis sorely against my Will.

Flor. I shou'd be sorry to oppose your Will, whilst you have that dying Look.

Bell. I'm glad you think me in so desperate a Condition, you'll the easier believe what I say, since the Words of even dying Criminals are seldom doubted.

Flor. I wou'd be glad to know what you have to discover, that makes you so solicitous to be believ'd.

Bell. Truth of great Importance, that will, if I recover, concern my Life.

Flor. But if you shou'd not recover, what wou'd you leave me?

Bell. I have nothing I can call my own; you, like a bold Invader, have born away by force what else my Faith and Love had offer'd.

C

Flor.

Flor. And what had my Brother's Visit to do with this Speech? Why did you not at once open your Snuff-box, and then the Case?

Bell. Truly, from not thinking well of myself, nor ill enough of you, to ask you to resign the World for me.

Flor. Tho' you pretend too much Modesty to ask it, I'll be sworn you have Vanity enough to expect it.

Bell. Rather say, I've Love enough to wish it, and too much, I fear, to be easy under a Disappointment.

Flor. Love from you sounds like Religion from Atheists, they never name it but in Ridicule or Complaisance to the Company.

Bell. I beg you not to think — because I laugh at the French Prophets, I'm so insensible as to reject Truths enforc'd by Miracles.

Flor. Ay, but Women like a little of the Prophet, a Man to win us must see Visions and dream Dreams till he is quite out of his Senses, and then we'll believe him sent by Love.

Bell. You are to blame, your Interest is the same with true Religion, a Man loves you the more for being in his Senses.

Flor. How comes it then all your Lovers in Romances and Novels are raving?

Bell. Faith, unless their Authors were so, I can't tell; or if that was a Proof, as you pretend, it ought to be a kind of Mortification, for it looks as if you were not the proper Objects of Reason's Worship.

Flor. Yes, but we love to be serv'd implicitly; it shows our Power. Now your Reason is an inquisitive Free-thinker, that rather prescribes than obeys.

Bell. It only inquires that it may serve you as you deserve, a Doctrine Women of your Merit ought to propagate, and scorn the Offering of Ignorance, that daily sacrifices to Idols. — Believe me, the want of Sense makes every Victory ridiculous.

Flor. Too much Sense has often the same effect as too little.

Bell. Then there are fewer ridiculous Things in the World than I imagin'd.

Flor.

Flor. And so you wou'd have us increase the Number and marry.

Bell. And why not — for People are generally fondest of their own Jest.

Flor. Nay, 'tis a secure Way of never being without one.

Bell. Which in a Month's time every Body will laugh at but ourselves.

Flor. Does not that Thought frighten you?

Bell. Not when I think how many happy Ages will rowl round me, and of the painful Hours I am to count without you.

Flor. And so you are really in Love.

Bell. As certainly as any one must be that saw you.

Flor. And how certain is that, pray?

Bell. Why just as certain as that you don't think I flatter when I tell you so.

Flor. Odious! I don't think of the Matter.

Bell. I'm glad to hear it, you'll the likelier consent.

Flor. Since you've help'd me to an Excuse I can't tell but I may.

Bell. Then let us lose no Time.

*For Beauty like a Shadow flies,
And our Youth before us dies.*

Flor. Or wou'd Youth and Beauty stay,
Love bath Wings and will away.

But for all that I'll venture — tho' I'm in the wrong to consent thus easily, for Men generally measure the Value of Things by the Difficulty they have in obtaining 'em.

Bell. Quite contrary, Madam, nothing dignifies a Benefit so much as a readiness in conferring it; and Men never like any thing for the sake of the Difficulty, but despise all Difficulties for the sake of what they like; the Charm is in the Prize, not in the Hardship. — But in return to your Goodness, I beg you wou'd make your own Terms.

Flor. No, Love is free as Air, and, like it, grows dis-temper'd by Confinement: You shall be absolute, for I shou'd hate the Good you did me by Compulsion, and scorn whatever little Contracts without Love produc'd.

Bell. Generous Creature — I'll instantly inform your Brother of my blest Success with you; he, I'm sure, will not delay my Happiness.

*Thou, sure, wer't left of all the Race uncurst,
To shew how perfect Heav'n form'd Woman first.*

*Scene changes to Mrs. Commode's, an India House,
and discovers Alamode with a Heap of Fans,
Snuff-boxes, and other Toys before him.*

Enter Moderna.

Ala. Madam, your Slave — You're opportunely come to help me in the choice of a Snuff-box for the Woman I love best.

Mod. That will require, Sir, what you won't agree to, my knowing the Lady, for our Tastes may differ.

Ala. Impossible, you may as easily differ from yourself.

Mod. That mayn't be so hard a Task, perhaps. But are you awake, do you know what you say?

Ala. I vow to God, Madam, I mean nothing, but that my Mistress is an Angel, and you are another — And Angels must always like the same Thing.

Mrs. Com. Yes, indeed, Madam, I'm sure that's what he meant — If your Ladyship had but heard what he said of your Wit and Beauty!

Mod. Fie, Mrs. Commode, I wou'd have some Tea.

Mrs. Com. There is some just ready, Madam.

Mod. Ay, but I hate this publick Room, one's kill'd with idle People.

Mrs. Com. Ay, Madam, I have a charming Room above Stairs your Ladyship never saw; with the charm-

charmingest rich Covering for a Bed that ever came into *England*. Will you be pleas'd to walk up, Madam?

Mod. I'll follow you, Mrs. *Commode* — Your Servant, Sir.

Ala. Nay, you must not exclude me, Madam.

Mrs. Com. Oh! pray, Madam, have Mr. *Alamode's* Fancy in the Covering; all the Ladies say he has a charming Fancy in a Covering. [*Exeunt.*]

The Scene changes to Worthy's House.

Enter Marlove and Maid.

Mar. Is Mrs. *Florinda* to be seen?

Maid. I'll let her know you are here, Madam.

Marlove Sol.

Mar. I'll try how she's inclin'd, before I give a loose to my Revenge; but why shou'd I be angry with *Bellamar*? I shew'd him first the way to change his Love, by being false myself — Fool that I was, first to give him up my Person, Honour, and my Heart, and then to wrong him; he's a Wretch we shou'd despise, that cou'd forgive an Injury in Love; for such an Easiness bespeaks Indifferency for us, or else a Meanness in the Lover's Soul, that everlastingly condemns our Choice — But here's *Florinda* — Be calm my Griefs.

Enter Florinda with Milton in her Hand.

Flor. You'll forgive me, dear *Marlove*, and yet I don't know how to expect it, when I consider what kept me so long.

Mar. If this was it [*looking at the Book*] I must approve your better Choice.

Flor. 'Tis silly to own it; but I've been as angry with Mother *Eve*, as ever Mother was with a Child.

Mar. What Part provok'd you so?

Flor. Don't you see — her Obstinacy in wandering from her Husband, contrary to his Will and common Sense — I can't help thinking it like some of our fine Ladies, who think their Husbands inhumanly cruel, if they won't believe they wou'd resist the Charms of all Mankind united for their sake, and yet won't sacrifice such a Trifle as a publick Place or Visit to his Quiet.

Mar. You'll make some Man envied, and all Woman-kind asham'd, when you marry, if you reason thus.

Flor. The latter will be against my Will then ; for all I propose in Marriage, is to make two People as happy as I can, by never doing any thing to be asham'd of myself.

Mar. Then you do think of marrying?

Flor. And what will surprize you more, I'll marry from having thought on't.

Mar. By no means, since you judge too well to chuse amiss — shou'd I not be too curious to ask the happy Man ——— Now hold my Heart.

[*Aside.*
Flor. Not at all, since my own Inclinations are confirm'd by my Brother's Approbation ——— though, perhaps, you'll laugh when I name him, 'tis *Bellamar*.

Mar. I wish you may have reason to laugh.

Flor. What's the Danger?

Mar. He's a Man, that's all.

Flor. Or between you and I, *Marlove*, I wou'd not have him ; wou'd you?

Mar. I ! not for the *Indies* ——— What stoop to be the Refuge of a Fop, who brings me the Refuse of the whole Town ; and, tir'd of Life, wou'd bury himself with me !

Flor. Yet you persuaded *Moderna* in my Brother's Favour, whom you knew a Man of Pleasure.

Mar. Because I knew him to be a Man of Honour.

Flor. Is not *Bellamar* too a Man of Honour?

Mar. I can't tell, I never trusted him.

Flor. Then when he's mine I beg you never will — for believe me, *Marlove*, if he offers to borrow then, it must be out of Extravagancy.

Mar.

Mar. What d'ye mean, Madam?

Flor. Nothing, but that I'm glad to be marry'd well; we Women without a Husband are like Sheep without a Shepherd, expos'd to Wolves and Foxes.

Mar. And Marriage, like a Shepherd, saves you from Wolves and Foxes, only to sell you to the Butcher's Knife, a Husband.

Flor. And so you wou'd have me graze my Life out, be shorn once a Year to support the Woollen Manufactory, cloath Fools, and comfort decay'd Constitutions — No, that will never do while my own is so good — But don't you think I'm wild, *Marlove*?

Mar. You are in the way of being tam'd, remember I say so.

Flor. I'm glad of it, for to tell you the truth, I'm quite tir'd of this savage Life.

Mar. But had you not better live in a Tree than a Cage?

Flor. No, if I had a kind Master, 'twere better than being disturb'd by hunting Fools and Hawks.

Mar. Well, I shall wonder at nothing, after your declaring in favour of the perfidious Sex with the Frankness of a downright Libertine.

Flor. I'll venture to say one thing, Madam, without thinking myself a Libertine: To subdue our Inclination to our Duty, is all I know of Virtue; for 'twere ridiculous to pretend a Merit in the Conquest of what didn't oppose us.

Mar. To have a Nature pure, and refin'd from all Passion, is sure a higher degree of Excellence.

Flor. But since such a one is not upon Earth, I shall insist 'tis in Resistance we acquire our Fame.

Mar. Well, I cou'd never come up to you — What, go to Church and declare to the whole Congregation that I've the Inclinations of a Brute! Oh! I am ready to faint at the Thought of it!

Flor. May be you think the Place too publick; that puts me in mind of a Lady, who wou'd never taste Wine at Table where ev'ry Body drank it, and got a red Face by drinking strong Waters in her Closet.

Mar. Red Face, Madam — mine is no redder than yours.

Flor. Yes it is — No — Now 'tis pale again.

