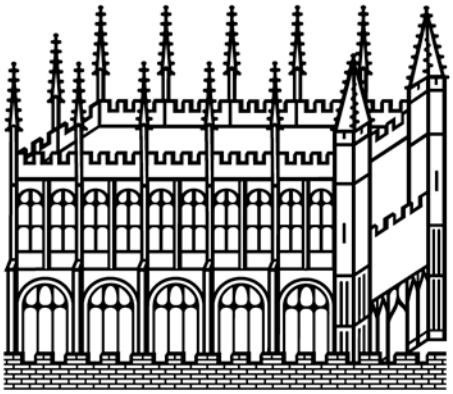

Calder House.

13. E.

Shuttleworth 4.

13.E.

R.B. SHERIDAN ESQR.

Drury Lane Theatre.

Publish.d Dec.r 21, 1795. by B. Crosby, 4 Stationers Court. Ludgate Street.

THE

DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

R. B. SHERIDAN, Esq.

CONTAINING,

The School for Scandal.	The Duenna.
The Rivals.	The Critic.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR A. MILLAR, W. LAW, and R. CATER.

THE

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL,

A COMEDY.

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

SIR PETER TEAZLE, -	MR KING.
SIR OLIVER SURFACE, -	MR YATES.
JOSEPH SURFACE, -	MR PALMER.
CHARLES, - -	MR SMITH.
CRABTREE, - -	MR PARSONS.
SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, -	MR DODD.
ROWLEY, - -	MR AIKEN.
SIR TOBY BUMPER, -	MR VERNON.
MOSES, - -	MR BADDELEY.
CARELESS, - -	MR JEFFERSON.
TRIP, - -	MR LAMASH.
SNAKE, - -	MR PACKER.

WOMEN.

LADY TEAZLE, - -	MRS ABINGTON.
MARIA, - -	MRS BRERETON.
LADY SNEERWELL, -	MRS HOPKINS.
MRS CANDOUR, -	MISS POPE.

SCENE, *LONDON.*

PROLOGUE.

Written by MR GARRICK.

A SCHOOL for Scandal!—Tell me, I beſeech you,
Needs there a ſchool, this modiſh art to teach you?
No need of leſſons now—the knowing think——
We might as well be taught to eat and drink:
Caus'd by a dearth of Scandal, ſhould the vapours
Diſtreſs our fair ones, let them read the papers;
Their powerful mixtures ſuch diſorders hit,
Crave what they will, there's *quantum ſufficit.*
" Lord!" cries my Lady Wormwood, (who loves tattle,
And puts much ſalt and pepper in her prattle)
Juſt ris'n at noon, all night at cards, when threſhing
Strong tea and ſcandal—bleſs me, how refreſhing!
" Give me the papers, Liſp—how bold and free! (*ſips*)
" Laſt night Lord L. (*ſips*) was caught with Lady D.
" For aching heads, what charming *ſal volatile!* (*ſips*)
" If Mrs B. will ſtill continue flirting,
" We hope ſhe'll *draw*, or we'll *undraw*, the curtain—
" Fine ſatire, poz! in public all abuſe it;
" But, by ourſelves, (*ſips*) our praiſe we can't refuſe it.
" Now Liſp, read you—there at that daſh and ſtar—
" Yes, Ma'am—A certain Lord had beſt beware,
" Who lives not twenty miles from Groſvenor-ſquare:
" For ſhould he Lady W. find willing—
" *Wormwood* is bitter."——" Oh! that's me—the villain!
" Throw it behind the fire, and never more
" Let that vile paper come within my door."
Thus at our friends we laugh, who feel the dart,
To reach *our* feelings we ourſelves muſt ſmart.
Is our young bard ſo young, to think that he
Can ſtop the full ſpring tide of calumny?
Knows he the world ſo little, and its trade?
Alas! the devil's ſooner *rais'd* than *laid.*
So ſtrong, ſo ſwift the monſter, there's no gagging;
Cut Scandal's head of—ſtill the tongue is wagging.
Proud of your ſmiles, once laviſhly beſtow'd,
Again our young Don Quixote takes the road,
To ſhew his gratitude, he draws his pen,
And ſeeks this Hydra, Scandal, in its den;
From his fell gripe the frighted fair to ſave——
Tho' he ſhould fall, th' attempt muſt pleaſe the brave,
For your applauſe, all perils he would through;
He'll fight—that's write—a cavaliero true,
Till every drop of blood—that's ink—is ſpilt for you.

THE

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL,

A COMEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE, Lady SNEERWELL's Houſe.

Lady SNEERWELL *and* SNAKE *diſcovered at a Tea Table.*

Lady Sneerwell.

THE paragraphs, you ſay, Mr Snake, were all inſerted.

Snake. They were, madam; and as I copied them myſelf in a feigned hand, there can be no ſuſpicion from whence they came.

L. Sneer. Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with captain Boaſtall?

Snake. That's in as fine a train as your Ladyſhip could wiſh, in the common courſe of things. I think it muſt reach Mrs Clacket's ears within twenty-four hours, and then the buſineſs, you know, is as good as done.

L. Sneer. Why yes, Mrs Clacket has talents, and a good deal of induſtry.

Snake. True, madam, and has been tolerably ſucceſsful in her day; to my knowledge, ſhe has been the cauſe of ſix matches being broken off, and three ſons diſinherited; of four forced elopements, as many cloſe confinements, nine ſeparate maintenances,

and two divorces;—nay, I have more than once traced her cauſing a *tete-a-tete* in the Town and Country Magazine, when the parties never ſaw one another before in their lives.

L. Sneer. Why yes, ſhe has genius, but her manner is too groſs.

Snake. True, madam, ſhe has a fine tongue, and a bold invention; but then, her colouring is too dark, and the outlines rather too extravagant; ſhe wants that delicacy of hint, and mellowneſs of ſneer, which diſtinguiſhes your ladyſhip's ſcandal.

L. Sneer. You are partial, Snake.

Snake. Not in the leaſt; every body will allow that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or a look, than many others with the moſt laboured detail, even though they accidentally happened to have a little truth on their ſide to ſupport it.

L. Sneer. Yes, my dear Snake, and I'll not deny the pleaſure I have at the ſucceſs of my ſchemes; (*both riſe*) wounded myſelf, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of ſlander, I confeſs nothing can give me greater ſatisfaction, than reducing others to the level of my own injured reputation.

Snake. True, madam; but there is one affair, in which you have lately employed me, wherein I confeſs I am at a loſs to gueſs at your motives.

L. Sneer. I preſume you mean with regard to my friend Sir Peter Teazle, and his family.

Snake. I do; here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as guardian ſince their father's death; the eldeſt poſſeſſing the moſt amiable character, and univerſally well ſpoken of; the youngeſt the moſt diſſipated, wild, extravagant young fellow in the world; the former an avowed admirer of your ladyſhip, and apparently your favourite; the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confeſſedly admired by her: Now, on the face of theſe circumſtances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a large fortune, ſhould not immediately cloſe with the

paſſion

paſſion of a man of ſuch character and expectation as Mr Surface; and more ſo, why you are ſo uncommonly earneſt to deſtroy the mutual attachment ſubſiſting between his brother Charles and Maria.

L. Sneer. Then at once, to unravel this myſtery, I muſt inform you, that love has no ſhare whatever in the intercourſe between Mr Surface and me.

Snake. No!—

L. Sneer. No: His real views are to Maria, or her fortune, while in his brother he finds a favoured rival; he is, therefore, obliged to maſk his real intentions, and profit by my aſſiſtance.

Snake. Yet ſtill I am more puzzled why you ſhould intereſt yourſelf for his ſucceſs.

L. Sneer. Heavens! how dull you are! Can't you ſurmiſe a weakneſs I have hitherto, through ſhame, concealed even from you? Muſt I confeſs it, that Charles, that profligate, that libertine, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation, that he it is for whom I am anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would ſacrifice every thing.

Snake. Now, indeed, your conduct appears conſiſtent; but pray, how came you and Mr Surface ſo confidential?

L. Sneer. For our mutual intereſt: he pretends to, and recommends, ſentiment and liberality; but I know him to be artful, cloſe and malicious. In ſhort, a ſentimental knave; while with Sir Peter, and, indeed with moſt of his acquaintance, he paſſes for a youthful miracle of virtue, good ſenſe, and benevolence.

Snake. Yes, I know Sir Peter vows he has not his fellow in England, and has praiſed him as a man of character and ſentiment.

L. Sneer. Yes; and with the appearance of being ſentimental, he has brought Sir Peter to favour his addreſſes to Maria, while poor Charles has no friend in the houſe, though I fear he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, againſt whom we muſt direct our ſchemes.

Enter

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr Surface, madam.

L. Sneer. Shew him up; (*Exit ſervant*) he generally calls about this hour—I dont wonder at people's giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Joſ. Lady Sneerwell, good morning to you——Mr Snake, your moſt obedient.

L. Sneer. Snake has juſt been rallying me upon our attachment, but I have told him our real views; I need not tell you how uſeful he has been to us, and believe me, our confidence has not been ill placed.

Joſ. Oh, madam, 'tis impoſſible for me to ſuſpect a man of Mr Snake's merit and accompliſhments.

L. Sneer. Oh, no compliments; but tell me when you ſaw Maria, or, what's more material to us, your brother.

Joſ. I have not ſeen either ſince I left you, but I can tell you they never meet; ſome of your ſtories have had a good effect in that quarter.

L. Sneer. The merit of this, my dear Snake, belongs to you; but do your brother's diſtreſſes increaſe?

Joſ. Every hour; I am told he had another execution in his houſe yeſterday—In ſhort, his diſſipation and extravagance exceed any thing I ever heard.

L. Sneer. Poor Charles!

Joſ. Aye, poor Charles indeed! notwithſtanding his extravagance one cannot help pitying him; I wiſh it was in my power to be of any eſſential ſervice to him; for the man who does not feel for the diſtreſſes of a brother, even though merited by his own miſconduct, deſerves to be———

L. Sneer. Now you are going to be moral, and forget you are among friends.

Joſ. Gad, ſo I was, ha! ha!—I'll keep that ſentiment 'till I ſee Sir Peter, ha! ha! however, it would certainly be a generous act in you to reſcue Maria from ſuch a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed at all, can only be ſo by a perſon of your ſuperior accompliſhments and underſtanding,

Snake. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming; I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to your ladyſhip. Mr Surface, your moſt obedient. (*Exit.*

Joſ. Mr Snake, your moſt obedient. I wonder, Lady Sneerwell, you would put any confidence in that fellow.

L. Sneer. Why ſo?

Joſ. I have diſcovered he has of late had ſeveral conferences with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's ſteward; he has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

L. Sneer. And would you think he would betray us?

Joſ. Not unlikely; and take my word for it, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow has not virtue enough to be faithful to his own villainies.

Enter MARIA.

L. Sneer. Ah, Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

Mar. Nothing, madam, only this odious lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, and his uncle Crabtree, juſt called in at my guardian's; but I took the firſt opportunity to ſlip out, and run away to your Ladyſhip.

L. Sneer. Is that all?

Joſ. Had my brother Charles been of the party, you would not have been ſo much alarmed.

L. Sneer. Nay, now you are too ſevere; for I dare ſay the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you was here, and therefore came; but pray, Maria, what particular objection have you to Sir Benjamin that you avoid him ſo?

Mar. Oh, madam, he has done nothing; but his whole converſation is a perpetual libel upon all his acquaintance.