Mar. I've gone too far [*Aside*] I must dissemble, or my Looks will betray me — I beg Pardon, dear *Florinda*, I've only rallied all this time.

Flor. I'm glad to hear it, I protest I was almost out of Temper, to hear you maintain an Argument so different from your former Conversation — I hope I have said nothing I shou'd not, I mightily fear I have.

Mar. Nothing I assure you, but what I shou'd have said in your Case — Here's your Brother, he seems pleas'd.

Enter Worthy.

Wor. *Marlove*, you must be Witness this Night to the greatest Happiness of my Life, next to *Moderna* — Sister, *Bellamar* overjoy'd me with the News of your Consent, and begs I'll not delay. So I'm resolv'd I will not sleep till he's pleas'd — You may sleep as much as you think fit.

Flor. I may, without blushing, own an Esteem that's authoriz'd by you — tho' my Friend *Marlove* has almost put me out of Humour with Mankind.

Mar. Lord, Child, I told you I was but in jest.

Wor. If she'll follow your Example, I'll answer for it she'll change her Mind. I must dance at your Wedding, remember, *Marlove*.

Mar. 'Twere kinder to dance at one's Funeral, for that is the End of our Sorrows, the other the Beginning.

Flor. Did not I tell you how averse she was — What is it, dear *Marlove*, has chang'd you so o'th' sudden?

Wor. Banter, meer Banter.

Mar. Nothing else, I assure you — Lord, did you never say a Thing for the sake of saying it?

Flor. Never; and I thank God I have not Wit enough to teach my Tongue a Language different from my Heart.

Mar.

C H I T - C H A T. 25

Mar. May no Time nor Chance dissolve the happy Union then ; and so I take my Leave of you.

Wor. You'll be here, *Marlove* — I'll invite the Company that din'd here, if they're to be found.

Mar. If I am able you may command me. [Exit.

Flor. Did you ever see any thing so alter'd ? What can it mean ?

Wor. I can't guess ; a secret Sorrow seem'd to hang about her, that discover'd itself the more she labour'd to conceal it.

Flor. It's odd, this strange Dislike to Matrimony shou'd seize her at this time. I remember nothing *Gayer* at your Wedding than she was.

Wor. If I did not know Malice and Envy had Ten thousand Tongues, and they all false, her Conduct would almost tempt me to believe common Fame ; and that her Aversion to your marrying *Bellamar* was like some memorable Patriot's Hatred to absolute Power, they could not endure it in any Hands except their own. — But I had forgot my Friend ; I am accountable to him for every Hour I lose. Come, Sister, let's go in and prepare ev'ry thing. [Exeunt.

The End of the Second Act.

A C T

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

Worthy's House.

Enter Moderna, reading a Letter.

Mod. **F**ROM *Alamode* — But here's my Husband ; he's now grown painful to me. Our Hate encreases with our Crimes ; and the Sight of him we have injur'd is like the Ghost of one we have murder'd ; it haunts away our Peace, awakes our Guilt, and fills our Soul with Horror.

Worthy coming towards Moderna.

Wor. Here she is (*Aside.*) What ! retir'd, and talking to yourself : Trust me, my Dear, it is unkind to rob my Eyes and Ears of all that can delight 'em. I've been this Hour in search of you to let you know I'm resolv'd this Evening to give my Sister to *Bellamar*, if you approve of it.

Mod. Your Judgment, Sir, is too good to want a Woman's Skill.

Wor. Believe me, my *Moderna*, 'tis mightily your Interest to have my Judgment good ; for it speaks wondrous Things in praise of you. But why so cold ? Has any thing displeas'd my Love ?

Mod. Sudden Vapours and Sicknefs at my Stomach.

Wor. Come, prithee cheer up, and glad my Heart that knows no Joy while thou art sad. Here's *Marlove*, she'll join to chase away your Cares.

Mod. Lord, I have no Cares — but your importuning me to fly without Wings — that is, to be merry when I have no Reason. *Marlove* your Servant.

Mar.

Mar. Your Servant : What makes you out of Humour, Child ?

Mod. Ridiculous Question ! Why, what makes one old and ugly ? Something we can't help, for one would be neither of the three by Choice.

Enter Bellamar, overhearing.

Bell. But why are you not as ready to help Nature in the Improvement of your Humour, as you are artful in mending your Complexion, and concealing your Age ?

Mar. Because, being better humour'd were to cultivate a Weakness that puts it in your Power to impose upon us, whilst looking young and handsome enables us to cheat you. And 'tis in Love as 'tis in Play, you must be the Knave or the Fool.

Bell. This is a way of Reasoning pardonable in none but those ruin'd by Play. I hope no ill Run has turn'd you Gamester, Madam.

Mar. No Matter : I shall never attempt repairing my Loss by one who understands all the Game. You are in no Danger, Sir.

Wor. In no Danger, *Marlove* ! Is he not going to be married ? I told you you'd change your Mind.

Mar. So will he, if he has not chang'd his Nature.

Wor. Don't you think this Behaviour of *Marlove*'s most prodigious ? *[Aside to Moderna.]*

Mod. Not at all ; but your Friend and you are so censorious, 'tis not safe to speak or look before you.

Wor. I've done — I leave you for a Minute to hasten the Bride.

Mod. Pray don't be in too great a Hurry ; for I'm engag'd for an Hour. *Marlove*, Shall I set you down any where ?

Mar. With all my Heart, if you go near the Strand.

[Exeunt Moderna and Marlove.]

Wor. Your Liberty is now upon the Brink of Fate, as a Man's Life is when the Enemy appears in the Field. Don't you, like many of 'em, wish to make up the Quarrel, and part Friends ?

Bell.

Bell. No ; for I would no more preserve my Freedom at the Price of my Love, than I would my Life at the Expence of my Honour.

Wor. Courage, *Bellamar*, the Enemy is as well determin'd as you : See you keep firm when she appears.

Bell. Pleasure will keep my Constancy in this, as Reputation wou'd do in the other.

Wor. I'll send and invite the Company that din'd here.

Bell. Do : In the mean time I'll go to the *Change*, and bespeak some of the Ensigns of *Hymen*. Such as Favours, &c.

[*Exeunt ambo.*]

Scene changes to the New-Exchange, and shows Alameda at Mrs. Trifle's Shop.

Ala. Mrs. *Trifle*, d'ye esteem this Essence essential ?

Mrs. Trifle. I'll assure you, Sir, 'tis as fine as ever was put in Hair.

Ala. What's in that Paper ?

Mrs. Trifle. Cravats, Sir.

Ala. May I crave at what Price you sell 'em ?

Mrs. Trifle. Twelve Pound the Dozen is the lowest, if you'll take my Word, Sir.

Ala. If I should take your Word, wou'd you not take me up ?

Mrs. Trifle. Good God ! Why shou'd you think so ?

Ala. Because 'twould be taking what was another's.

Mrs. Trifle. O, Sir, You are dispos'd to be merry ; however, I'll venture to take your Word. Here's a charming Piece of Lace : To be sure I'll use you as well as any Body.

Enter Moderna.

Mrs. Trifle. Madam, your Ladyship's most humble Servant. I hope, Madam, your Head and Ruffles pleas'd your Ladyship.

Mod. By no means, Mrs. *Trifle*, nor any Body else.

Mrs. Trifle. I wonder at that, Madam ; they were the same Pattern with my Lady *Roundabout's*.

Mod.

Mod. And therefore I, nor no Body else lik'd them. I would assoon have my Stays made by her Measure, or let her fit for my Picture, as have any thing I wear made by her Pattern.

Ala. What d'ye mean that overgrown Blue-Coat Girl, who has always as much Muslin about her Face as she has Affectation, or Decay in it ?

Mrs. Trifle. Indeed she's in Fashion now to be sure.

Mod. Silly ; She has been as long out of Fashion as out of her Teens.

Ala. And out of Lovers.

Mod. Or Modesty, for she has yet the Assurance to snuff those dim Eyes of hers, and twinkle after Hearts.

Ala. Then when she would be obliging or civil, she's as nauseous as the old *English* Hospitality, that brings you Ale and Cheese for Breakfast : Or as a certain Knight's Lady that gives you Wine of her own making : I wou'd as live drink Water of her own making.

Mod. Well, surely an old Jest, or an old Story, is not duller than Love in an old Man or Woman.

Ala. Or 'tis as dull as a Country Town in Sermon-time.

Mod. Ay, or a Country Town at any time : Or as foolish as neglecting it in the Young.

Ala. A propos. Madam, I thank you for the Hint.

[*Whispers Moderna.*]

Mod. Well, *Mrs. Trifle*, I'll send you that monstrous Head and Ruffles ; and if you can reduce them to a size fit for a Christian, you'll do Miracles. Sir, your Servant.

[*Exit Moderna.*]

Ala. You won't take less than Twenty Shillings a Cravat ?

Mrs. Trifle. If I would I'm sure, Sir, you would not have the Conscience to ask 'em cheaper.

Ala. Lay by a Dozen, with some Essence, sweet *Mrs. Trifle*, and I'll send for 'em to Morrow. [Exit laughing.]

Scene

Scene changes to Marlove's House.

Enter Maid.

Maid. Madam, Mr. Townley is below.

Mar. Show him up. He is an old Admirer of mine. I could, if he would assist me in my Revenge, be tempted to do that out of Malice, which I shall never do out of Love; for *Lurcher*, I fear, is too great a Fool to be of any use.

Enter Townley a little fuddled.

Town. Love and the Hickup have seiz'd me so of the sudden, I can't tell the dear Creature how much I love the Tip of her little Finger.

Mar. Shall I get you any thing to bring up the mighty Nothing you are big with?

Town. Three Go-downs of you would do me more good than warm Water.

Mar. You want warm Water to wash those Hands of thine, and that dear dirty Face. Why, Man, thou'rt as dirty as a Chymist.

Town. And as hot as his Fire. [*Hickups, and offers to kiss her.*]

Mar. Foh! And as windy as the Bellows that blows it. But prithee where hast been?

Town. That's not to the purpose; shall I tell you where I would be?

Mar. Where all drunken Men generally would be, in the Place they are oftner troublesome than pleasing.

Town. Methinks you Women thou'd like Drunkenness, for it opens Mens Purfes, and shuts their Eyes.

Mar. But not their Mouths, Beast: Women hate Drunkards, for they neither keep their Words nor a Secret.

Town. And you Women all keep your Words, because no Body will take 'em. Then for your Secrets you never trust us with any, but the Subject of a Quarrel betwixt you and your She Friend, how inhumanly she made you wait at Home to go with her to the Opera;
be

be deny'd to seventy or eighty Bosom Friends ; and neglect paying a hundred Visits that the last Winter was too short to pay : but indeed you're not sorry, since you've heard her Character, of any Pretence to break off an Acquaintance that had neither Credit or Entertainment.

Mar. Hold, you Brute, wou'd you have me believe, if we repos'd greater Confidence, you wou'd not deceive us ? I would as soon trust *Isabella* at Play.

Town. It's better doing that than never play.

Mar. To those that have the Rage of Gaming.

Town. Do you never divert yourself with those dear Fingers ? Let me buss 'em. I warrant they are always full of Court-Cards that crowd about 'em as about Favourites, to guide 'em to the Port of Preferment.

Mar. Nonsense ! What does the Fool mean by Fingers, Favourites, Port and Preferment ?

Town. If you do not know what I mean I'll explain myself.

Mar. No, trust that to any Understanding rather than your own ; 'twill be to your Advantage

Town. Nay then — [Offers to kiss her.

Mar. If you're thus rude, I vow I'll keep my Resolution, and —

Town. Till it spoils in this warm Weather ; but it shan't be my Fault. [Offers to kiss her again.

Mar. Stand off, Impertinence ; d'ye think this Impudence will prevail ?

Town. If that don't, I have neither Wealth, nor Beauty ; and for Modesty that never did ; so I have no Hopes.

Mar. Your Case is not so desperate as you imagine perhaps — If you, in return to any Favour you wou'd obtain, will grant another.

Town. Name it.

Mar. Let the Proposal be what it will, you promise ?

Town. Provided it be not Murder, Treason, nor Marriage, I do promise.

Mar. None of them ; and upon this Condition, an Hour hence I'll meet you at *Spring-Garden*. Remember you perform.

Town. Keep your Appointment, and you shall find I will perform, and Wonders too. [Exeunt.

Scene

Scene changes to the New Exchange.

Bellamar speaking to Worthy's Footman.

Bell. Where's your Master ?

Footm. I don't know, Sir. My Lady is at Mrs. *Commode's* Shop. She sent the Coach and me away with Mrs. *Marlove*, with Orders to return in an Hour, and wait for her here.

Bellamar walks up towards Mrs. Trifle's Shop.

Bell. Your Servant, Mrs. *Trifle* ; how goes new Fashions and old Promises ?

Mrs. Trifle. Why truly, Sir, neither to my Advantage.

Bell. Have you had no Ladies this Afternoon ?

Mrs. Trifle. None, except Madam *Moderna*.

Bell. Is it long since she went ?

Mrs. Trifle. O, Sir, at least an Hour : Mr. *Alamode* and she just staid to laugh at my Lady, and went away.

Bell. What, together ! It's pretty odd, send her Coach and her Servants away. [*Aside.*] Your Servant, Mrs. *Trifle* ; I wish, for your sake, little Heads may go out of Fashion. Pray make hast with what I sent about.

[*Goes to the other end of the Change, and meets Alamode handing Moderna out of a Hackney-Coach.*
Ha ! is not that *Alamode* and *Moderna* coming out of a Hackney-Coach ?

Mod. Don't this look strange, *Bellamar* ?

Bell. By no means, Madam, 'tis the commonest thing in Life.

Mod. *Marlove* and I had certainly been kill'd ; for the Coach broke at *Temple-Bar* ; and if Mr. *Alamode* had not come by, I know not what we should have done without him. Pray, Heaven, *Marlove* has kept the Coach. [*Aside,*

Ala. I live but to serve the Fair, Madam.

Bell. And your Friend, Sir.

Ala. After them *Bellamar*.

Bell. Both at once sometimes.

Mod. I'm frighten'd to Death ; he seems suspicious.
(*Aside.*) Sir, you are expected at our House to Night.
I'm the unluckiest Creature. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Alla. I'll not fail.

[Exit Mod.]

Bell. I hope, Sir, you'll come and see the last of your humble Servant.

Alla. How soon, pray?

Bell. You can never come too soon. In an Hour at farthest.

Alla. I'll not fail waiting on you. [Exeunt Ambo. They remain till he is gone out some time.]

Scene changes to Worthy's House.

Enter Bellamar.

Bell. 'Tis plain *Worthy* is abus'd. I task'd the Fop, in jest, to see the last of me—— I wish it prove not so in earnest—— The last of all that Calm I now enjoy.—— By Heavens, the Woman startled me, to see her injure thus the best of Men, with the most abject Wretch of the Creation: I'm dreadfully uneasy, till I inform *Worthy* of his Wrongs,—— for to know, and yet conceal 'em, is a Degree of Guilt.—— Though, Heaven can tell, 'tis the dangeroufist Task of Friendship—— The faithful Counsellor, that boldly serves his Prince against his Will, runs not a greater Risque, than him that tells his Friend, his Wife, or Mistress, has betray'd him—— here comes *Florinda*—— she, surely, is not false, and yet she's fair—— But Women differ as the Men; there are some few *Worthys*, amidst a Croud of vile Impostors.

Enter Florinda.

Flor. Who are Impostors?

Bell. Not they who are so wondrous fair as you, I hope.

Flo. Why should you suspect they are?

Bell. Because the fallen Angels were once the fairest of the heavenly Beings.

Flo. But 'twas Ambition, not their Beauty cast 'em.

D

Bell.

Bell. Too much Humility is oft as fatal to the fair on Earth, as Pride to them in Heaven.

Flo. But that's a Fault the handsome seldom are accus'd of: Beauty is generally distinguish'd, by the proud, the haughty, and the cruel.

Bell. Yes, to them that love 'em—but, 'tis observ'd, those Masters, who are most inhuman to their Slaves, are humblest to their Tyrants..

Flo. Pray, what Tyrants have we to stoop to?

Bell. To Fools, Time, Affectation, Detraction, Malice, Idleness, Curiosity, Revenge—Extravagancy and Covetousness despotically govern by turns.

Flo. The Lord preserve us—— though, if these are our Tyrants, I must in Gratitude confess, their Reign is the mildest of all Princes—— I'm not conscious of their Power being ever exercis'd on me.

Bell. No, thou art the *Hortentia* of the Age, an Age that swarms with *Messalinas*.

Flo. What Satire, in the Name of Wonder, have you been reading against Women?

Bell. The most severe and pointed—their own Actions!

Flo. Tell me, for Heaven's Sake.

Bell. No; 'tis a Thing as black as Night, and but to mention it, were to o'er-cast the brightest Day.—— You are concern'd.

Flo. I'm on the Rack, till you disclose what thus disquiets you.

Bell. I dare not trust you; yet I wish you knew it.

Flo. You say I'm concern'd——I've then a Right to know it.

Bell. Take care how you improve in Knowledge—— It was that Thirst lost Paradise——be happy yet, and live in Ignorance.

Flo. I would not wander after vain Enquiries—— but when a Thing concerns me, my Duty bids me be inform'd. Tell me, I conjure you; or I shall think what-e'er you said of Love, was Gallantry; and this a low, mean Artifice, to insult my Easiness, by wounding me through all the Sex. 'Tis something you've heard to my Dishonour, and half believe it; but dare not speak it out. I'll hear it, or never see you more.

Bell.

Bell. What might before be look'd on as Imprudence, by this hard Injunction, now becomes Obedience——
Know then, your Brother is basely wrong'd.

Flo. By whom?

Bell. Spare me the Words, and think the rest.

Flo. No; I will hear it all. Who is't has wrong'd him.

Bell. *Moderna.*

Flo. 'Tis false.

Bell. 'Tis true; and *Alamode* is her Accomplice; the Bane that's thrown into *Worthy's* Cup, and poisons all his Draught of Happiness.

Flo. This is the Fumes of Spleen; the mere Creature of Jealousy, and busy Censure—— My Sister's as innocent, as your Suspicion is foul. This will be my Curse soon——whene'er the Vapours, or a cloudy Day fill your Brains with visionary Dangers——I'll hear no more.

Bell. By all that's sacred but you shall, since you rack'd the Secret from me: Unless you'll have me think you are her Confident, and not to learn of me——Confess, and I have done.

Flo. You have! but let me tell you, 'tis what never shall be undone, by Time, nor you. Farewel.

[*Offers to go.*
Bell. Yet stay, and hear the Grounds on which my Fears are founded.

Flo. No; I've heard too much; and but for the Quiet of my Brother, I would proclaim the opprobrious Accusation till thou becam'st as infamous as thou wou'd'st make my Sister.

[*Offers to go, Bellamar holds her.*
Flo. Let me go; your Hands will poison me.

Bell. Indeed you wrong 'em; they are too obedient to my Heart to hurt you. They ev'ry Day assist to cherish Life, which they wou'd never do, if they were capable of hurting you, nor wou'd I trust 'em more. I beg you hear.

Flo. What? my self call'd Bawd, by the more modish Name of Confident?——Injurious Man!

[*Exit, angrily.*
Bell. This is right; right Tyrant, Woman; first torture from me the Confession of a Thing; that known, my Life must pay for——If she is thus warm'd, how wou'd *Worthy* have been fir'd? he must not know it; at least not for a Time——My Mind is grievously disturb'd, tofs'd to and fro, betwixt the honest and the prudent Part——

Be it for a while determin'd thus—— I will not awake him in his peaceful Night ; but leave it to her Conduct—— that seems to me, too loose to let his golden Dream continue,

[Exit.

Florinda returns, and meets Lurcher.

Lurch. She's here alone ! I'll try my Fortune.

[Aside.

Flo. Did you meet Bellamar, as you came this Way, Sir?

Lurch. Yes, Madam.

Flo. I have heard you profess, Sir, you had no Business, nor Pleasure, but going other Peoples Errand : If I durst trouble you—— I beg you wou'd overtake Bellamar, and let him know, I've something to impart to him, of Moment to us both.

Lurch. That's to be married, I suppose, I'll bite her.

[Aside.] Madam, I'll run ev'ry Step of the Way.

[Exit Lurcher.

Flo. I was to blame, in forcing him to tell a Secret he assur'd me wou'd dispense ; and afterwards condemning him unheard, for giving up his Judgment to my Will. I'll own my Error, and hear the Story out.

Enter Lurcher.

Could you overtake him, Sir ?

Lurch. Yes, Madam. That's a Lie, for I did not go after him. [Aside.]

Flo. And he's a coming ?

Lurch. No, Madam ?

Flo. What did he say ?