Joſ. Yes, and the worſt of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him, for he would abuſe a ſtranger as ſoon as his beſt friend, and his uncle is as bad.

Mar.

Mar. For my part, I own wit loſes its reſpect with me, when I ſee it in company with malice;——what think you, Mr Surface?

Joſ. To be ſure, madam,—to ſmile at a jeſt, that plants a thorn in the breaſt of another, is to become a principal in the miſchief.

L. Sneer. Pſha—there is no poſſibility of being witty without a little ill nature; the malice in a good thing is the band that makes it ſtick.——What is your real opinion, Mr Surface?

Joſ. Why my opinion is, that where the ſpirit of raillery is ſuppreſſed, the converſation muſt be naturally inſipid.

Mar. Well, I will not argue how far ſlander may be allowed; but in a man, I am ſure it is deſpicable.—We have pride, envy, rivalſhip, and a thouſand motives to depreciate each other; but the male ſlanderer muſt have the cowardice of a woman, before he can traduce one.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mrs Candour, madam, if you are at leiſure, will leave her carriage.

L. Sneer. Deſire her to walk up. *(Exit Servant.)* Now, Maria, here's a character to your taſte; though Mrs Candour is a little talkative, yet every body allows ſhe is the beſt natured ſort of woman in the world.

Mar. Yes—with the very groſs affectation of good nature, ſhe does more miſchief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

Joſ. Faith it's very true; and whenever I hear the current of abuſe running hard againſt the character of my beſt friends, I never think them in ſuch danger, as when Candour undertakes their defence.

L. Sneer. Huſh! huſh! here ſhe is.

Enter Mrs CANDOUR.

Mrs Cand. Oh! my dear Lady Sneerwell; well, how do you? Mr Surface, your moſt obedient.—Is there any news abroad? No! nothing good I ſuppoſe—No, nothing but ſcandal!—nothing but ſcandal!

Joſ. Juſt ſo indeed, madam.

Mrs Cand.

Mrs Cand. Nothing but ſcandal! Ah, Maria, how do you do, child? what! is every thing at an end between you and Charles? What! is he too extravagant? —Aye! the town talks of nothing elſe.

Mar. I am ſorry, madam, the town is ſo ill employed.

Mrs Cand. Aye, ſo am I, child—but what can one do? we can't ſtop people's tongues.—They hint too, that your guardian and his lady don't live ſo agreeably together as they did.

Mar. I am ſure ſuch reports are without foundation.

Mrs Cand. Aye, ſo things generally are:—It's like Mrs Faſhion's affair with Colonel Coterie: though, indeed, that affair was never rightly cleared up; and it was but yeſterday Miſs Prim aſſured me, that Mr and Mrs Honeymoon are now become mere man and wife, like the reſt of their acquaintance. She likewiſe hinted, that a certain widow in the next ſtreet had got rid of her dropſy, and recovered her ſhape in a moſt ſurpriſing manner.

Joſ. The licence of invention ſome people give themſelves, is aſtoniſhing.

Mrs Cand. 'Tis ſo—but how will you ſtop people's tongues? 'Twas but yeſterday Mrs Clacket informed me, that our old friend Miſs Prudely was going to elope, and that her guardian caught her juſt ſtepping into the York Diligence, with her dancing maſter. I was informed too, that Lord Flimſy caught his wife at a houſe of no extraordinary fame, and that Tom Saunter and Sir Harry Idle were to meaſure ſwords on a ſimilar occaſion.—But I dare ſay there is no truth in the ſtory, and I would not circulate ſuch a report for the world.

Joſ. You report! No, no, no.

Mrs Cand. No, no,—tale-bearers are juſt as bad as the tale makers.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Benjamin Backbite and Mr Crabtree.

[*Exit Servant.*

Enter

Enter SIR BENJAMIN *and* CRABTREE.

Crab. Lady Sneerwell, your moſt obedient humble ſervant; Mrs Candour, I believe you don't know my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite; he has a very pretty taſte for poetry, and ſhall make a rebus or a charade with any one.

Sir Benj. Oh fie! uncle.

Crab. In faith he will: did you ever hear the lines he made at Lady Ponto's rout, on Mrs Frizzle's feathers catching fire; and the rebuſes——his firſt is the name of a fiſh; the next a great naval commander, and—

Sir Benj. Uncle, now pr'ythee.

L. Sneer. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publiſh any thing.

Sir Benj. Why, to ſay the truth, 'tis very vulgar to print—and as my little productions are chiefly ſatires, and lampoons on particular perſons, I find they circulate better by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties;——however, I have ſome love elegies, which when favoured by this lady's ſmiles, (*to Maria*) I mean to give to the public.

Crab. 'Foregad, madam, they'll immortalize you, (*to Maria*) you will be handed down to poſterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sachariſſa.

Sir Benj. Yes, madam, I think you'll like them, (*to Maria*) when you ſhall ſee them on a beautiful quarto type, where a neat rivulet of text ſhall murmur through a meadow of margin;—'Foregad, they'll be the moſt elegant things of their kind.

Crab. But, odſo, Ladies, did you hear the news?

Mrs Cand. What—do you mean the report of—

Crab. No, madam, that's not it—Miſs Nicely going to be married to her own footman.

Mrs Cand. Impoſſible!

Sir Benj. 'Tis very true indeed, madam; every thing is fixed, and the wedding liveries beſpoke.

Crab. Yes, and they do ſay there were very preſſing reaſons for it.

Mrs Cand. I heard ſomething of this before.

L. Sneer.

L. Sneer. Oh! it cannot be; and I wonder they'd report ſuch a thing of ſo prudent a lady.

Sir Benj. Oh! but madam, that is the very reaſon that it was believed at once; for ſhe has always been ſo very cautious and reſerved, that every body was ſure there was ſome reaſon for it at bottom.

Mrs Cand. It is true, there is a ſort of puny, ſickly reputation, that would outlive the robuſter character of an hundred prudes.

Sir Benj. True, madam; there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as conſtitution, who being conſcious of their weak part, avoid the leaſt breath of air, and ſupplying their want of ſtamina by care and circumſtances, have often given riſe to the moſt ingenious tales.

Crab. Very true;—but odſo, ladies, did you hear of Miſs Letitia Piper's loſing her lover and her character at Scarborough.—Sir Benjamin, you remember it.

Sir Benj. Oh, to be ſure, the moſt whimſical circumſtance.

L. Sneer. Pray let us hear it.

Crab. Why, one evening, at Lady Spadille's aſſembly, the converſation happened to turn upon the difficulty of breeding Nova Scotia ſheep in this country; no, ſays a lady preſent, I have ſeen an inſtance of it, for a couſin of mine, Miſs Letitia Piper, had one that produced twins. What, what, ſays old Lady Dundizzy, (whom we all know is as deaf as a poſt) has Miſs Letitia Piper had twins—This, you may eaſily imagine, ſet the company in a loud laugh; and the next morning it was every where reported, and believed, that Miſs Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Crab. 'Tis true, upon my honour.—Oh, Mr Surface, how do you do? I hear your uncle, Sir Oliver, is expected in town; ſad news upon his arrival, to hear how your brother has gone on.

Joſ. I hope no buſy people have already prejudiced his uncle againſt him—he may reform.

Sir Benj. True, he may; for my part, I never thought him ſo utterly void of principle as people ſay,

and though he has loſt all his friends, I am told nobody is better ſpoken of amongſt the Jews.

Crab. 'Foregad, if the Old Jewry was a ward, Charles would be an alderman, for he pays as many annuities as the Iriſh Tontine; and when he is ſick, they have prayers for his recovery in all the Synagogues.

Sir Benj. Yet no man lives in greater ſplendor.—They tell me, when he entertains his friends, he can ſit down to dinner with a dozen of ſecurities, his own have a ſcore of tradeſmen waiting in the antichamber, and an officer behind every gueſt's chair.

Joſ. This may be entertaining to you, gentlemen; but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

Mar. Their malice is intolerable. (*Aſide.*) Lady Sneerwell, I muſt wiſh you a good morning; I'm not very well. [*Exit Maria.*

Mrs Cand. She changes colour.

L. Sneer. Do, Mrs Candour, follow her.

Mrs Cand. To be ſure I will;—poor dear girl, who knows what her ſituation may be. [Mrs Cand. *follows her.*

L. Sneer. 'Twas nothing but that ſhe could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithſtanding their difference.

Sir Benj. The young lady's penchant is obvious.

Crab. Come, don't let this diſhearten you—follow her, and repeat ſome of your odes to her, and I'll aſſiſt you.

Sir Benj. Mr Surface, I did not mean to hurt you, but depend on't, your brother is utterly undone.

Crab. Oh! undone as ever man was—can't raiſe a guinea.

Sir Benj. Every thing is ſold, I am told, that was moveable.

Crab. Not a moveable left, except ſome old bottles, and ſome pictures, and they ſeem to be framed in the wainſcot, egad.

Sir Benj. I am ſorry to hear alſo ſome bad ſtories of him.

Crab. Oh! he has done many mean things, that's certain.

Sir Benj. But, however, he's your brother.

Crab.

Crab. Aye! as he is your brother—we'll tell you more another opportunity. [*Exeunt* Crab. *and* Sir Benj.

L. Sneer. 'Tis very hard for them, indeed, to leave a ſubject they have not quite run down.

Joſ. And I fancy their abuſe was no more acceptable to your ladyſhip than to Maria.

L. Sneer. I doubt her affections are farther engaged than we imagine;—but the family are to be here this afternoon, ſo you may as well dine where you are; we ſhall have an opportunity of obſerving her further;—in the mean time I'll go and plot miſchief, and you ſhall ſtudy. (*Exeunt.*

SCENE, Sir PETER TEAZLE'S Houſe.

Enter Sir PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. When an old batchelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect?——'Tis now above ſix months ſince my Lady Teazle made me the happieſt of men——and I have been the moſt miſerable dog ever ſince.——We tifted a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells were done ringing. I was more than once nearly choaked with gall during the honey-moon, and had loſt every ſatisfaction in life, before my friends had done wiſhing me joy.——And yet, I choſe with caution a girl bred wholly in the country, who had never known luxury, beyond one ſilk gown, or diſſipation beyond the annual gala of a race ball.——Yet now, ſhe plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the town, with as good a grace as if ſhe had never ſeen a buſh, or a graſs plot out of Groſvenor-Square.——I am ſneered at by all my acquaintance——paragraphed in the newspapers——ſhe diſſipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours.——And yet, the worſt of it is, I doubt I love her, or I ſhould never bear all this——but I am determined never to be weak enough to let her know it——No! No! No!

Enter ROWLEY.

Rowl. Sir Peter, your ſervant, how do find yourſelf to-day?

Sir Pet. Very bad, Mr Rowley; very bad indeed.

Rowl. I'm ſorry to hear that—what has happened to make you uneaſy ſince yeſterday?

Sir Pet. A pretty queſtion truly to a married man.

Rowl. Sure my Lady is not the cauſe!

Sir Pet. Why! has any one told you ſhe was dead?

Rowl. Come, come, Sir Peter, notwithſtanding you ſometimes diſpute and diſagree, I am ſure you love her.

Sir Pet. Aye, Mr Rowley; but the worſt of it is, that in all our diſputes and quarrels, ſhe is ever in the wrong, and continues to thwart and vex me;—I am myſelf the ſweeteſt tempered man in the world, and ſo I tell her an hundred times a-day.

Rowl. Indeed, Sir Peter!