Lurch. Egad, I don't know what he said ; only this I am sure, he said he cou'd not, or he wou'd not come—— I won't be positive, for fear of telling a Lie.

Flo. You'll make an ill Courier, and as bad a Fortune, if you adhere always thus scrupulously to Truth ; though 'tis strange, methinks, he should refuse to come.

Lurch.

Lurch. Nay, I know he'll deny it, because he hates me—— but I'm sure 'tis as true as other Things I have heard him say of your Ladyship.

Flo. I hope 'twas nothing bad he said ; since you say they were equally true.

Lurch. Did I say so, Madam ? No, they are not equally true, for he said no Harm at all ; only us'd to say if he was not your Brother's Friend, you was a very handsome Lady—— And wou'd, I am ashamed to say it, make a charming Bedfellow — He ask'd me once, why I wou'd not marry you, that he might cuckold me.

Flo. Now I begin to see through his Design ; this Fellow's Folly has let in Day upon me ; and all my Sister's Crimes were only a Pretext, to break off the Match he never was sincere in—— I'm sorry now I sent for him again—[*Aside.*] I wish you had told me this before you went, I had spar'd you then the Pains of going.

Lurch. 'Twas not the Want of good Will, nor Love to your Ladyship ; for I'm sure, if that wou'd do, as they say in our Country, I love you enough to do that, and more, without Offence.

Flo. Sad ! his Simplicity is as insufferable as t'other's Insolence. [*Aside.*] Sir, I'm so much indebted to you for this Discovery, that I must take an infinite deal of Time to thank you.

[*Exit Florinda.*]

Lurch. So, I think I have done his Business : She'll take a Time to thank me ; I'll tell *Marlove* this, and follow her close.

[*Exit Lurcher.*]

Scene Spring-garden.

Enter Townly and Marlove, from an Arbour.

Mar. Well ! what is it I have done ?

Town. Not half so much as your good Nature cou'd have let you done, if I had not been a reasonable Man.

Mar. Be it as it will——remember you're engag'd——*Bellamar* and *Florinda* must not marry : And to prevent it, I'll have him arrested for a Bond of Ten thousand Pounds,

for a Debt contracted by me his Wife — You are only to be at *Worthy's*, when he receives the Letter from the unfortunate Woman — and to mention that you've heard about *Town*, *Bellamar* and I were marry'd ; a Thing you long ago had heard, but never before believ'd — and so keep up the Cheat, by ministerial Nods, and doubtful, and unmeaning Words — Do this, and the Woman you love is your's for ever.

Townly. But, dare I trust you ?

Mar. Yes ; for I'm no *Lurcher*. [*Lurcher turns short upon her.*] Bless me ! Is not that *Lurcher* ? I hope he did not hear me.

Lurch. [*Aside.*] You mistake ; both hear and see you too. [*Exit.*]

Town. Is this all my Task ? I'll do it — 'Tis a mere Trifle, to what a Man must do to oblige the Fair — Pray, by the by, Have you no Body you wish poison'd ?

Mar. You are merry, Sir — Let me tell you, out of Season.

Town. Indeed I'm serious, Madam — And to convince you, and destroy my Rivals, there's nothing I wou'd not undertake — You may rely upon me.

Mar. I do — at least 'tis now too late to say I don't. [*Aside.*]

Town. She seems alarm'd ; I must talk as if I was in earnest. [*Aside.*] Pray, what can you propose by this ? it must be discover'd, and you loaded with Reproach and Disappointment.

Mar. No Matter, 'tis gaining Time ; and Things are now at that *Crisis*, that ev'ry Moment's precious. Besides, every Body knows of a long and intimate Correspondence between us ; but none know certainly upon what Terms it has been kept ; so that will produce Doubt in the impartial, and Caution, and Delay in the Brother. In the mean while, I've a Project to engage *Moderna's* Interest, for *Lurcher's* marrying *Florinda*, then what will happen, I'm at least reveng'd. [*Exeunt Omnes.*]

The End of the Third Act.

ACT

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

WORTHY'S House.

Florinda and he appears.

[He with a Letter in his Hand.]

Worthy. SISTER, how long have you been under my Care ?

Flo. All the happy Hours of my Life.

Worthy. By that you seem to think I love you.

Flo. I shou'd not, else, have call'd them happy Hours.

Worthy. Then you dare trust whoever loves you.

Flo. Yes, when, like yours, their Actions have assur'd me of their Love.

Worthy. Why, then, what I wou'd recommend to you is, for a little Time to entertain *Bellamar* coldly ——— Think not by this I am capricious ——— My Care for you that never sleeps, is, by its Tendernefs, alarm'd, 'till that's at Peace, the Match must be deferr'd.

Flo. I fear my hasty Temper has undone us all ——— *Bellamar*, certainly enrag'd at my Behaviour, has told the Secret to my Brother. [*aside.*] I cou'd, but that I fear to offend, desire to know why what you once so fondly recommended, is now become improper ?

Worthy. No ——— perhaps it may appear a Dream, that when we awake will vanish, and then 'twere better you had never heard it.

Flo. But to make the awaking Pleasure truly great, we shou'd have dream't ——— Pray let me suffer with you.

Worthy. Nay, if you're willing to purchase Pleasure at the Price of Pain——Read that.

[Gives a Letter.

Flo. Reads——

I Have endur'd, as long as my Wrongs and Griefs wou'd let me, the Cruelty of the perfidious Man Bellamar——to see how far his barbarous Nature wou'd extend——in Hopes Patience, Love, Tendernefs, and Sense of Honour wou'd reclaim his Savage Heart——But finding he is going to add to his Injuries to me, by imposing upon the best of Men, and Innocentest of Women ; I must tell you, he is my Husband——Which at his Request I have hitherto conceal'd, and suffer'd in my Fame, and shou'd have done 'till Death——But to save your Sister from Ruin, his Person is as lost as if she had married him——to the unfortunate

MARLOVE.

Flo. Unhappy, injur'd Woman!——From my Soul I pity thee, as I despise and hate the Author of thy Sorrow! Did ever Villain come up to this?——He liv'd the very Censor of the Age!——No Fool or Knave escap'd his Satyr!——but——

Worthy. Spare your Reproaches 'till we have more——for, tho' it shou'd prove true, 'twou'd be a Fault in me to believe too soon——that were a sign I doubted him before——Or else, unheard, I never cou'd condemn the Man, whose Friendship and whose Faith, I and the World have so often prov'd.

Flo. What greater Proofs wou'd you, or the most generous Judge desire, than what is under this poor, wretched Woman's Hand?——No wonder she was griev'd I was to marry him!

Worthy. If People had ne'er put their Hands to Falshood, you're in the right, mean time behave to him as I desir'd you——I owe this Caution to my self and you——The Debt to Friendship I'll discharge, by not believing, while I've room to doubt.

Enter

Enter Servant with a Letter.

Worthy. To me!——'Tis Bellamar's Hand!—

[Opens and Reads.]

AN Accident has happen'd to me, as I was coming to be the happiest Man in the World, that will make me the most miserable for this Night, by forcing me to beg you'll put off the Wedding 'till to Morrow——Not being sure I can wait on you so soon as my Impatience cou'd wish.

BELLAMAR.

[Worthy pauses.]

Flo. What d'ye think?

Worthy. Just as I did before——Still well of him I never knew no ill off——Tho', to a suspicious Mind, this Circumstance agreeing with the other, wou'd give a Jealousie——Here comes your Sister!——I'll leave you, and enquire the Truth, that I may not wrong my Friend or Self.

[Exit, out of Humour, passes by Moderna, and bows and smiles constrain'dly, without speaking.]

Enter Moderna.

Mod. Methought he look'd as injur'd Goodness, when 'tis forc'd to punish——A just Revenge sat angry on his Brow, whilst pitying Mildness griev'd for our Offences.

Flo. Sister, your Servant, you look melancholy.

Mod.

Mod. Then I look just as I am——What seldom happens to Women, if you'll credit Men : Don't you think I have Cause to grieve, when as I enter'd, your Brother pass'd with such a cold Indifference by, as if he had nothing left for me, but what was common to the World, Good-Breeding——bowed, and then forc'd a Smile; then flew away, as swift as once he wou'd have done to meet me ?

Flo. His Mind is much distemper'd, and I must own, I think with Reason——To find one's self betray'd by those we trusted as our Guard, where we've repos'd such Faith and Confidence—is worse than to've been murder'd by a common Robber.

Mod. I'm ruin'd !——*Bellamar* has been here, and all's discover'd !——How long has this Disorder seiz'd him ?

Flo. About an Hour ago——His honest Soul, unwilling to believe, when you met him, was going to be more certainly inform'd——I tremble for th' Event.

Mod. And so do I——'tis so, I'm undone. [*Faints.*

Flo. Heavens! Help!——Who's there ?

[*Moderna recovers.*] *Mod.* No matter—I'm well again—He did not then, you say, too willingly believe, good Man ?

Flo. No ; tho' he had Proofs to have convinc'd a Sceptick——Pray read these Letters ; one from *Marlove*, t'other from *Bellamar*. [*Gives the Letters.*

Mod. My Fears are hush'd, and all is calm again. [*aside.*]——[*Reads*]——Prodigious!——Monstrous?——Unheard of Villany!——Unhappy Woman!——But did you ever know a Man who rail'd so much at Vice, that did not prove an errant Knave?——These loud Protectors Virtue, is like the *Spanish* Frier's Piety, when he gave the Letter, he counts his Beads with one Hand, whilst t'other play'd the Bawd.

Enter Bellamar.

Bell. I'm free, thank Heav'n, sooner than I cou'd hope.

Flo. Or than any Body wou'd desire, if you mean in Speech,

Bell.

Bell. Mine was always employ'd in Truth, a Thing you owe too much to, Madam, ever to discourage.

Flo. I wish I cou'd return you the Compliment, Sir—and say you had the same Obligation to Truth.

Bell. I was in Hopes, Madam, by this Time, you was come to your self.

Flo. So I am, Sir, and shou'd be very glad you'd leave me so.

Bell. 'Tis impossible to leave you alone : Officious Cupids still attend you ? But to be serious, for God's sake lay aside——

Flo. Hold, Sir, and let me tell you, you differ extremely with me, if you think I'm in Jest.

Bell. I'm sure there's one thing I agree with you in.

Flo. Tell me, that I may change.

Bell. Why, liking you better than any Body else.

Flo. You have furnish'd me with a Reason for correcting that Error, if it was really my Fault, for I think I never had so just a Cause to hate my self before.