Sir Pet. Yes—and then there's Lady Sneerwell, and the ſet ſhe meets at her houſe, encourage her to diſobedience; and Maria, my ward, ſhe too preſumes to have a will of her own, and refuſes the man I propoſe to her; deſigning, I ſuppoſe, to beſtow herſelf and fortune upon that profligate his brother.

Rowl. You know, Sir Peter, I have often taken the liberty to differ in opinion with you, in regard to theſe two young men; for Charles, my life on't, will retrieve all one day or other.—Their worthy father, my once honoured maſter, at his years, was full as wild and extravagant as Charles now is; but at his death, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loſs.

Sir Pet. You are wrong, maſter Rowley, you are very wrong:—by their father's will, you know, I became guardian to theſe young men, which gave me an opportunity of knowing their different diſpoſitions; but their uncle's eaſtern liberality ſoon took them out of my power, by giving them an early independence.—But for Charles, whatever good qualities he may have inherited, they are long ſince ſquandered away with the reſt of his fortune; Joſeph, indeed, is a pattern for the young men of the age—a youth of the nobleſt ſentiments, and acts up to the ſentiments he profeſſes.

Rowl.

Rowl. Well, well, Sir Peter, I ſhan't oppoſe your opinion at preſent, though I am ſorry you are prejudiced againſt Charles, as this may probably be the moſt critical period of his life, for his uncle, Sir Oliver, is arrived, and now in town.

Sir Pet. What! my old friend, Sir Oliver, is he arrived? I thought you had not expected him this month.

Rowl. No more we did, Sir, but his paſſage has been remarkably quick.

Sir Pet. I ſhall be heartily glad to ſee him—'Tis ſixteen years ſince old Nol and I met—But does he ſtill enjoin us to keep his arrival a ſecret from his nephews?

Rowl. He does, Sir; and is determined, under a feigned character, to make trial of their different diſpoſitions.

Sir Pet. Ah! there is no need of it, for Joſeph, I am ſure, is the man—But hark'ye, Rowley, does Sir Oliver know that I am married?

Rowl. He does, Sir, and intends ſhortly to wiſh you joy.

Sir Pet. What, as we wiſh health to a friend in a conſumption—But I muſt have him at my houſe—do you conduct him, Rowley, I'll go and give orders for his reception (*going.*) We uſed to rail at matrimony together—he has ſtood firm to his text.—But, Rowley, don't give him the leaſt hint that my wife and I diſagree, for I would have him think (heaven forgive me) that we are a very happy couple.

Rowl. Then you muſt be careful not to quarrel whilſt he is here.

Sir Pet. And ſo we muſt—but that will be impoſſible!——Zounds, Rowley, when an old batchelor marries a young wife, he deſerves,—aye, he deſerves——no, the crime carries the puniſhment along with it.

ACT II.

SCENE, Sir PETER TEAZLE's Houſe.

Enter Sir PETER *and Lady* TEAZLE.

Sir PETER.

LADY Teazle, Lady Teazle, I won't bear it.

L. Teaz. Very well, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, juſt as you pleaſe; but I know I ought to have my own way in every thing, and what's more, I will.

Sir Pet. What, madam! is there no reſpect due to the authority of a huſband?

L. Teaz. Why, don't I know that no woman of faſhion does as ſhe is bid after her marriage.—Though I was bred in the country, I am no ſtranger to that: if you wanted me to have been obedient, you ſhould have adopted me, and not married me—I'm ſure you were old enough.

Sir Pet. Aye, there it is.—Oons, madam, what right have you to run into all this extravagance?

L. Teaz. I am ſure I am not more extravagant than a woman of quality ought to be.

Sir Pet. 'Slife, madam, I'll have no more ſums ſquandered away upon ſuch unmeaning luxuries; you have as many flowers in your dreſſing room, as would turn the Pantheon into a green houſe; or make a Fete Champetre at a maſ———

L. Teaz. Lord, Sir Peter, am I to blame that flowers don't blow in cold weather? you muſt blame the climate, and not me—I'm ſure, for my part, I wiſh it was Spring all the year round, and that roſes grew under our feet.

Sir Pet. Zounds, madam, I ſhould not wonder at your extravagance if you had been bred to it—Had you any of theſe things before you married me?

L. Teaz. Lord, Sir Peter, how can you be angry at thoſe little elegant expences?

Sir

Sir Pet. Had you any of thoſe little elegant expences when you married me?

L. Teaz. For my part, I think you ought to be pleaſed your wife ſhould be thought a woman of taſte.

Sir Pet. Zounds, madam, you had no taſte when you married me.

L. Teaz. Very true, indeed; and after having married you, I ſhould never pretend to taſte again.

Sir Pet. Very well, very well, madam; you have entirely forgot what your ſituation was when firſt I ſaw you.

L. Teaz. No, no, I have not; a very diſagreeable ſituation it was, or I am ſure I never ſhould have married you.

Sir Pet. You forget the humble ſtate I took you from—the daughter of a poor country 'Squire—When I came to your father's, I found you ſitting at your tambour, in a linen gown, a bunch of keys at your ſide, and your hair combed ſmoothly over a roll.

L. Teaz. Yes I remember very well;—my daily occupations were to overlook the dairy, ſuperintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lap dog.

Sir Pet. Oh! I am glad to find you have ſo good a recollection.

L. Teaz. My evening employments were to draw patterns for ruffles, which I had no materials to make up; play at Pope Joan with the curate; read a ſermon to my aunt Deborah, or perhaps be ſtuck up at an old ſpinnet to thrum my father to ſleep after a fox chace.

Sir Pet. Then you was glad to take a ride out behind the butler, upon the old dock'd coach horſe.

L. Teaz. No, no; I deny the butler and the coach horſe.

Sir Pet. I ſay you did. This was your ſituation—— Now, madam, you muſt have your coach, vis-a-vis, and three powdered footmen to walk before your chair; and in ſummer, two white cats to draw you to Kenſington gardens; and inſtead of your living in that hole in the country, I have brought you home here,

made

made you a woman of fortune and of quality—in ſhort, madam, I have made you my wife.

L. Teaz. Well, and there is but one thing more you can now do to add to the obligation, and that is——

Sir Pet. To make you my widow, I ſuppoſe.

L. Teaz. Hem!——

Sir Pet. Very well, madam, very well; I am much obliged to you for the hint.

L. Teaz. Why then will you force me to ſay ſhocking things to you. But now we have finiſhed our morning converſation, I preſume I may go to my engagements at Lady Sneerwell's.

Sir Pet. Lady Sneerwell!—a precious acquaintance you have made her too, and the ſet that frequent her houſe.—Such a ſet, mercy on us! Many a wretch who has been drawn upon a hurdle, has done leſs miſchief than thoſe barterers of forged lies, coiners of ſcandal, and clippers of reputation.

L. Teaz. How can you be ſo ſevere; I'm ſure they are all people of faſhion, and very tenacious of reputation.

Sir Pet. Yes, ſo tenacious of it, they'll not allow it to any but themſelves.

L. Teaz. I vow, Sir Peter, when I ſay an ill natured thing, I mean no harm by it, for I take it for granted they'd do the ſame by me.

Sir Pet. They've made you as bad as any of them.

L. Teaz. Yes—I think I bear my part with a tolerable grace——

Sir Pet. Grace indeed!

L. Teaz. Well, but, Sir Peter, you know you promiſed to come.

Sir Pet. Well I ſhall juſt call in to look after my own character.

L. Teaz. Then, upon my word, you muſt make haſte after me, or you'll be too late. *(Exit L. Teazle.*

Sir Pet. I have got much by my intended expoſtulation—What a charming air ſhe has!—what a neck, and how pleaſingly ſhe ſhews her contempt of my authority!——Well, though I can't make her love me,

'tis

'tis ſome pleaſure to teaze her a little, and I think ſhe never appears to ſuch advantage, as when ſhe is doing every thing to vex and plague me.

SCENE, LADY SNEERWELL'S Houſe.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN, JOSEPH, MRS CANDOUR, *and* MARIA.

L. Sneer. Nay, poſitively we'll have it.

Joſ. Aye, aye, the epigram by all means.

Sir Benj. Oh! plague on it, it's mere nonſenſe.

Crab. Faith, ladies, 'twas excellent for an extempore.

Sir Benj. But, ladies, you ſhould be acquainted with the circumſtances——You muſt know that one day laſt week, as Lady Bab Curricle was taking the duſt in Hyde Park, in a ſort of duodecimo phaeton, ſhe deſired me to write ſome verſes on her ponies; upon which I took out my pocket book, and in a moment produced the following:——

"Sure never were ſeen two ſuch beautiful ponies,
"Other horſes are clowns, and theſe macaronies;
"To give them this title I'm ſure can't be wrong,
"Their legs are ſo ſlim, and their tails are ſo long."

Crab. There ladies,——done in the crack of a whip—and on horſeback too.

Joſ. Oh! a very Phœbus mounted——

Mrs Cand. I muſt have a copy.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

L. Sneer. Lady Teazle, how do you do?—I hope we ſhall ſee Sir Peter.

L. Teaz. I believe he ſhall wait on your ladyſhip preſently.

L. Sneer. Maria, my love, you look grave; come, you ſhall ſit down to picquet with Mr Surface.

Mar. I take very little pleaſure in cards—but I'll do as your Ladyſhip pleaſes.

L. Teaz. I wonder he would ſit down to cards with Maria.——I thought he would have taken an opportunity of ſpeaking to me before Sir Peter came. (*Aſide.*

Mrs Cand.

Mrs Cand. Well, now I'll forſwear his ſociety. (*Aſide.*

L. Teaz. What's the matter, Mrs Candour?

Mrs Cand. Why, they are ſo cenſorious they won't allow our friend, Miſs Vermilion, to be handſome.

L. Sneer. Oh, ſurely ſhe's a pretty woman.

Crab. I'm glad you think ſo,

Mrs Cand. She has a charming freſh colour.

L. Teaz. Yes, when it is freſh put on.

Mrs Cand. Well, I'll ſwear 'tis natural, for I've ſeen it come and go.

L. Teaz. Yes, it comes at night, and goes again in the morning.

Sir Benj. True, madam, it not only goes and comes, but what's more, her maid can fetch and carry it.

Mrs Cand. Well,---and what do you think of her ſiſter?

Crab. What, Mrs Evergreen---'foregad, ſhe's ſix and fifty if ſhe is a day.

Mrs Cand. Nay, I'll ſwear two or three and ſixty is the outſide———I don't think ſhe looks more.

Sir Benj. Oh, there's no judging by her looks, unleſs we could ſee her face.

L Sneer. Well, if Mrs Evergreen does take ſome pains to repair the ravages of time, ſhe certainly effects it with great ingenuity, and ſurely that's better than the careleſs manner in which the widow Oaker chalks her wrinkles.

Sir Benj. Nay, now, my Lady Sneerwell, you are too ſevere upon the widow---Come, it is not that ſhe paints ſo ill, but when ſhe has finiſhed her face, ſhe joins it ſo badly to her neck, that ſhe looks like a mended ſtatue, in which the connoiſſeur may ſee at once, that the head is modern, though the trunk is antique.

Crab. What do you think of Miſs Simper?

Sir Benj. Why ſhe has pretty teeth.

L. Teaz. Yes, and upon that account never ſhuts her mouth, but keeps it always a-jar, as it were, thus (*ſhews her teeth.*)

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha.