Bell. Yes, you have liking Fools, that make you hateful to ev'ry Body else, and despicable even to themselves——when they have enjoy'd the Indulgencies and Smiles your Easiness is daily lavishing upon 'em.

Flo. Their Folly is less offensive than your Wit, that like a Magnifying-Glass, is ever showing frightful Pimples in the smoothest Skin.

Mod. Besides, if they han't Wit enough to entertain us, in recompence, they're always pleas'd with our Sense, and for the Harm they can do us, it can never be great, since they have not Invention enough to tell a probable Lye, nor Reputation enough to be believ'd in a Truth.

Bell. I differ with you for the very Reason you give, for their known want of Invention will give the Credit of Truth to all they say.

Flo. Don't you think he's very wise, Sister ?

Mod. Yes, but Men may be ignorant from too much Knowledge, as well as blind from too much Light.

Flo. I really think him exceeding Wise, hi, ho !

Bell. I believe you do, by your treating me with this Contempr.

Mod. Had you not better be a Fool then ?

Bell.

Bell. 'Tis because I'm made one, and know it nearer, that I detest the Character——It ne'er offended me by half so much before.

Flo. 'Tis certainly some Body inclines to love you.

Bell. More likely some Body I love, by her using me so ill.

Flo. What!—— By making you the Thing most agreeable to her, as I've heard you say.

Bell. There's something in this Behaviour I don't comprehend. [*Aside.*] Madam, the fine Lady I see at present predominates over the reasonable one; I shall leave you till you can recollect your lost self enough to be intelligible. [*Exit.*]

Flo. If I am not, my Brother is, inform your self of him.

Enter Alamode.

Ala. Ladies, the humblest of your Slaves; I fear I made you stay, Madam. [*To Florinda.*]

Flo. No, Sir——One can never take too much Time to think of so serious a Thing as Marriage.

Mod. I'm apt to think, the less we consider, the more pardonable some Things are——Deliberation's an Aggravation of the Crime.

Enter Maid.

Maid. Madam——Mr. Townly is below in a Coach, and desires to know where he can find my Master or Mr. Bellamar.

Mod. I really don't know——My Service, and tell him Home is the last place he shou'd look for a fashionable Husband.

Ala. Or a fashionable Wife either, ha, Madam.

Mod. I believe so too in good Humour——Shall we go in *Florinda* to Ombre.

Flo. Ay, any thing to banish Thought, and kill Time——Come, Sir——from this Minute your Money's ours.

Ala. And all I have beside, Madam.

[*Exeunt.*]

The

The Scene continues.

[Lurcher appears, knocking at the Door that opens.

Lur. Is your Master within?

Ser. I expect him in ev'ry Minute—if you'll walk in. [Exit Servant.

Lur. I met Townly, with Marlove, at Spring-Garden—She certainly designs to get the Sister for him, and cheat me; for when I told her what pass'd between me and Florinda, she put me off, and said, she'd think of it; besides, I over-heard her name me, and then something of a Woman he lov'd, that shou'd be his for ever; I'll be reveng'd of her, by discovering all I know to Worthy—Here he is.

Enter Worthy.

Worthy. What's that you were saying, Lurcher?

Lur. Why, if you won't be angry, I'll tell you; 'tis to have a care of Marlove, for she made me promise to join with her, to hinder Bellamar's marrying your Sister—because, by what I can understand, she's in Love with him her self—She said you lov'd me, and wou'd believe any thing I told you. Moreover, for my Reward, promis'd to get me your Sister—I made her believe I wou'd do all she ask'd of me, but resolv'd to tell you as soon as I cou'd find you.

Worthy. Are you sure of this?

Lur. I'll take my Oath on't—Did you ever catch me in a Lye?

Worthy. I can't say I did.

Enter

Enter Townly.

Town. I have look'd all over the Town for you and *Bellamar*, to arm you against *Marlove*; wou'd you imagine, not above an Hour ago, she made me swear to be present when she sent you a Letter, pretending a Marriage with *Bellamar*——'Twas to take Occasion at that Time to tell you, I had long ago very good Reasons to believe it, but was averse to meddle in other Peoples Business: The other part of our Project was, arresting him on a Bond of 10000*l.* contracted by her his Wife; by this Means to break off the Match, till she cou'd bring about the Design she had of getting *Florinda* for *Lurcher*, that in case she shou'd be discover'd, your Sister and *Bellamar* cou'd never come together. I hope I have come time enough to prevent the ill Effects of her Malice.

Worthy. I fear you have not——Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Has *Bellamar* been here since I went out?

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Worthy. Go immediately to his Lodging, and let him know I want this Minute to speak with him. My Wife's in the next Room, let's go in, and be inform'd how he was receiv'd.

[*Exit all but Lurcher.*

Lurcher. I find I have been mistaken—— I'll go and confess all to *Marlove*—— and try if it can yet be remedied.

[*Exit.*

Scene

Scene opens, discovers Moderna, Florinda, and Alamode at Cards.

[Moderna throws the Cards away in a Rage.

Mod. Sir, you've lost *Codille*—had you given me that Trick, 'twou'd have been remise against the Cards.

Ala. You're in the right, Madam—the Game's gone without remise, and I'm a Beast for my pains.

Enter Worthy.

Worthy. Sister, We've sadly wrong'd *Bellamar*, *Townly* waits in the next Room, to tell you the particulars.

[Exit Flo.

Mod. Mr. *Alamode* has won all our Money.

Worthy. That were enough to make me suspect his Honesty, since Fortune seldom smiles on Men of his Parts.

Ala. Sometimes she flatters us, to draw us in; *April Sun-shine*.

Mod. Draw you in, how can you talk so— You put me out of Patience; I never saw you lose.

Worthy. You're in a Passion, my Dear—you'd have more Reason to be so, if you knew *Bellamar's* Case.

Mod. I do—but no worse than I always believ'd wou'd be his Case— This is your faithful Friend, Sir.

Worthy. And is so still— my too much injur'd, faithful Friend— whose Face I should be asham'd to see, but that I know his Goodness equal to his Wrongs.

Enter

Enter Bellamar.

Worthy. O *Bellamar* ! Can you forgive ?

Bell. Not if *Worthy* makes a doubt of it— I have found the bottom of this Project.

Worthy. We know it too, by the means of *Lurcher* and *Townly*— I hope now you will allow a Man may be a Fool, and yet not want common good Nature and Honesty. Prithee what made the Difference between you and *Lurcher* at first ?

Bell. Why ! our invincible Natures ; I hated him as a Fool ; and he me, because I was not wise enough to conceal it.

Worthy. 'Tis as dangerous jesting with filly, as sacred Things. For the future, let your good Nature prevail over your Judgment, and be more indulgent ; you're indebted to him now, I assure you— So is a certain Lady to you ; I'll call her to make up the Account herself. *[Exit Worthy.]*

Ala. Why here has been some damnable Mistake. I thought when I met you just now, you was married, for you had the surly Looks of a Husband.

Bell. Because just as I met you, I met one of the most dangerous Rivals a Husband has.

Ala. Who was that ?

Bell. A Coxcomb you don't know, Sir——but an Intimate Acquaintance of yours, Madam—— had not I reason to fear ?

Mod. Malicious Devil *[Aside.]* you'd best ask *Florinda* ; here she is.

Enter Florinda and Worthy.

Flo. I hope, Sir, the Caution I used, whilst I had reason to suspect you, will heighten rather than lessen me in your Esteem ; since it show'd I set some Value upon my self.

Bell.

Bell. I'm afraid to excuse it, since you'll think I can forgive you any thing when I pardon, you having robb'd me of your self thus long.

Mod. Tell me after this, *Bellamar* can't say obliging things.

Worthy. The want of Unity in his Character, would set all the Criticks and Wits of a certain Coffee-House to work, if it was expos'd upon the Stage.

Bell. Hang 'em, they are like young Heirs that succeed to great Mortgag'd Estates. They live upon the Credit of what it was; — and as the one imposes Beggars upon the World for Rich Men; So the other does Fools for Wits.

Worthy. Yet they read much, and know all the Rules of Writing.

Bell. Stupid pretence to Judging, Method in Writing is like Ceremony in Living, too often us'd to supply the Want of better things, Wit and Sincerity — And I wou'd no more excuse a dull Rogue that shou'd entertain me Ill by the Rule of *Aristotle* and *Horace*, than a Physician who shou'd Increase my Disease by the rule of *Hippocrates* and *Galen*.

Ala. Then you're no Friend to those who Quote *Greek* and *Latin*.

Bell. Dull Rogue (*aside*) --- No, 'tis an Impertinent Excuse for not being Intelligible in their Mother-Tongue.

Worthy. But you wou'd not exclude all Rule in Writing.

Bell. No, But I wou'dn't have 'em take the Wit out of a Play to make it regular, no more than the Seasoning out of my Meat to make it wholsom: Trust me *Worthy*, Method is the Crutch of Wit, a mere Going Cart for Ricketty Lane Genius's, It's like Cooks who make Sawce by Receipt and not by Taste.

Ala. But you was talking just now of Rules, I wish there cou'd be one found out for Expressing ones Thoughts as Delicately as we conceive 'em, mine suffer'd extremely by my Words.

Bell. Is that possible Sir? --- Words in my Opinion are the Slave of Sense, that fly wherever he commands 'em --- and I always conclude when they bring a silly Message, they're come of a Fools Errand.

Mod. I prais'd *Bellamar's* Politeness too soon --- he repents as if he fear'd we shou'd suspect him of Degenerating into Flattery.

Worthy. That shows he's above Courting what is not just, because 'tis powerful.

Enter Servant Whispers Worthy.

Flo. Is Flatt'ry then so powerful? *[Exit Worthy.]*

Mod. Yes, and I think with some Reason too, there's the Appearances of good Nature, it's ever giving People what they want.

Bell. Yes, as Strong Waters give Spirits, it raises you for an Hour, to sink you for the rest of your Life, if you Indulge the Taste.

Mod. I can easily see through your Satyr, in your Dispraising of Flatt'ry --- 'tis meant chiefly in reproach to us Women, who are thought most Subject to it, but the Liberties you take with us is like *Jodilit* affecting in publick, by Offensive freedoms the intire Ascendant over his Master, but that won't do, for People --- Distinguish between the Fop and the Favourite.

Bell. That is not easy in my Opinion Madam, for they're generally the same.

Flo. I wonder to see great Men prefer Worthless ones, which daily happens.

Bell. 'Tis because they have only the Names of Great Men, they're Adorn'd with Titles, as *Egyptian* Temples are with glitt'ring Gold, but the God within's a Monkey, and Conscious of their own wants, they in the World, like the Sultan in his Seraglio, prefer Eunuchs to secure themselves from Rivals.

Ala. And so had rather the Business was undone than
have

have any body else do it — There's a double meaning in that, *Bellamar*.

Bell. I hate your double meanings Sir, they're always us'd by those who have least pretence to a single One, and are with me as much the Sign of a false Understanding as a false Heart.

Flo. Prithee now what is't thou dost Love *Bellamar*, I'll be bound to Live in the Countrey all my Life time, if by his Consent he'll permit Poor Women to see a Play.

Bell. You wrong me Madam, I've no Objection to their seeing a Play, but going to be seen at a Play is levelling themselves with Players, a thing wou'd grieve me in the Woman I valued.

Flo. But if we are not seen, how shou'd we get Husbands? Small is the Worth of Beauty — from the Light retir'd.

Bell. But like Valuable Pictures, Beauty shou'd be seen in a good Light. — If you were to Buy a Gown and Petticoat, you wou'd not chuse it from the Piece that hangs out for the Sign, nor wou'd you care for that which has been often Expos'd to Sale, for the difference between being handled and Worn is very little, as to the Lustre of the Silk.

Re-enter Worthy.

Worthy. Now Summ up all your Courage, for the Man in Black is without, and all Things ready; we only wait for *Townly* and *Lurcher*; 'tis but jult they shou'd be present to whom we owe this Happiness. — — — We'll in, and send a Servant to let them know the Ceremony waits for them.

Flor. A Word before you go. Did *Lurcher* immediately after our first Dispute, overtake you with a Message from me? Or had you ever any Conversation with him concerning me?

Bellamar. Never upon my Honour, as I hope never to Converse with him whilst I live. How comes you to ask? I'll make him own it to your Face, tho' it is

Truth, the thing I still much fear he hates, I beg you tell me whence this Question.

Flor. A Womans Curiosity—— I am satisfied, think no more on't, nor mention it, as you Love me.

Bellamar. Then the Secret will Dye with me, for I shall ever Love, and as an Earnest I will Obey you, tho' I am strangely tempted to Inquire farther.

Excunt Omnes.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT

ACT V.

Scene. *Wortby's Lodging.*

Enter Marlove and Maid.

Marlove. Mrs. Betty. We are Old Acquaintance, I dare trust you, can I speak with your Mistress?

Maid. Madam stay here, and I'll Whisper her you are here.

Marlove. Don't name me, only say one would speak with her.

Maid. I will Madam.

Enter Lurcher.

Lurcher. I've been to see for you at your House, just as you went out, and followed your Chair hither.

You'll pardon me Madam, I hope, for what I did was not out of Love to them; ——— But fearing you design'd to give the Sister to *Tomny*, I ———

E 3

Mar-

Marlove. No more, — 'tis in clearing ones Character as in taking Spots out of ones Cloaths, — you make it Ten times bigger for the present, and seldom or never efface the first Stains — Our first Design has fail'd thro' the Villany of *Townly*, your Mistake, and my Imprudence.

Lurcher. If you had follow'd my Advice, and made him Jealous, it had done at Once.

Marlove. And shall do still, — Circumstances are altered, — *Moderna* was Innocent at that time, and would not have been wrought on, — But Crimes, like Stumbling in Running, beget one another; and as it seems to me, your Honesty in your late Discovery, in Favour of the Man you Hated, upon a seeming Principle of Justice, will help us in our Design, by doubling of your Credit with *Worthy*, and give an irresistible Force to all you shall hereafter say — Your first Project then must be executed — I have already *Bellamar's* Servant in our Interest, by means of my Maid — Your part is, in a Blunt, Honest manner, to tell *Worthy* what you've Observed relating to *Bellamar's* Conduct to his Wife: As for her, if I'm not Deceiv'd, she'll readily agree to any thing to break off the Match with *Bellamar*, who has Discover'd her Affair, and who she therefore looks upon as an eternal Check to all her Pleasures.

Lurcher. But I don't know what to do — I just now receiv'd a Message, to let me know the Marriage waited for me, to whose Honesty it was mostly owing; they'll take it Ill if I shou'd not go, for that delays the Marriage.

Marlove. For that very Reason you shou'd not appear — Your Stay will delay the Ceremony till our Plot take Effect — Meet me here half an Hour hence, and I'll instruct you farther.

[*Exeunt Lurcher.*]

Marlove. Now let me call up all the Woman to my Aid.

Enter

Enter Moderna.

Moderna. Wou'd you speak with me Madam ?

Marlove. I wou'd, — but not till you have promis'd me, that be I who I will, you will with Patience hear me out — and if the Reasons I urge shall seem good, not to reject them for their Authors sake, but let 'em for their own good worth prevail.

Moderna. I promise.

Marlove. Mind you keep it then. —

(Pulls off her Mask.)

Moderna Starts.

You Start, as if you thought my Native colour Blacker than my Mask, but no matter; if what I propose contribute to your Happiness, you're Bound in Interest, as in Promise to approve the Miracle, tho' *Mahomet* perform'd it. — I'll then be brief: Ruin threatens you from every Corner — The moment *Bellamar's* Interest is encreased by Marrying *Florinda*, you are Lost. — He, accidentally, you told me, discover'd your Intrigue with *Alamode*. — If so, each Hour you Live in Peace is owing to his Mercy. — Your Honour, Safety, Quiet, Pleasure; all that's Dear you hold from him. — Break off the Match, and you'll at once Disarm his Malice, and set your Life at Liberty.

Moderna. My Guilt, my Fear, your Reasons, — all Convince me that it should be done, but point not out the means. — Your first Plot has fail'd, and all things now are ready to Confirm me Miserable; — The Priest's prepared within, — and only wait *Lurchers* coming.

Marlove. If you'll be rul'd, his coming shall render all these Preparations useless.

Moderna. I wou'd do any thing to live in Quiet.

Marlove. Wou'd you consent to Marry him to *Florinda*? he's an easy Tool, and to be manag'd.

Moderna. I understand you, and tell you once again, I dread this Match so much I wou'd agree to any thing.

Marlove. Wou'd you agree to make *Worthy* Jealous of his Friend?

Moderna. Hah! that wou'd be Base indeed ——— extremely base, [*Pauses*] but Self-Security must justify the Necessary Evils we commit: ——— I am yours.

Marlove. Why then, my Life for't we succeed, — all you have to do is, if your Husband mentions it to you, keep up his Doubts and Jealousies by Words: — You are too much a Woman not to know, and leave the rest to me: My Instruments are all prepar'd, and waited only for your Voice to give 'em motion: Hurry you on the Match between *Lurcher* and your Sister, and then 'twill be impossible for him to Hurt you; for if after that he shou'd attempt it, 'twou'd be refus'd as Malice and Revenge.

Moderna. And luckily for our Purpose I have a Letter from him, which at my own request some time ago he sent me, ——— and though Harinless in it self, yet as I'll use it, it shall make him wish he never had Learn'd to Write.

Enter Lurcher.

Marlove. Wait you here for *Worthy*, and by the same Honest Face and Words you Betray'd me, accuse *Bellamar* of a Design upon his Wife, she is prepar'd to back you, and the Sister is your Reward. Tell *Worthy* of a Letter which *Bellamar* sent his Wife, ——— say the Servant told you of it, and that he talked of her in his Sleep, but discover it all by degrees, let him oblige you to tell, before you do.

Worthy's

Worthy's *House*.

Lurcher alone.

Now to remember what she bid me say, aye, but I must not tell it all at once; no, I will seem unwilling, and afraid, until I make him force me to tell it, let me con it over, a Letter, the Servant, and talk'd of her in his Sleep; then the Sisters mine.

Enter Worthy.

Lurcher and *Worthy* meet.

Worthy. *Lurcher*, I was this Moment sending for you, *Bellamar* and my Sister, are impatient to be reveng'd of one another --- why, Man, if they were not as Obstinate as Children, you have given them time enough to repent and be saved by thy Stay.

Lurcher. 'Tis time some of 'em Repent, --- but that's their business, and not mine, otherwise than as I am a Christian, and love you.

Worthy. I don't comprehend you ---- who is't must Repent, prithee help me a little to aim aright ---- I cannot guess the meaning.

Lurcher. I believe not, and that Grieves me the more. ---- See so good a Man abus'd.

Worthy. As who?

Lurcher. As you.

Worthy. In what? ----- And by whom?

Lurcher. By them that shou'd not, and you suspect the least.

Worthy. If thou art the Honest Fellow, and as much my Friend as I believe, tell me.

Lurcher. I am --- sure you never found me otherways than both, but --- I am afraid to tell you what I have heard.

Worthy. Then you'l give me cause to think I have been deceiv'd in my Opinion of you.

Lurcher. Rather than lose that --- I will tell the truth, tho' I shou'd Die for it --- Honesty is the best Policy.

Worthy.

Worthy. Why now I love you again --- Proceed.

Lurcher. Why then, for all *Bellamar* is your Friend, and pretends to love your Sister --- he loves some body nearer to you than her.

Worthy. Explain, for I'm still to seek.

Lurcher. Your Wife then --- So, now 'tis out.

Worthy. Thy Tongue shall follow it, pernicious Villain

(Catches him by the Throat.)

Lurcher. This I get for my Honesty --- but I've done, and will be silent.

Worthy. So thou shalt for ever, unless thou prove thy Words.

Lurcher. How can I prove my Words. --- I can prove I was told so: --- but next time I'll hold my Tongue, since I am a Villain.

Worthy. *(Pauses --- then as recover'd, in a soft Voice)* I beg thy pardon good *Lurcher*, what thou saidst surpriz'd me so, I was not Master of my Temper, go on, I'm now prepar'd.

Lurcher. *Bellamar's* Servant 'twas that told me --- he that often heard his Master in his sleep call upon your Wife. --- And this Minute he told me he carry'd a Letter from him to her, but don't trust me. Ask her --- I only tell you out of Kindness --- however I'll Swear the Servant told me so --- and I don't use to Swear to a Lie. --- Moreover I saw him Kiss her Hand once, and look as if he was ready to cry.

Worthy. I believe thou wou'dst not Swear a Lie. --- I thank thee good *Lurcher*. --- Leave me a little, --- but let me know where I shall meet with you.

Lurcher. I'll come to you at home presently.