L. Teaz.

L. Teaz. And, yet I vow that's better than the pains Mrs Prim takes to conceal the loſs in front—ſhe draws her mouth till it reſembles the aperture of a poor box, and all her words appear to ſlide out edge-ways as it were thus——"*How do you do, madam?—Yes, madam.*"

L. Sneer. Ha, ha, ha; very well, Lady Teazle—I vow you appear to be a little ſevere.

L. Teaz. In defence of a friend, you know, it is but juſt—But here comes Sir Peter to ſpoil our pleaſantry.

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. Ladies, your ſervant—mercy upon me! The whole ſet—a character dead at every ſentence. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Cand. They won't allow good qualities to any one—not even good nature to our friend Mrs Purſey.

Crab. What! the old fat dowager that was at Mrs Quadrille's laſt night.

Mrs Cand. Her bulk is her misfortune; and when ſhe takes ſuch pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

L. Sneer. That's very true indeed.

L. Teaz. Yes.—I'm told ſhe abſolutely lives upon acids and ſmall whey, laces herſelf with pullies;—often in the hotteſt day of ſummer, you will ſee her on a little ſquat poney, with her hair plaited and turned up like a drummer, and away ſhe goes puffing round the ring in a full trot.

Sir Pet. Mercy on me! this is her own relation; a perſon they dine with twice a-week. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Cand. I vow you ſhan't be ſo ſevere upon the dowager; for let me tell you, great allowances are to be made for a woman who ſtrives to paſs for a flirt at ſix and thirty.

L. Sneer. Though ſurely ſhe's handſome ſtill; and for the weakneſs in her eyes, conſidering how much ſhe reads by candle light, 'tis not to be wondered at.

Mrs Cand. Very true; and for her manner, I think it very graceful, conſidering ſhe never had any education; for her mother, you know, was a Welſh milliner, and her father a ſugar baker at Briſtol.

Sir Benj.

Sir Benj. Aye, you are both of ye too good natured.

Mrs Cand. Well, I never will join in the ridicule of a friend; ſo I tell my couſin Ogle, and ye all know what pretenſions ſhe has to beauty.

Crab. She has the oddeſt countenance—a collection of features from all the corners of the globe.

Sir Benj. She has indeed, an Iriſh front,

Crab. Caledonian locks.

Sir Benj. Dutch noſe.

Crab. Auſtrian lips.

Sir Benj. The complexion of a Spaniard.

Crab. And teeth a la Chinoiſe.

Sir Benj. In ſhort, her face reſembles a table d'hôte at Spa, where no two gueſts are of a nation.

Crab. Or a congreſs at the cloſe of a general war, where every member ſeems to have a different intereſt, and the noſe and chin are the only parties likely to join iſſue.

Sir Benj. Ha, ha, ha.

L. Sneer. Ha, ha—Well, I vow you are a couple of provoking toads.

Mrs Cand. Well, I vow you ſhan't carry the laugh ſo,—let me tell you that, Mrs Ogle.

Sir Pet. Madam, madam, 'tis impoſſible to ſtop thoſe good gentlemen's tongues; but when I tell you, Mrs Candour, that the lady they are ſpeaking of is a particular friend of mine, I hope you will be ſo good as not to undertake her defence.

L. Sneer. Well ſaid, Sir Peter; but you are a cruel creature, too phlegmatic yourſelf for a wit, and too peeviſh to allow it to others.

Sir Pet. True wit, madam, is more nearly allied to good nature than you are aware of.

L. Teaz. True, Sir Peter; I believe they are ſo near a-kin that they can never be united.

Sir Benj. Or rather, madam, ſuppoſe them to be man and wife, one ſo ſeldom ſees them together.

L. Teaz. But Sir Peter is ſuch an enemy to ſcandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

Sir Pet. 'Foregad, madam, if they conſidered the ſporting with reputations of as much conſequence as poaching

poaching on manors, and paſſed an act for the preſervation of ſame, they would find many would thank them for the bill.

L. Sneer. O lud!—Sir Peter would deprive us of our *privileges.*

Sir Pet. Yes, madam; and none ſhould then have the liberty to kill characters, and run down reputations, but *privileged* old maids, and *diſappointed* widows.

L. Sneer. Go, you monſter!

Mrs Cand. But ſurely you would not be ſo ſevere on thoſe who report what they hear?

Sir Pet. Yes, madam, I would have law for them too; and wherever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured party ſhould have a right to come on any of the indorſers.

Crab. Well, I verily believe there never was a ſcandalous ſtory without ſome foundation.

Sir Pet. Nine out of ten are formed on ſome malicious invention, or idle repreſentation.

L. Sneer. Come, ladies, ſhall we ſit down to cards in the next room?

Enter a SERVANT *who whiſpers* SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. I'll come directly—I'll ſteal away unperceived. [*Aſide.*

L. Sneer. Sir Peter, you're not leaving us.

Sir Pet. I beg pardon, ladies, 'tis particular buſineſs, and I muſt—But I leave my character behind me. [*Exit.*

Sir Benj. Well, certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a ſtrange being; I could tell you ſome ſtories of him would make you laugh heartily, if he was not your huſband.

L. Teaz. Oh, never mind that.—This way.

[*They walk up and exeunt.*

Joſ. You take no pleaſure in this ſociety.

Mar. How can I! If to raiſe a malicious ſmile at the misfortunes and infirmities of thoſe who are unhappy, be a proof of wit and humour, Heaven grant me a double portion of dulneſs.

Joſ. And yet they have no malice in their hearts.

Mar. Then it is the more inexcuſeable, ſince nothing but an ungovernable depravity of heart could tempt them to ſuch a practice.

Joſ. And is it poſſible, Maria, that you can thus feel for others, and yet be cruel to me alone?—Is hope to be denied the tendereſt paſſion?

Mar. Why will you perſiſt to perſecute me on a ſubject on which you have long ſince known my ſentiments.

Joſ. O Maria, you would not be thus deaf to me, but that Charles, that libertine, is ſtill a favoured rival.

Mar. Ungenerouſly urged! but whatever my ſentiments are, with regard to that unfortunate young man, be aſſured, I ſhall not conſider myſelf more bound to give him up, becauſe his misfortunes have loſt him the regards——even of a brother—[*Going out.*

Joſ. Nay, Maria, you ſhall not leave me with a frown; by all that's honeſt I ſwear—[*Kneels and ſees Lady Teazle behind.*] Ah! Lady Teazle, ah! you ſhall not ſtir—[*To Maria*] I have the greateſt regard in the world for Lady Teazle, but if Sir Peter was once to ſuſpect—

Mar. Lady Teazle!——

L. Teaz. What is all this child? You are wanted in the next room. [*Exit Maria.*]——What is the meaning of all this?—What! did you take her for me!

Joſ. Why, you muſt know—Maria—by ſome means ſuſpecting—the—great regard I entertain for your ladyſhip—was threatening—if I did not deſiſt, to acquaint Sir Peter——and I—I—was juſt reaſoning with her——

L. Teaz. You ſeem to have adopted a very tender method of reaſoning—pray, do you uſually argue on your knees?

Joſ. Why, you know ſhe's but a child, and I thought a little bombaſt might be uſeful to keep her ſilent.—But, my dear Lady Teazle, when will you come and give me your opinion of my library?

L. Teaz. Why I really begin to think it not ſo proper: and you know I admit you as lover no farther than faſhion dictates.

Joſ.

Joſ. Oh, no more ;—a mere Platonic Ciciſbeo, that every lady is entitled to.

L. Teaz. No further—and though Sir Peter's treatment may make me uneaſy, it ſhall never provoke me—

Joſ. To the only revenge in your power.

L. Teaz. Go, you inſinuating wretch——but we ſhall be miſſed, let us join the company.

Joſ. I'll follow your ladyſhip.

L. Teaz. Don't ſtay long, for I promiſe you Maria ſhan't come to hear any more of your reaſoning. [*Exit.*

Joſ. A pretty ſituation I am in—by gaining the wife I ſhall loſe the heireſs—I at firſt intended to make her ladyſhip only the inſtrument in my deſigns on Maria, but—I don't know how it is—I am become her ſerious admirer.—I begin now to wiſh I had not made a point of gaining ſo very good a character, for it has brought me into ſo many confounded rogueries, that I fear I ſhall be expoſed at laſt. [*Exit.*

SCENE, Sir Peter Teazle's *Houſe.*

Enter Sir Oliver *and* Rowley.

Sir Oliv. Ha ha, and ſo my old friend is married at laſt, eh ! Rowley—and to a young wife out of the country, ha, ha, ha ! That he ſhould buff to old batchelors ſo long, and ſink into a huſband at laſt.

Rowl. But let me beg of you, ſir, not to rally him upon the ſubject, for he cannot bear it, though he has been married theſe ſeven months.

Sir Oliv. Then he has juſt been half a year on the ſtool of repentance. Poor Sir Peter !——But you ſay he has entirely given up Charles——never ſees him, eh ?

Rowl. His prejudice againſt him is aſtoniſhing, and I believe is greatly aggravated by a ſuſpicion of a connection between Charles and lady Teazle, and ſuch a report I know has been circulated and kept up, by means of Lady Sneerwell, and a ſcandalous party who aſſociate at her houſe ; where, I am convinced, if there is any partiality in the caſe, Joſeph is the favourite.

Sir Oliv. Aye, aye —I know there is a ſet of miſchievous prating goſſips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time, and rob a young fellow of his good name, before he has ſenſe enough to know the value of it:——But I am not to be prejudiced againſt my nephew by any ſuch, I promiſe you——No, no, if Charles has done nothing falſe or mean, I ſhall compound for his extravagance.

Rowl. I rejoice, ſir, to hear you ſay ſo; and am happy to find the ſon of my old maſter has one friend left however.

Sir Oliv. What! ſhall I forget, Mr Rowley, when I was at his years myſelf;——egad, neither my brother nor I were very prudent youths, and yet I believe, you have not ſeen many better men than your old maſter was.

Rowl. 'Tis that reflection I build my hopes on—and, my life on't! Charles will prove deſerving of your kindneſs.—But here comes Sir Peter.

Enter Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Where is he? Where is Sir Oliver?—Ah, my dear friend, I rejoice to ſee you!——You are welcome to England a thouſand—and a thouſand times!—

Sir Oliv. Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter—and I am glad to find you ſo well, believe me.

Sir Pet. Ah, Sir Oliver!—It's ſixteen years ſince laſt we ſaw one another——many a bout we have had together in our time!

Sir Oliv. Aye! I have had my ſhare.——But what, I find you are married—hey, old boy!——Well, well, it can't be helped, and ſo I wiſh you joy with all my heart.

Sir Pet. Thank you, thank you—Yes, Sir Oliver, I have entered into that happy ſtate—but we won't talk of that now.

Sir Oliv. That's true, Sir Peter, old friends ſhould not begin upon grievances at their firſt meeting, no, no, no.

Rowl. [*Aſide to* Sir Oliver] Have a care, ſir;—don't touch upon that ſubject.

Sir Oliv.

Sir Oliv. Well,——ſo one of my nephews, I find, is a wild young rogue.

Sir Pet. Oh, my dear friend, I grieve at your diſappointment there—Charles is, indeed, a ſad libertine—but no matter, Joſeph will make you ample amends—every body ſpeaks well of him.

Sir Oliv. I am ſorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honeſt fellow.—Every body ſpeaks well of him—pſhaw—then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools, as to the honeſt dignity of genius and virtue.

Sir Pet. What the plague! are you angry with Joſeph for not making enemies?

Sir Oliv. Why not, if he has merit enough to deſerve them.

Sir Pet. Well, we'll ſee him, and you'll be convinced how worthy he is.—He's a pattern for all the young men of the age.—He's a man of the nobleſt ſentiments.