Exit Lurcher.

Worthy. This Fellow's a Fool, but then he's Honest, can that be? --- Yes, --- Why shou'd not Fools be Honest, as well as Wise Men Knaves? Besides, his late Discovery is a sufficient proof. --- I fear I am abus'd, I'll try my Wife, --- he said *Bellamar* talk'd of her in sleep,

sleep, --- What then? --- We are not Masters of these floating Images --- Dreams as often bring to mind the hateful as the lovely, Heaven and Hell are equally the Subjects of our sleeping Thoughts, --- Villains oft sleep sound, whilst Virgin Innocence sees frightful Spectres --- aye --- but when he kiss'd her Hand, he was awake --- Eternal Sorrows keep him so.

Enter Moderna.

Moderna. 'Tis my turn now to Chide, and think you're Unkind, whilst any thing disturbs your Peace, thus Miser-like to keep it to yourself, and Rob me of my share. --- Tell me what is't afflicts you so.

Worthy. What shou'd, or can, --- but seeing. Prize the most in Danger, --- our Friendship and our Love.

Mod. I hope you live secur'd of both, if Merit's a Protection you have no cause to fear.

Worthy. Thou canst Secure the better half, but I am Covetous and Wish for all.

Mod. You're Words are Dark --- Dare you not let me see the Light?

Worthy. Yes --- For surely thou art full as White and Pure --- Tell me *Moderna* --- Do you think *Bellamar* Loves my Sister?

Mod. We shou'd not doubt when She's convinc'd, --- But why that Question?

Worthy. Because I'm told he's otherways Engag'd.

Mod. But that Report has happily prov'd false.

Worthy. I Wish it may.

Mod. Why d'ye Really think *Marlove* has been wrong'd?

Worthy. No, --- but I fear another's wrong is design'd. Come --- To be plain, *Moderna*, did his behaviour never give you room to think him less our Friend than I do.

Mod. This Frightens and Confirms a Thousand Jealousies, I suffer'd and conceal'd, unwilling to Alarm you still inclin'd to put the best Construction on his Conduct --- But since it has awaken'd you --- I must confess his Words and Looks sometimes Surprise me

me ——— Pray read this Letter ——— and explain it if you can, for 'tis perfect Myſtery to me.

[Gives a Letter.]

Worthy. 'Tis from *Voiture* ——— upon ſending the Verb *I Love, Thou Loveſt*, to his *Spaniſh* Miſtreſs.

Reads.

Worthy. *It will, I don't doubt Madam, ſeem ſtrange to you ——— That in the two firſt Words of my Letter, I ſhou'd tell ſo great a Truth and ſo great a Falſhood, but it is to ſhow you, Madam, that thoſe who Regulated our Words by the reaſon of things, have Order'd I Love, to be immediately followed with Thou Loveſt, as if Nature, Senſe, and Juſtice, had Decreed the Lover ought to meet with the return of his Paſſion.*

Worthy. I Wiſh my Friend's *Engliſh* Honesty is not Loſt in his *Spaniſh* Gallantry ----- this Marriage muſt not be ---- *Hymen* is out of Humour to Day. — I am ſadly griev'd *Moderna*, ſhall we go in —.

Mod. It works as I cou'd Wiſh. (*aſide*)
Be not too haſty in determining a Point on which ſo much Depends ——— I ſain wou'd think we are all Miſtaken.

Worthy. And ſo wou'd I, but I've concurring Witneſſes, if he ſhou'd ask for me, ſay, a Buſineſs of Importance call'd me --- Take this Opportunity to Mark his Actions well --- Be gentle to him, perhaps he may Discover more ---- (*pauses*) By Heavens, I am almoſt Mad.

Exit Worthy.

Enter Florinda, Bellamar and Townly.

Bellamar. Where is your Husband gone, Madam?

Mod. About a matter of moment, but he promis'd to be back ſoon, and has left me his Security.

Bellamar. We then are ſure of his Return, for he has left us two of the Deareſt things to him on Earth, his Word and You.

[Enter.]

[Enter Alamode, and walks with an affected Air up to Florinda, without taking notice of the rest of the Company, who bow and speak to him, brushes by Bellamar, and flings his Hat down, and jostles Townly against a Tea-Table, making him break a Cup.]

Mod. Your Servant, Sir——You seem to be in a hurry.

Ala. [to Florinda] No Wonder, Madam, you keep Lovers at such Distance, who are guarded thus by the Points of Spain and Flanders [looks upon her Head and Ruffles] tho' in the Struggle I see you have been ruffled, Madam.

Flo. I really don't understand you, Sir.

Ala. What so——lac'd, can you be so fur-be-low of what I mean, that I must hoop and hallow to make you understand thereby hangs a Tale——[Plays all the time with her Gown and Petticoat, giving himself Airs, treads upon Moderna's Gown, and unpins it.]

Mod. Are you blind?

Ala. Pardon me, Dear Madam, I protest I did not see you. Bellamar, yours——Townly, how dost do——

Town. Not as you do, Sir, pull Ladies Clothes down.

Ala. Bellamar, what ails you; you look dull.

Bell. There's no trusting Looks, Alamode; you look quite otherwise.

Ala. As you say, there's no trusting Looks: I remember I lookt so dull one Day, I was aham'd to go into Company, at last I pluckt up a Resolution, dress'd myself betwixt a Statesman and a Rake, a thinking, careless, dirty Dress, and ventur'd with vast Success, and I had more Wit than all the Table.

Flo. You excel in chusing your Company, Sir.

Bell. Ay, and in entertaining 'em too.

Ala. Yes 'faith, but 'twas at their own Expence; I show'd 'em what 'twas to be a Fool and Coxcomb.

Bell. I know your Ability too well that way to doubt of it, Sir.

Flo. That I take for granted is your Master-piece.

Ala. Yes, Madam, I can do that or nothing——I made a Pun; let me recollect——O, I put it down in my Pocket-Book.——The Company, you must know, said

And they were not upon the Square with me; to which I reply'd, how shou'd you, when the Table is Round; but to put you upon the Square, I've taken you all round (meaning you know banter'd every body) so they laugh'd ready to die.

Bell. This Squaring the Circle, *Alamode*, will make the Mathematicians jealous; 'tis what they have labour'd at in vain.

Flo. Yes, but the extraordinary things he does are Natural, not Labour'd; and I think if any body were to be made jealous by him, it should be his Mistress, and his Rival.

Ala. Surprizingly obliging, Madam. *Bellamar*, 'tis very uncommon to meet Sense and Beauty in one Woman: Thou art a happy Man, or I'll send you to Heaven, and make you so soon. [*Aside.*]

Flo. Your Gallantry and Parts are enough to corrupt the Youth of Age, by tempting 'em to follow their Example.

Ala. There are faint Imitators Madam; but Men must be born Poets, &c. you know, Madam, I shou'd laugh to see any body look or speak like me.

Flo. So shou'd I most immoderately.

Ala. Nay, I vow, Madam, you flatter me now; I mean, because it shou'd be the Height of ev'ry body's Ambition to look and speak like your Ladyship.

Mod. Insufferable! he does not see himself laugh'd at; for God's sake why do you talk so, you are mad.

Ala. I am indeed, Madam, but not for you [*aside.*] a Lover should always be mad.

Flo. Your Friend here says otherwise — making Madness a Proof of Love, he says, is debasing the Passion.

Ala. Puh! he talks like a Lover — Why never tell me a Man can be in Love, and in his Senses; the Passion is an unreasonable Passion, and always asks more than it wants — that makes Marriages unhappy — for the Husbands require more than they know what to do with, and the Wife can dispose on better — Is it not so, Madam?

[*To Moderna.*]

Mod. Can the Wife dispose of any thing better than to her Husband, Sir?

Ala. A fine Lady (we all know) thinks she can, or I am plaguily mistaken. [*Looks on Moderna, and gapes.*]

Flo.

Flo. 'Tis as *Bellamar* said, and the Monster now despises her [*aside*] — I believe little Indiscretions on our side, and great Vanity on yours, make most of the ill Characters in Life.

Bell. I know what makes more ill Women than either.

Flo. What, I pray?

Bell. Why marrying 'em for Interest against their Inclinations — Is it not ridiculous to imagine a Woman will suffer the last Freedoms from a Man she dislikes, and refuse 'em to him she loves?

Mod. He's certainly in the right — If we have Resolution enough to act against our Inclinations, we shall be easily persuaded to act with 'em.

Bell. I know but two things in Life so silly, one is the Weakness of great Men, in making their Creatures play the Rogue and Villain to promote their Grandure, and afterwards wonder at their Want of Faith and Gratitude; as if a Man would play the Knave for my Advantage, and not his own.

Flo. I beseech you what's the other?

Bell. Only a Folly of a Friend of mine, who makes his Mistress an Atheist, to quiet her Fears, and then most wisely puts her to her Oath to satisfy his Jealousies.

Flo. Mere Invention! for Heaven's sake lay aside your Railing: Don't you think a Suspension of Wit as necessary in Pity to Fools, as a Suspension of Justice in Compassion to Knaves?

Bell. By the Power Knaves and Fools have, one would think they were an Exclusion of Wit and Justice both. — But to speak my opinion, I'm for Mercy in neither Case: Impunity propagates Vice.

Mod. These are bold Truths you confess, Sir; and Truths not to be spoke ev'ry where.

Bell. I'm in no Apprehension of being discover'd; Ladies are the best Repositories of Truth, it never escapes their Mouths: What think you, *Alamode*?

Ala. Not a Word of the Matter — for I've been asleep the whole time, and have a Dream for you to interpret, Madam.

Flo. I've no Superstition in my Religion.

Ala. Ha, so chang'd! Your Mistress *Bellamar* is damnable proud.

Bell. Not of your Confidence, it seems, Sir.

Ala. Then I must e'er trust one who is, [*Whispers Mod.*] The *Roman* Conquests were imperfect, till publick Triumphs crown'd 'em. [*Exit Alamode.*]

Bell. What does the Coxcomb mean?

Mod. I fear you guess too well [*aside*] ----- to show his History and his Ignorance at once, by misapplying what he has read.

Bell. I'm impatient till your Brother comes; I'll try if I can find him. [*Exit both.*]

Flo. You'll find him in my Room.

[*Manet Moderna.*]

Mod. Hell and Revenge! the Idiot triumphs and shows me to the World, branded with that worst Infamy of being subdu'd by him. --- I own I'm guilty, and I'm severely punish'd in my Crimes.