Sir Oliv. Oh! plague of his ſentiments—if he ſalutes me with a ſcrap of morality in his mouth, I ſhall be ſick directly.—But don't however miſtake me, Sir Peter; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors; but before I form a judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts, and my friend Rowley and I have planned ſomething for that purpoſe.

Sir Pet. My life on Joſeph's honour.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, gives us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink your lady's health, and tell you all our ſchemes.

Sir Pet. Allons—donc.

Sir Oliv. And don't, Sir Peter, be too ſevere againſt your old friend's ſon—Odds my life, I am not ſorry he has run a little out of the courſe—for my part, I hate to ſee prudence clinging to the green ſuckers of youth; 'tis like ivy round the ſaplin, and ſpoils the growth of the tree. (*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE, SIR PETER'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER, SIR OLIVER, *and* ROWLEY.

SIR PETER.

WELL, well, we'll ſee this man firſt, and then have our wine afterwards.—But Rowley, I don't ſee the jeſt of your ſcheme.

Rowl. Why, ſir, this Mr Stanley was a near relation of their mother's, and formerly an eminent merchant in Dublin—he failed in trade, and is greatly reduced; he has applied by letter to Mr Surface and Charles for aſſiſtance—from the former of whom he has received nothing but fair promiſes; while Charles, in the midſt of his own diſtreſſes, is at preſent endeavouring to raiſe a ſum of money, part of which I know he intends for the uſe of Mr Stanley.

Sir Oliv. Aye—he's my brother's ſon.

Rowl. Now, Sir, we propoſe, that Sir Oliver ſhall viſit them both, in the character of Mr Stanley; as I have informed them he has obtained leave of his creditors to wait on his friends in perſon—and in the younger, believe me, you'll find one, who, in the midſt of diſſipation and extravagance, has ſtill, as our immortal bard expreſſes it, *A tear for pity, and a hand open as day for melting charity.*

Sir Pet. What ſignifies his open hand and purſe, if he has nothing to give. But where is this perſon you were ſpeaking of?

Rowl. Below, ſir, waiting your commands—You muſt know, Sir Oliver, this is a friendly Jew; one who, to do him juſtice, has done every thing in his power to aſſiſt Charles—Who waits?—(*Enter a Servant*) Deſire Mr Moſes to walk up. *Exit Servant.*

Sir Pet. But how are you ſure he'll ſpeak truth?

Rowl. Why, ſir, I have perſuaded him there's no proſpect of his being paid ſeveral ſums he has advanced for Charles, but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is in town; therefore you may depend

on

on his being faithful to his intereſt—Oh! here comes the honeſt Iſraelite.

Enter Moses.

Sir Oliver, this is Mr Moſes.—Mr Moſes, this is Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. I underſtand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

Moſ. Yes, Sir Oliver—I have done all I could for him—but he was ruined before he came to me for aſſiſtance.

Sir Oliv. That was unlucky truly, for you had no opportunity of ſhewing your talent.

Moſ. None at all; I had not the pleaſure of knowing his diſtreſſes, 'till he was ſome thouſands worſe than nothing.

Sir Oliv. Unfortunate indeed! But I ſuppoſe you have done all in your power for him.

Moſ. Yes, he knows that—This very evening I was to have brought a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will advance him ſome monies.

Sir Pet. What! a perſon that Charles has never borrowed money of before, lend him any in his preſent circumſtances.

Moſ. Yes——

Sir Oliv. What is the gentleman's name?

Moſ. Mr Premium, of Crutched Friars, formerly a broker.

Sir Pet. Does he know Mr Premium?

Moſ. Not at all.

Sir Pet. A thought ſtrikes me—Suppoſe, Sir Oliver, you was to viſit him in that character; 'twill be much better than the romantic one of an old relation; you will then have an opportunity of ſeeing Charles in all his glory.

Sir Oliv. Egad, I like that idea better than the other, and then I may viſit Joſeph afterwards as old Stanley.

Rowl. Gentlemen, this is taking Charles rather unawares; but Moſes, you underſtand Sir Oliver; and I dare ſay you will be faithful.

Moſ.

Moſ. You may depend upon me.—This is very near the time I was to have gone.

Sir Oliv. I'll accompany you as ſoon as you pleaſe, Moſes—But hold—I had forgot one thing—how the plague ſhall I be able to paſs for a Jew?

Moſ. There is no need—the principal is a Chriſtian.

Sir Oliv. Is he? I am very ſorry for it—But then again, am I not too ſmartly dreſſed to look like a money lender?

Sir Pet. Not at all—it would not be out of character if you went in your own chariot: would it, Moſes?

Moſ. Not in the leaſt.

Sir Oliv. Well, but how muſt I talk? There's certainly ſome cant of uſury, or mode of treating, that I ought to know.

Sir Pet. As I take it, Sir Oliver, the great point is to be exorbitant in your demands.—Eh, Moſes?

Moſ. Yes, dat is very great point.

Sir Oliv. I'll anſwer for't I'll not be wanting in that; eight or ten per cent. on the loan at leaſt.

Moſ. Oh! if you aſk him no more as dat, you'll be diſcovered immediately.

Sir Oliv. Hey, what the plague—how much then?

Moſ. That depends upon the circumſtances—if he appears not very anxious for the ſupply, you ſhould require only forty or fifty *per cent.* but if you find him in great diſtreſs, and he wants money very bad——— you muſt aſk double.

Sir Pet. Upon my word, Sir Oliver———Mr Premium I mean—it's a very pretty trade you're learning.

Sir Oliv. Truly I think ſo; and not unprofitable.

Moſ. Then you know you have not the money yourſelf, but are forced to borrow it of a friend.

Sir Oliv. O! I borrow it for him of a friend, do I?

Moſ. Yes, and your friend's an unconſcionable dog, but you can't help dat.

Sir Oliv. Oh! my friend's an unconſcionable dog—is he?

Moſ. And then he himſelf has not the monies by him, but is forced to ſell ſtock at a great loſs.

Sir Oliv.

Sir Oliv. He's forced to ſell ſtock at a great loſs;—well, really, that's very kind of him.

Sir Pet. But hark'ye, Moſes, if Sir Oliver was to rail a little at the annuity bill, don't you think it would have a good effect?

Moſ. Very much.

Rowl. And lament that a young man muſt now come to the years of diſcretion, before he has it in his power to ruin himſelf.

Moſ. Aye! a great pity.

Sir Pet. Yes, and abuſe the public for allowing merit to a bill, whoſe only object was to preſerve youth and inexperience from the rapacious gripe of uſury, and to give the young heir an opportunity of enjoying his fortune, without being ruined by coming into poſſeſſion.

Sir Oliv. So,—ſo,—Moſes ſhall give me further inſtructions as we go together.

Sir Pet. You'll ſcarce have time to learn your trade, for Charles lives but hard by.

Sir Oliv. Oh! never fear—my tutor appears ſo able, that though Charles lived in the next ſtreet, it muſt be my own fault if I am not a compleat rogue before I have turned the corner. [*Exeunt* Sir Oliver *and* Moſes.

Sir Pet. So, Rowley, you ſhould have been partial, and given Charles notice of our plot.

Rowl. No indeed, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Well, I ſee Maria coming, I want to have ſome talk with her. [*Exit* Rowley.

Enter MARIA.

So Maria, what, is Mr Surface come home with you?

Mar. No, Sir, he was engaged.

Sir Pet. Maria, I wiſh you were more ſenſible to his excellent qualities,——does not every time you are in his company convince you of the merit of that amiable young man?

Mar. You know, Sir Peter, I have often told you, that of all the men who have paid me a particular attention,

tention, there is not one I would not ſooner prefer, than Mr Surface?

Sir Pet. Aye, aye, this blindneſs to his merit proceeds from your attachment to that profligate brother of his.

Mar. This is unkind; you know, at your requeſt, I have forborne to ſee or correſpond with him, as I have long been convinced he is unworthy my regard; but while my reaſon condemns his vices, my heart ſuggeſts ſome pity for his misfortunes.

Sir Pet. Ah! you had beſt reſolve to think of him no more, but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

Mar. Never to his brother.

Sir Pet. Have a care, Maria, I have not yet made you know what the authority of a guardian is; don't force me to exert it.

Mar. I know, that for a ſhort time I am to obey you as my father,—but muſt ceaſe to think you ſo, when you would compel me to be miſerable. [*Exit in tears.*

Sir Pet. Sure never man was plagued as I am; I had not been married above three weeks, before her father, a heal, hearty man died,—on purpoſe to plague me with his daughter; but here comes my helpmate, ſhe ſeems in mighty good humour; I wiſh I could teaze her into loving me a little.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

L. Teaz. What's the matter, Sir Peter? What have you done to Maria? It is not fair to quarrel and I not by.

Sir Pet. Ah! Lady Teazle, it is in your power to put me into a good humour at any time.

L. Teaz. Is it? I am glad of it—for I want you to be in a monſtrous good humour now; come, do be good humoured, and let me have two hundred pounds.

Sir Pet. What the plague! can't I be in a good humour without paying for it,—but look always thus, and you ſhall want for nothing. (*Pulls out a pocket-book*) There, there's two hundred pounds for you, (*going to kiſs*) now ſeal me a bond for the repayment.

L. Teaz.

L. Teaz. No, my note of hand will do as well.

[*Giving her hand.*

Sir Pet. Well, well, I muſt be ſatisfied with that,—you ſhan't much longer reproach me for not having made you a proper ſettlement—I intend ſhortly to ſurpriſe you.

L. Teaz. Do you? You can't think, Sir Peter, how good humour becomes you; now you look juſt as you did before I married you.

Sir Pet. Do I indeed?

L. Teaz. Don't you remember when you uſed to walk with me under the elms, and tell me ſtories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and aſked me if I could like an old fellow, who could deny me nothing.

Sir Pet. Aye, and you were ſo attentive and obliging to me then.

L. Teaz. Aye, to be ſure I was, and uſed to take your part againſt all my acquaintance; and when my couſin Sophy uſed to laugh at me, for thinking of marrying a man old enough to be my father, and call you an ugly, ſtiff, formal bachelor, I contradicted her, and ſaid I did not think you ſo ugly by any means, and that I dar'd ſay you would make a good ſort of a huſband.

Sir Pet. That was very kind of you—Well, and you were not miſtaken, you have found it ſo, have not you?—But ſhall we always live thus happy?

L. Teaz. With all my heart;—I'm—I don't care how ſoon we leave off quarrelling—provided you will own you are tired firſt.

Sir Pet. With all my heart.

L. Teaz. Then we ſhall be happy as the day is long, and never, never—quarrel more.

Sir Pet. Never—never—never—and let our future conteſt be, who ſhall be moſt obliging.

L. Teaz. Aye!——

Sir Pet. But, my dear Lady Teazle—my love—indeed you muſt keep a ſtrict watch over your temper—for you know, my dear, that in all our diſputes and quarrels, you always begin firſt.

L. Teaz.

L. Teaz. No, no, Sir Peter, my dear, 'tis always you that begins.

Sir Pet. No, no—no ſuch thing.

L. Teaz. Have a care, this is not the way to live happy, if you fly out thus.

Sir Pet. No, no——'tis you.

L. Teaz. No——'tis you.

Sir Pet. Zounds! I ſay 'tis you.

L. Teaz. Lord! I never ſaw ſuch a man in my life, juſt what my couſin Sophy told me.

Sir Pet. Your couſin Sophy is a forward, ſaucy, impertinent minx.

L. Teaz. You are a very great bear, I am ſure, to abuſe my relations.

Sir Pet. But I am very well ſerved for marrying you, a pert, forward, rural coquette, who had refuſed half the honeſt 'ſquires in the country.

L. Teaz. I am ſure I was a great fool for marrying you—a ſtiff, crop, dangling old bachelor, who was unmarried at fifty, becauſe nobody would have you.

Sir Pet. You was very glad to have me—you never had ſuch an offer before.

L. Teaz. Oh, yes I had—there was Sir Tivy Terrier, who every body ſaid would be a better match; for his eſtate was full as good as yours, and—he has broke his neck ſince.

Sir Pet. Very—very well, madam—you're an ungrateful woman; and may plagues light on me, if I ever try to be friends with you again—You ſhall have a ſeparate maintenance.

L. Teaz. By all means a ſeparate maintenance.

Sir Pet. Very well, madam—Oh, very well. Aye, madam, and I believe the ſtories of you and Charles—of you and Charles, madam,——were not without foundation.

L. Teaz. Take care, Sir Peter; take care what you ſay, for I won't be ſuſpected without a cauſe, I promiſe you.

Sir Pet. A divorce.——

L. Teaz. Aye, a divorce.

Sir Pet.

Sir Pet. Aye, zounds! I'll make an example of myſelf for the benefit of all old bachelors.

L. Teaz. Well, Sir Peter, I ſee you are going to be in a paſſion, ſo I'll leave you, and when you come properly to your temper, we ſhall be the happieſt couple in the world; and never—never—quarrel more. Ha, ha, ha. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. What the devil! can't I make her angry neither—I'll after her—Zounds—ſhe muſt not preſume to keep her temper.———No, no—ſhe may break my heart—but damn it—I'm determined ſhe ſhan't keep her temper. (*Exit.*

SCENE, CHARLES's Houſe.

Enter TRIP, *Sir* OLIVER *and* MOSES.

Trip. This way, gentlemen, this way—Moſes, what's the gentleman's name?

Sir Oliv. Mr Moſes, what's my name? (*Aſide.*

Moſ. Mr Premium———

Trip. Oh, Mr Premium,—very well. (*Exit.*

Sir Oliv. To judge by the ſervant, one would not imagine the maſter was ruined—Sure this was my brother's houſe.

Moſ. Yes, ſir,—Mr Charles bought it of Mr Joſeph, with furniture, pictures, &c. juſt as the old gentleman left it.—Sir Peter thought it a great piece of extravagance in him.

Sir Oliv. In my mind the other's œconomy in ſelling it to him, was more reprehenſible by half.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. Gentlemen, my maſter is very ſorry he has company at preſent, and cannot ſee you.

Sir Oliv. If he knew who it was that wanted to ſee him, perhaps he would not have ſent ſuch a meſſage.

Trip. Oh! Yes, I told who it was—I did not forget my little Premium, no, no.

Sir Oliv. Very well, ſir; and pray what may your name be?

Trip. Trip, ſir; Trip, at your ſervice.

Sir Oliv. Very well, Mr Trip———You have a pleaſant ſort of a place here, I gueſs.

Trip. Pretty well———There are four of us, who paſs our time agreeably enough—Our wages, indeed, are but ſmall, and ſometimes a little in arrear—We have but fifty guineas a-year, and find our own bags and bouquets.

Sir Oliv. Bags and bouquets!—Halters and baſtinadoes!

Trip. Oh Moſes, hark'ye, did you get that little bill diſcounted for me?

Sir Oliv. Wants to raiſe money too!—Mercy on me!—He has diſtreſſes, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns. *(Aſide.*

Moſ. 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr Trip. *(Gives the note.*

Trip. No! Why I thought when my friend Bruſh had ſet his mark upon it, it was as good as caſh.

Moſ. No, indeed, it would not do.

Trip. Perhaps you could get it done by way of annuity.

Sir Oliv. An annuity!—A footman raiſe money by annuity!—Well ſaid luxury, egad. *(Aſide.*

Moſ. Well, but you muſt inſure your place.

Trip. Oh! I'll inſure my life, if you pleaſe.

Sir Oliv. That's more than I would your neck. *(Aſide.*

Trip. Well, but I ſhould like to have it done before this damn'd regiſter takes place; one would not wiſh to have one's name made public.

Moſ. No certainly—But is there nothing you could depoſit?

Trip. Why, there's none of my maſter's cloaths will fall very ſoon, I believe; but I can give a mortgage on ſome of his winter ſuits, with equity of redemption before Chriſtmas—or a *poſt obit* on his blue and ſilver. Now theſe, with a few pair of point ruffles, by way of ſecurity, *(bell rings)* coming, coming. Gentlemen, if you'll walk this way, perhaps I may introduce you now.

—Moſes,

—Moſes, don't forget the annuity—I'll inſure my place, my little fellow.

Sir Oliv. If the man is the ſhadow of the maſter, this is the temple of diſſipation indeed. *(Exeunt omnes.*

CHARLES, CARELESS, *Sir* TOBY, *and Gentlemen, diſcovered drinking.*

Char. Ha, ha, ha.——'Fore heaven you are in the right—the degeneracy of the age is aſtoniſhing; there are many of our acquaintance who are men of wit, genius and ſpirit, but then they won't drink.

Care. True, Charles; they ſink into the more ſubſtantial luxuries of the table, and quite neglect the bottle.

Char. Right—beſides, ſociety ſuffers by it; for inſtead of the mirth and humour that uſed to mantle over a bottle of Burgundy, the converſation is as inſipid as the Spa water they drink, which has all the tartneſs of Champagne, without its ſpirit or flavour.

Sir Toby. But what will you ſay to thoſe who prefer play to the bottle?—There's Harry, Dick and Careleſs himſelf, who are under a hazard regimen.

Char. Pſha! no ſuch thing—What! would you train a horſe for the courſe by keeping from corn? Let me throw upon a bottle of Burgundy, and I never loſe; at leaſt I never feel my loſs, and that's the ſame thing.

1ſt. Gent. True; beſides, 'tis wine determines if a man be really in love.

Char. So it is—Fill up a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and ſhe that floats at the top is the girl that has bewitched you.

Care. But come, Charles, you have not given us your real favourite.

Char. Faith I have withheld her only in compaſſion to you, for if I give her, you muſt toaſt a round of her peers, which is impoſſible (*Sighs*) on earth.

Care. We'll toaſt ſome heathen deity, or celeſtial goddeſs, to match her.

Char. Why then bumpers—bumpers all round—Here's Maria——Maria—(*Sighs.*)

1ſt. Gent. Maria——'pſha, give us her ſirname.

Char. 'Pſha——Hang her ſirname, that's too formal to be regiſtered in love's kalendar.

1ſt. Gent. Maria then—Here's Maria.

Sir Toby. Maria——Come, here's Maria.

Char. Come, Sir Toby, have a care; you muſt give a beauty ſuperlative.

Sir Toby. Then I'll give you——Here's————

Care. Nay, never heſitate.—But Sir Toby has got a ſong that will excuſe him.

Omnes. The ſong—the ſong.

SONG.

Here's to the maiden of bluſhing fifteen,
Now to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting, extravagant quean,
And then to the houſewife that's thrifty.
Let the toaſt paſs, drink to the laſs,
I warrant ſhe'll find an excuſe for the glaſs.

Here's to the charmer whoſe dimples we prize,
Now to the damſel with none, Sir;
Here's to the maid with a pair of blue eyes,
And now to the nymph with but one, Sir.
Let the toaſt paſs, &c.

Here's to the maid with her boſom of ſnow,
Now to her that's as brown as a berry;
Here's to the wife with her face full of woe,
And now to the damſel that's merry.
Let the toaſt paſs, &c.

For let them be clumſy, or let them be ſlim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill us a bumper quite up to the brim,
And e'en let us toaſt them together.
Let the toaſt paſs, &c.

TRIP *enters and whiſpers* CHARLES.

Char. Gentlemen, I muſt beg your pardon; [*riſing*] I muſt leave you upon buſineſs—Careleſs, take the chair.

Care. What, this is ſome wench, but we won't loſe you for her.

Char. No, upon my honour—It is only a Jew and a broker come by appointment.

Care. A Jew and a broker! we'll have 'em in.

Char. Then deſire Mr Moſes to walk in.

Trip. And little Premium too, Sir.

Care. Aye, Moſes and Premium. (*Exit* Trip) Charles, we'll give the raſcals ſome generous Burgundy.

Char. No, hang it—wine but draws forth the natural qualities of a man's heart, and to make them drink, would only be to whet their knavery.

Enter SIR OLIVER *and* MOSES.

Walk in, gentlemen, walk in; Trip, give chairs; ſit down, Mr Premium, ſit down, Moſes. Glaſſes, Trip; come, Moſes, I'll give you a ſentiment. "*Here's ſucceſs to uſury.*" Moſes, fill the gentleman a bumper.

Moſ. "Here's ſucceſs to uſury."

Care. True, Charles, uſury is induſtry, and deſerves to ſucceed.

Sir Oliv. Then here's "All the ſucceſs it deſerves."

Care. Oh, dam'me, Sir, that won't do; you demur to the toaſt, and ſhall drink it in a pint bumper at leaſt.

Moſ. Oh, pray, Sir, conſider Mr Premium is a gentleman.

Care. And therefore loves good wine, and I'll ſee juſtice done to the bottle.—Fill, Moſes, a quart.

Char. Pray, conſider, gentlemen, Mr Premium is a ſtranger.

Sir Oliv. I wiſh I was out of their company. [*Aſide.*

Care. Come along my boys; if they won't drink with us, we'll not ſtay with them; the dice are in the next room—You'll ſettle your buſineſs, Charles, and come to us.

Char. Aye, aye—But, Careleſs, you muſt be ready—perhaps I may have occaſion for you.

Care. Aye, aye, bill, bond, or annuity, 'tis all the ſame to me, [*Exit with the reſt.*

Moſ. Mr Premium is a gentleman of the ſtricteſt honour and ſecrecy, and always performs what he undertakes——Mr Premium, this is——(*formally.*)

Char. 'Pſha! hold your tongue—My friend, Moſes, Sir, is a very honeſt fellow, but a little ſlow at expreſſion—I ſhall cut the matter very ſhort;——I'm an extravagant young fellow that wants to borrow money; and you, as I take it, are a prudent old fellow who has got money to lend—I am ſuch a fool as to give fifty per cent. rather than go without it; and you, I ſuppoſe, are rogue enough to take an hundred if you can get it. And now we underſtand one another, and may proceed to buſineſs without further ceremony.

Sir Oliv. Exceeding frank, upon my word—I ſee you are not a man of compliments.

Char. No, Sir.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I like you the better for it——However, you are miſtaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure you ſome from a friend; but then he's a damn'd unconſcionable dog; is he not, Moſes?

Moſ. But you can't help that.

Sir Oliv. And then, he has not the money by him, but muſt ſell ſtock at a great loſs. Muſt he not Moſes?

Moſ. Yes, indeed—You know I always ſpeak the truth, and ſcorn to tell a lye.

Char. Aye, thoſe who ſpeak truth uſually do—And Sir, I muſt pay the difference, I ſuppoſe—Why look'ye, Mr Premium, I know that money is not to be had without paying for it.

Sir Oliv. Well—but what ſecurity could you give?——You have not any land I ſuppoſe?

Char. Not a mole-hill, not a twig, but what grows in bow-pots out at the windows.