[*Enter Marlove.*]

Mar. And ever will be so, untill you have Resolution to keep out of Difficulty, or to behave your self better when you're in 'em: What is now the matter?

Mod. Matter! --- I think when one has given ones self to a Fop, 'tis like selling one self to the Devil; he has Power over you ever after ---

Mar. Ay, and before too, or it had never been a Bargain, --- *Alamode*, I guess, is the Cause.

Mod. Yes, the Fool presses me to meet him, for no Reason, I believe, but to show I dare not refuse him --- --- I won't go --- What wou'd you advise me? --- The Wretch begins to insult me --- Alas there was a time --- I had my Vertue, and an uninjur'd Husband for my Guards --- but I've deserv'd it --- Tell me what to do.

[*Enter Maid.*]

Maid. Madam, one wou'd speak with you.

Mod. I'll return in a moment, in the mean while think how to advise. [*Exit Moderna.*]

Mar.

Mar. Let me consider——[*Pauses*] She must go, if it be only to defer the Marriage for this Night, which else will be confirm'd beyond the reach of my Repentment; for what has been hitherto hinted must have stronger Proofs, or it will make against us: *Worthy* is not easy to believe ill of the Man he loves. [*Pauses again*] I have it, I'll make it yet impossible, tho' at the Expence of her undoing; the Odds are on the side of my Projects; and if my Plot fail, I am but where I was, lost to Hope, Revenge and Reputation. They may venture safely to throw the Dice, who have nothing to lose——But here she is.

[*Enter Moderna.*]

Mod. Well, what am I to do?

Mar. By all means go, for nothing is so malicious, and so much to be fear'd, as the Repentment of such Animals; You must do with them as with Children when you have got 'em, endure the Noise of Bells and Rattles, to keep 'em from making a greater.

Mod. You shall govern me, tho' 'tis against my Judgment——I'll go home with you, and from thence meet him——(O *Worthy*; but it is too late.)

[*Exit Moderna and Marlove.*]

[*Enter Worthy and Lurcher.*]

Lur. You see the Servant has made it plain that your Wife is his Design, and your Sister the Pretence.

Wor. He has indeed, *Lurcher*, too plain, if he is not a Lyar and a Villain; and what should tempt him to be either to me?——Besides, my Wife's Observations concur with his Story. (*Distraction*)——I'll in and speak one Word to my Sister.

Lur. I'll wait you here.

[*Exeunt ambo.*]

S C E N E continues.

[*Enter Marlove.*]

Mar. Well, she's gone to meet her Lover; now's the time to compleat the Work——I cou'd wish it might
F be

be without her Ruin; but better that and all the World's
—than I go unreveng'd.

Mar. O! are you there? I was impatient to find you.
—We must convince *Worthy*, now or never—Let me
think—*Alamode* is very like *Bellamar* in his Figure;
besides, the Evening's dusky, and that will contribute to
deceive the Sight.—I have it—Away, and I'll instruct
you as we go; it must succeed, for he's rais'd to such a
Pitch of Jealousy, that he reads *Rival* and *Bellamar* in
ev'ry Object that he meets; as fearful Travellers do
Robbery and Murder in ev'ry Tree or Bush upon the
Road. [*Exeunt ambo.*]

[*Florinda and he enter.*]

Wor. Where is your Sister gone?

Flo. I really can't tell.

Wor. Nor where *Bellamar* is?

Flo. I thought he had been with you—he follow'd
my Sister, in Search, as I imagin'd, of you.

Wor. So he soon follow'd then. (It is so) Hell-hounds
follow him.

[*Enter Lurcher.*]

Lur. I've something to tell you in private.

Wor. Sister, shall I find you in your Room?

Flo. I'll wait you there.

[*Exit Flo.*]

Wor. Now, my honest Friend, what new Misfortune
hast thou brought me?—

Lur. Why—What will surprize you more than all;
God knows it did me.—Your Wife is gone, as *Bella-*
mar's Servant tells me, this Minute with his Master, as
he believes to *Spring-Garden*—for they directed the Coach
thither—

Wor. My Wife, with her affected Tenderness and Faith,
conspires against me: Impossible! For she complain'd to
me of his Addresses, and show'd a Letter to confirm 'em.
Ay, but she own'd it not till first I accus'd her: I am so
alarm'd, that I see all my Dangers thro' my Fears, altho'
methinks 'tis strange, just at a time when the Bride waits,
and ev'ry Eye is on 'em.

Lur. You may be easily satisfied, by going to see if
they are there; we shall know 'em by the Servant: We
can

can watch at a distance, without being seen ; and then come away convinc'd one way or other.

Wor. As you say, that wou'd satisfie any Body ; and nothing less shall me. — This may be Malice, as the first Plot was.

Lur. I'm sure it's no Malice of mine.

Wor. My honest Nature still prevails, though every Circumstance of Proof is combating against it : Besides, my Sister said, they follow'd one another out. Away Lurcher, Death is better than Suspence. *[Exeunt amb.]*

SCENE continues.

Enter Bellamar and Florinda.

Bell. Can you guess what is become of your Brother?

Flo. I wonder you did not meet him ; he's this Minute gone out, extremely uneasie, as I thought.

Bell. Not more uneasie than I am ; — the Skies seem swell'd with Mischiefs, just breaking on my Head.

Flo. I am, as well as you, to seek what 'tis can have diverted my Brother from his first Purpose. — Pray Heaven, *Marlove*, has not fallen on some new Project.

Bell. And I wish Some-body has not join'd with her : This Inconstancy is not of a piece with your Brother's Character ; — I'll endeavour to find him out ; and if I can, the Cause of this Alteration.

Flo. You'll find me in my Chamber.

[Exeunt amb.]

SCENE changes to Spring Garden.

Enter Alamode, and Moderna in a Mask and Scarf.

Alam. So *Juno* once, we read in ancient Tale,
To meet *Ixion*, wore a cloudy Vail.

My own, Extempore, Madam.

Mod. Are you surpriz'd, Sir?

Alam. Why, Madam?

Mod. From your making a Simile.

Alam. Now you talk of Similes, it puts me in mind of a Pun I can make, if you'll ask me why a certain Tune always haunts me?

E 2

Mod.

Mod. I do.

Alam. No, ask me in Terms.

Mod. Ridiculous! Well, why does that Tune always haunt you?

Alam. Because I murder'd it, Ha, ha, ha.

Mod. And are not you afraid of the Ghosts of all the harmless *English* Words you daily murder?

Alam. No more than you are of the Ghosts of all the Lovers you daily Kill.

Mod. Silly! Is this Nonsense the pressing Business you had with me?

[*They walk to t'other end of the Stage. She's out of Humour.*]

Enter Lurcher and Worthy, as Watching.

Lur. Let's place Ourselves here.

Wor. Agreed; 'tis a pleasant Evening. [*Looks on his Watch.*] Nine a Clock. — Hold, whose Coach is that?

Lur. By the Servant it shou'd be them.

Wor. By Hell, and so it is! — look, they turn down yonder Walk. — He has chang'd his Cloaths, and is dress'd like *Alamode*. — Hark, Friend, Is your Master here? [*Speaks to the Servant.*]

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Lur. Now you are satisfied; let's be gone, they never can deny this.

Wor. I think they can't, *Lurcher*. — Come, let's go. But see! by Heavens he forces her into an Arbour: This is too much for any, but Gods or Cowards to bear.

Lur. Don't make a work here, the whole World will know it.

Wor. Here, or any where; the Altar should not shield 'em from my Vengeance.

[*Goes into the Walk, finds it to be Alamode, strikes him, they Draw, he Wounds Alamode and Disarms him.*]

Ala. You won't kill me. [*And Moderna runs off.*]

Wor. You're in less Danger now, than when your Sword was in your own Hand; Get well, for I've more to say: This World's too little for us both.

[*Exit Alamode.*]

Come then, perfidious Villain! and you the Under-Engine of this great Design — Away, and let me hear what made you to attempt this Scene of Mischief.

Lur.

Lar. If you'll forgive us, we'll confess it all. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to Worthy's House.

Enter Florinda, Bellamar, and Townly

Flo. Have neither of you heard of my Brother?

Town. I've been hunting him ever since you desir'd me.

Flo. Where's my Sister gone, I wonder?— The Servants tell me she went out with *Marlove*; but 'tis impossible.

Bell. The Anxiety of my Mind had almost made me forget your Vertues, and say, Nothing that's ill's impossible to Woman.

Flo. My own Disquiets and Fears make your Satyr at this Time pardonable, which else, spight of the Exception, would offend.

Town. And with reason, if a new Song I've heard is true; the Poet, less severe than him, not wholly excusing, nor accusing the Ladies, is more Just.

Enter Maid.

Madam, Mr. *Tuneful* seeing me at the Door, desires the Honour of welcoming your Ladiship to Town, and to know when he may wait on you.

Town. O pray Madam let him come in; 'twas him I heard sing it: 'Twill amuse the Spleen for a Minute.

Flo. An't please you, Sir, let him come in.

Enter Mr. Tuneful.

Town. Pray sing the Song you sung Yesterday.

Mr. Tunef. I will, Sir.

I.

False and mean's th' Accusation
With which Men the Fair asperse;
Fools they say's their darling Passion;
Women are to Sense averse.

II. Jove

II.

*Jove adorn'd in all his Glory,
 Coy Antiope cou'd never move :
 A Satyr's Shape, in the same Story,
 Made the God successful prove.*

III.

*But it was as Towns are Conquer'd,
 That too much their Foe despise,
 Secure in Scorn they sleep unguarded,
 So are taken by Surprise.*

Bell. It may be so ; but here's your Brother.

[Enter Worthy.]

We have been waiting for you these Two Hours.

Wor. That's very little, to the Time I'm doom'd to wait for the return of Peace and Joy.—— O *Bellamar*, *Moderna's* false—— and damn'd *Lurcher* is, as thou always saidst, as much a Villain as a Fool——But no more——Thus I'll puff the Prostitute away——Let's in, and hear each sad Particular of my Fate.——Tho' first permit me thus to expiate the Wrongs I've done.

[Gives his Sister to Bellamar.]

Bell. And thus let me receive it : And, believe me, no Grief could enter at a Time of such full Happiness, except *Worthy's* Sorrows.

*Learn hence, in Fops nor Truth nor Friendship lies ;
 But Men of Sense have other Joys than Vice.
 And take it, fair Ones, for a certain Rule,
 That Woman trusts indeed that trusts a Fool.*

End of the Fifth ACT.