Sir Oliv. Nor any ſtock, I preſume.

Char. None but live ſtock, and they're only a few pointers and ponies.—But pray, Sir, are you acquainted with any of my connections?

Sir Oliv. To ſay the truth, I am.

Char.

Char. Then you muſt have heard that I have a rich old uncle in India, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greateſt expectations.

Sir Oliv. That you have a wealthy uncle I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

Char. Oh yes, I'm told I am a monſtrous favourite; and that he intends leaving me every thing.

Sir Oliv. Indeed! this is the firſt time I heard of it.

Char. Yes, yes, he intends making me his heir—— Does he not, Moſes?

Moſ. Oh yes, I'll take my oath of that.

Sir Oliv. Egad, they'll perſuade me preſently that I'm at Bengal. (*Aſide.*)

Char. Now, what I propoſe, Mr Premium, is to give you a *poſt obit* on my uncle's life. Though, indeed, my uncle Noll has been very kind to me, and upon my ſoul, I ſhall be ſincerely ſorry to hear any thing has happened him.

Sir Oliv. Not more than I ſhould I aſſure you. But the bond you mention happens to be the worſt ſecurity you could offer me, for I might live to an hundred, and never recover the principal.

Char. Oh, yes you would, for the moment he dies, you come upon me for the money.

Sir Oliv. Then I believe I would be the moſt unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

Char. What, you are afraid, my little Premium, that my uncle is too good a life.

Sir Oliv. No, indeed, I am not; tho' I have heard he's as heal, and as hearty, as any man of his years in Chriſtendom.

Char. Oh, there you are miſinformed. No—no, poor uncle Oliver! he breaks apace. The climate, ſir, has hurt his conſtitution, and I'm told he's ſo much altered of late, that his neareſt relations don't know him.

Sir Oliv. No! ha, ha, ha; ſo much altered of late, that his neareſt relations would not know him. Ha, ha, ha, that's droll egad.

Char. What, you are pleaſed to hear he is on the decline, my little Premium.

Sir Oliv.

Sir Oliv. No, I am not,—no, no, no.

Char. Yes you are, for it mends your chance.

Sir Oliv. But I am told Sir Oliver is coming over —Nay, ſome ſay he is actually arrived.

Char. Oh, there you are miſinformed again—No—no ſuch thing—he is this moment at Bengal. What! I muſt certainly know better than you.

Sir Oliv. Very true, as you ſay, you muſt know better than I; though I have it from very good authority —Have I not Moſes?

Moſ. Moſt undoubtedly.

Sir Oliv. But, Sir, as I underſtand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing that you would diſpoſe of.

Char. How do you mean?

Sir Oliv. For inſtance, now; I have heard your father left behind him a great quantity of maſſy old plate.

Char. Yes, but that's gone long ago—Moſes can inform you how, better than I can.

Sir Oliv. Good lack! all the family race cups, and corporation bowls gone! (*Aſide*) It was alſo ſuppoſed that his library was one of the moſt valuable and compleat.

Char. Much too large and valuable for a private gentleman: for my part, I was always of a communicative diſpoſition, and thought it a pity to keep ſo much knowledge to myſelf.

Sir Oliv. Mercy on me! knowledge that has run in the family like an heir-loom. (*Aſide*) And pray, how may they have been diſpoſed of?

Char. Oh! You muſt aſk the auctioneer that—I don't believe even Moſes can direct you there.

Moſ. No—I never meddle with books.

Sir Oliv. The profligate! (*Aſide*) And is there nothing you can diſpoſe of?

Char. Nothing ——unleſs you have a taſte for old family pictures. I have a whole room full of anceſtors above ſtairs.

Sir Oliv. Why ſure you would not ſell your relations?

Char.

Char. Every ſoul of them to the beſt bidder.

Sir Oliv. Not your great uncles and aunts.

Char. Aye, and my grandfathers and grandmothers.

Sir Oliv. I'll never forgive him this. (*Aſide.*) Why! ——what! ——Do you take me for Shylock in the play, to raiſe money from me on your own fleſh and bood!

Char. Nay, don't be in a paſſion, my little Premium; what is it to you, if you have your money's worth?

Sir Oliv. That's very true as you ſay——Well, well, I believe I can diſpoſe of the family canvas. I'll never forgive him this. (*Aſide.*)

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Come, Charles, what the devil are you doing ſo long with the broker?——we are waiting for you.

Char. Oh! Careleſs, you are juſt come in time, we are to have a ſale above ſtairs——I am going to ſell all my anceſtors to little Premium.

Care. Burn your anceſtors!

Char. No, no, he may do that afterwards if he will. But, Careleſs, you ſhall be auctioneer.

Care. With all my heart—I can handle a hammer as well as a dice box—a-going—a-going.

Char. Bravo!—And Moſes, you ſhall be appraiſer, if we want one.

Moſ. Yes, I'll be the appraiſer.

Sir Oliv. Oh the profligate! (*Aſide.*

Char. But what's the matter, my little Premium? You don't ſeem to reliſh this buſineſs.

Sir Oliv. (*Affecting to laugh*) Oh yes, I do, vaſtly; ha, ha, ha, I——Oh the prodigal! (*Aſide.*

Char. Very true; for when a man wants money, who the devil can he make free with if he can't with his own relations. (*Exit.*

Sir Oliv. (*Following*) I'll never forgive him.

ACT IV.

Enter CHARLES, SIR OLIVER, CARELESS, *and* MOSES.

CHARLES.

WALK in, gentlemen, walk in; here they are —the family of the Surfaces up to the conqueſt.

Sir Oliv. And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Char. Aye, there they are, done in the true ſpirit and ſtile of portrait painting, and not like your modern Raphaels, who will make your picture independent of yourſelf;—no, the great meritof theſe are, the inveterate likeneſs they bear to the originals. All ſtiff and aukward as they were, and like nothing in human nature beſides.

Sir Oliv. Oh, we ſhall never ſee ſuch figures of men again.

Char. I hope not——You ſee, Mr Premium, what a domeſtic man I am; here I ſit of an evening ſurrounded by my anceſtors—— But come, let us proceed to buſineſs—To your pulpit, Mr Auctioneer——Oh, here's a great chair of my father's, that ſeems fit for nothing elſe.

Care. The very thing—but what ſhall I do for a hammer, Charles? An auctioneer is nothing without a hammer.

Char. A hammer! [*looking round*] Let's ſee, what have we here—Sir Richard, heir to Robert—a genealogy in full, egad——Here, Careleſs, you ſhall have no common bit of mahogany; here's the family tree, and now you may knock down my anceſtors with their own pedigree.

Sir Oliv. What an unnatural rogue he is!——An expert de facto parricide. [*Aſide.*]

Care. 'Gad, Charles, this is lucky; it will not only ſerve for a hammer, but a catalogue too if we ſhould want it.

Char.

Char. True—Come, here's my great uncle Sir Richard Ravelin, a marvellous good general in his day—He ſerved in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet——He is not dreſſed out in feathers like our modern captains, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general ſhould be.—What ſay you, Mr Premium?

Moſ. Mr Premium would have you ſpeak.

Char. Why, you ſhall have him for ten pounds, and I'm ſure that's cheap enough for a ſtaff officer.

Sir Oliv. Heaven deliver me! his great uncle Sir Richard going for ten pounds—[*Aſide*]—Well, Sir, I take him at that price.

Char. Careleſs, knock down my uncle Sir Richard.

Care. Going, going——a-going——gone.

Char. This is a maiden ſiſter of his, my great aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, thought to be one of his beſt pictures, and eſteemed a very formidable likeneſs. There ſhe ſits, as a ſhepherdeſs feeding her flock. You ſhall have her for five pounds ten. I'm ſure the ſheep are worth the money.

Sir Oliv. Ah, poor aunt Deborah! a woman that ſet ſuch a value on herſelf, going for five pounds ten. [*Aſide*]—Well, Sir, ſhe's mine.

Char. Knock down my aunt Deborah, Careleſs.

Care. Gone.

Char. Here are two couſins of theirs—Moſes, theſe pictures were done when beaux wore periwigs, and ladies their own hair.

Sir Oliv. Yes, truly—head dreſſes ſeem to have been ſomewhat lower in thoſe days.

Char. Here's a grandfather of my mother's, a judge well known on the weſtern circuit. What will you give for him?

Moſ. Four guineas.

Char. Four guineas! why you don't bid the price of his wig. Premium, you have more reſpect for the wool ſack; do let me knock him down at fifteen.

Sir Oliv. By all means.

Care.

Care. Gone.

Char. Here are two brothers, William and Walter Blunt, Eſqrs, both members of parliament, and great ſpeakers; and what's very extraordinary, I believe this is the firſt time they were ever bought or ſold.

Sir Oliv. That's very extraordinary indeed!—I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of parliament.

Char. Well ſaid, Premium.

Care. I'll knock them down at forty pounds.—Going—going—gone.

Char. Here's a jolly, portly fellow; I don't know what relation he is to the family; but he was formerly mayor of Norwich, let's knock him down at eight pounds.

Sir Oliv. No, I think ſix is enough for a mayor.

Char. Come, come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen into the bargain.

Sir Oliv. They are mine.

Char. Careleſs, knock down the mayor and aldermen.

Care. Gone.

Char. But hang it, we ſhall be all day at this rate; come, come, give me three hundred pounds, and take all on this ſide the room in a lump——That will be the beſt way.

Sir Oliv. Well well, any thing to accommodate you; they are mine—But there's one portrait you have always paſſed over.

Care. What, that little ill-looking fellow over the ſettee.

Sir Oliv. Yes, Sir, 'tis that I mean—but I don't think him ſo ill-looking a fellow by any means.

Char. That's the picture of my uncle Sir Oliver—Before he went abroad it was done, and is eſteemed a very great likeneſs.

Care. That your uncle Oliver! Then in my opinion you never will be friends, for he is one of the moſt ſtern looking rogues I ever beheld; he has an unforgiving eye, and a damn'd diſinheriting countenance. Don't you think ſo, little Premium?

Sir Oliv.

Sir Oliv. Upon my ſoul I do not, Sir; I think it as honeſt a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. —But, I ſuppoſe, your uncle Oliver goes with the reſt of the lumber.

Char. No, hang it, the old gentleman has been very good to me, and I'll keep his picture as long as I have a room to put it in.

Sir Oliv. The rogue's my nephew after all—I forgive him every thing. [*Aſide.*] But Sir, I have ſome how taken a fancy to that picture.

Char. I am ſorry for it, maſter Broker, for you certainly won't have it.——What the devil! have you not got enough of the family?

Sir Oliv. I forgive him every thing. [*Aſide*] Look'ye, Sir, I am a ſtrange ſort of a fellow, and when I take a whim in my head, I don't value money; I'll give you as much for that as for all the reſt.

Char. Pr'ythee don't be troubleſome——I tell you I won't part with it, and there's an end on't.

Sir Oliv. How like his father the dog is!—I did not perceive it before, but I think I never ſaw ſo ſtrong a reſemblance. [*Aſide.*] Well, Sir, here's a draft for your ſum. [*Giving a bill.*]

Char. Why this bill is for eight hundred pounds.

Sir Oliv. You'll not let Sir Oliver go, then.

Char. No, I tell you once for all.

Sir Oliv. Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that ſome other time—But give me your hand; [*preſſes it*] you are a damn'd honeſt fellow, Charles—O lord! I beg pardon, Sir, for being ſo free——Come along, Moſes.

Char. But hark'ye, Premium, you'll provide good lodgings for theſe gentlemen. [*Going.*]

Sir Oliv. I'll ſend for 'em in a day or two.

Char. And pray let it be a genteel conveyance, for I aſſure you moſt of 'em have been uſed to ride in their own carriages.

Sir Oliv. I will for all but Oliver.

Char. For all but the honeſt little Nabob.

Sir Oliv. You are fixed on that.

Char. Peremptorily.

Sir Oliv. Ah the dear extravagant dog! [*Aſide*] Good day, Sir. Come, Moſes.—Now let me ſee who dares call him profligate? [*Exit with* Moſes.

Care. Why, Charles, this is the very prince of brokers.

Char. I wonder where Moſes got acquainted with ſo honeſt a fellow.—But, Careleſs, ſtep into the company; I'll wait on you preſently, I ſee old Rowley coming.

Care. But hark'ye, Charles, don't let that fellow make you part with any of that money to diſcharge muſty old debts. Tradeſmen, you know, are the moſt impertinent people in the world.

Char. True, and paying them would be encouraging them.

Care. Well, ſettle your buſineſs, and make what haſte you can. [*Exit.*

Char. Eight hundred pounds! Two thirds of this are mine by right—Five hundred and thirty odd pounds!—Gad, I never knew till now, that my anceſtors were ſuch valuable acquaintance.—Kind ladies and gentlemen, I am your very much obliged, and moſt grateful humble ſervant. [*Bowing to the pictures.*]

Enter Rowley.

Ah! Rowley, you are juſt come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Rowl. Yes, Sir; I heard they were going.—But how can you ſupport ſuch ſpirits under all your misfortunes?

Char. That's the cauſe, Mr Rowley; my misfortunes are ſo many, that I cant't afford to part with my ſpirits.

Rowl. And can you really take leave of your anceſtors with ſo much unconcern?

Char. Unconcern! what, I ſuppoſe you are ſurpriſed that I am not more ſorrowful at loſing the company of ſo many worthy friends. It is very diſtreſſing to be ſure; but you ſee they never move a muſcle, then why the devil ſhould I!

Rowl. Ah, dear Charles!

Char.

Char. But come, I have no time for trifling;—here, take this bill and get it changed, and carry an hundred pounds to poor Stanley, or we ſhall have ſomebody call that has a better right to it.

Rowl. Ah, Sir, I wiſh you would remember the proverb———

Char. Be juſt before you are generous.—Why, ſo I would if I could, but juſtice is an old lame, hobbling beldam, and I can't get her to keep pace with generoſity for the ſoul of me.

Rowl. Do, dear Sir, reflect.

Char. That's very true, as you ſay—but Rowley, while I have, by heavens I'll give—ſo damn your morality, and away to old Stanley with the money. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SIR OLIVER *and* MOSES.

Moſ. Well, Sir, I think, as Sir Peter ſaid, you have ſeen Mr Charles in all his glory—'tis a great pity he's ſo extravagant.

Sir Oliv. True,—but he would not ſell my picture.

Moſ. And loves wine and women ſo much.

Sir Oliv. But he would not ſell my picture.———

Moſ. And games ſo deep.

Sir Oliv. But he would not ſell my picture.———Oh, here comes Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY.

Rowl. Well, Sir, I find you have made a purchaſe.

Sir Oliv. Yes, our young rake has parted with his anceſtors like old tapeſtry.

Rowl. And he has commiſſioned me to return you an hundred pounds of the purchaſe money, but under your fictitious character of old Stanley. I ſaw a taylor and two hoſiers dancing attendance, who, I know, will go unpaid, and the hundred pounds would ſatisfy them.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, I'll pay his debts and his benevolence too.—But now, I'm no more a broker, and you ſhall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. Gentlemen, I'm ſorry I was not in the way to ſhew you out. Hark'ye Moſes. [*Exit with* Moſes.

Sir Oliv. There's a fellow, now—Will you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raiſe money before he got to his maſter.

Rowl. Indeed!

Sir Oliv. And they are now planning an annuity buſineſs—Oh! maſter Rowley, in my time ſervants were content with the follies of their maſters, when they were wore a little threadbare; but now they have their vices, like their birth-day clothes, with the gloſs on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *the Apartments of* JOSEPH SURFACE.

Enter JOSEPH *and a* SERVANT.

Joſ. No letters from Lady Teazle.

Serv. No, Sir.

Joſ. I wonder ſhe did not write if ſhe could not come—I hope Sir Peter does not ſuſpect—But Charles's diſſipation and extravagance are great points in my favour. (*Knocking at the door*) See if it is her.

Serv. 'Tis Lady Teazle, Sir; but ſhe always orders her chair to the milliner's in the next ſtreet.

Joſ. Then draw that ſcreen—my oppoſite neighbour is a maiden lady of ſo curious a temper—You need not wait. (*Exit Servant*)—My Lady Teazle, I'm afraid, begins to ſuſpect my attachment to Maria; but ſhe muſt not be acquainted with that ſecret till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

L. Teaz. What, Sentiment in Soliloquy!——Have you been very impatient now? Nay, you look ſo grave, ——I aſſure you I came as ſoon as I could.

Joſ. Oh, madam, punctuality is a ſpecies of conſtancy——a very unfaſhionable cuſtom among ladies.

L. Teaz. Nay, you wrong me; I'm ſure you'd pity me if you knew my ſituation—[*both ſit.*]—Sir Peter

really

really grows ſo peeviſh, and ſo ill-natured, there's no enduring him; and then to ſuſpect me with Charles—

Joſ. I'm glad my ſcandalous friends keep up that report.

L. Teaz. For my part, I wiſh Sir Peter to let Maria marry him—Woul'dn't you, Mr Surface?

Joſ. Indeed I would not—[*Aſide*]—Oh, to be ſure; and then my dear Lady Teazle would be convinced how groundleſs her ſuſpicions were, of my having any thoughts of the ſilly girl.

L. Teaz. Then, there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has propagated malicious ſtories about me—and what's very provoking, all without the leaſt foundation.

Joſ. Ah! there's the miſchief——for when a ſcandalous ſtory is believed againſt one, there's no comfort like the conſciouſneſs of having deſerved it.

L. Teaz. And to be continually cenſured and ſuſpected, when I know the integrity of my own heart—it would almoſt prompt me to give him ſome grounds for it.

Joſ. Certainly——for when a huſband grows ſuſpicious, and withdraws his confidence from his wife, it then becomes a part of her duty to endeavour to outwit him.—You owe it to the natural privilege of your ſex.

L. Teaz. Indeed!

Joſ. Oh yes; for your huſband ſhould never be deceived in you, and you ought to be frail in compliment to his diſcernment.

L. Teaz. This is the neweſt doctrine.

Joſ. Very wholeſome, believe me.

L. Teaz. So, the only way to prevent his ſuſpicions, is to give him cauſe for them.

L. Teaz. But then the conſciouſneſs of my innocence——

Joſ. Ah, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis that conſciouſneſs of your innocence that ruins you. What is it that makes you imprudent in your conduct, and careleſs of the cenſures of the world? The conſciouſneſs of your innocence.—What is it that makes you regardleſs of forms, and inattentive to your huſband's peace?

—Why, the conſciouſneſs of your innocence.—Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you could only be prevailed upon to make a trifling *faux-pas*, you can't imagine how circumſpect you would grow.

L. Teaz. Do you think ſo?

Joſ. Depend upon it.—Your caſe at preſent, my dear Lady Teazle, reſembles that of a perſon in a plethora—you are abſolutely dying of too much health.

L. Teaz. Why, indeed, if my underſtanding could be convinced———

Joſ. Your underſtanding!—Oh yes, your underſtanding *ſhould* be convinced. Heaven forbid that I ſhould perſuade you to any thing that you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honour for that.

L. Teaz. Don't you think you may as well leave honour out of the queſtion? [*both riſe.*]

Joſ. Ah! I ſee, Lady Teazle, the effects of your country education ſtill remain.

L. Teaz. They do, indeed, and I begin to find myſelf imprudent; and if I ſhould be brought to act wrong, it would be ſooner from Sir Peter's ill treatment of me, than from your honourable logic, I aſſure you.

Joſ. Then, by this hand, which is unworthy of—[*Kneeling, a ſervant enters.*]—What do you want, you ſcoundrel?

Serv. I beg pardon, Sir,——I thought you would not chuſe Sir Peter ſhould come up.

Joſ. Sir Peter!

L. Teaz. Sir Peter! Oh, I'm undone!—What ſhall I do? Hide me ſomewhere, good Mr Logic.

Joſ. Here, here, behind this ſcreen, (*She runs behind the ſcreen*) and now reach me a book. [*Sits down and reads.*

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. Aye, there he is, ever improving himſelf.—Mr Surface, Mr Surface.

Joſ. [*Affecting to gape.*] Oh, Sir Peter! I rejoice to ſee you—I was got over a ſleepy book here—I am vaſtly glad to ſee you—I thank you for this call—I believe

believe you have not been here ſince I finiſhed my library.—Books, books, you know, are the only thing I am a coxcomb in.

Sir Pet. Very pretty, indeed—why, even your ſcreen is a ſource of knowledge—hung round with maps I ſee.

Joſ. Yes, I find great uſe in that ſcreen.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, ſo you muſt when you want to find any thing in a hurry.

Joſ. Yes, or to hide any thing in a hurry. [*Aſide.*]

Sir Pet. But, my dear friend, I want to have ſome private talk with you.

Joſ. You need not wait. [*Exit Serv.*

Sir Pet. Pray ſit down—(*both ſit*)—My dear friend, I want to impart to you ſome of my diſtreſſes—In ſhort, Lady Teazle's behaviour of late has given me very great uneaſineſs. She not only diſſipates and deſtroys my fortune, but I have ſtrong reaſons to believe ſhe has formed an attachment elſewhere.

Joſ. I am unhappy to hear it.

Sir Pet. I knew you would ſympathize with me.

Joſ. Believe me, Sir Peter, ſuch a diſcovery would affect me—juſt as much as it does you.

Sir Pet. What a happineſs to have a friend we can truſt, even with our family ſecrets!—Can't you gueſs who it is?

Joſ. I hav'n't the moſt diſtant idea.—It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite.

Sir Pet. No, no—What do you think of Charles?

Joſ. My brother! impoſſible! I can't think he would be capable of ſuch baſeneſs and ingratitude.

Sir Pet. Ah, the goodneſs of your own mind makes you ſlow to believe ſuch villainy.

Joſ. Very true, Sir Peter.—The man who is conſcious of the integrity of his own heart, is ever ſlow to credit another's baſeneſs.

Sir Pet. And yet, that the ſon of my old friend ſhould practiſe againſt the honour of my family.

Joſ. Aye, there's the caſe, Sir Peter.—When ingratitude beards the dart of injury, the wound feels doubly ſmart.

Sir Pet.

Sir Pet. What noble ſentiments!—He never uſed a ſentiment, ungrateful boy! that I have acted as guardian to, and who was brought up under my eye; and I never in my life refuſed him—my advice.

Joſ. I don't know, Sir Peter—he may be ſuch a man—if it be ſo, he is no longer a brother of mine; I renounce him.—For the man who can break through the laws of hoſpitality, and ſeduce the wife or daughter of his friend, deſerves to be branded as a peſt to ſociety.

Sir Pet. And yet, Joſeph, if I was to make it public, I ſhould only be ſneered and laughed at.

Joſ. Why, that is very true—No, no, you muſt not make it public; people would talk——

Sir Pet. Talk!—they'd ſay it was all my own fault; an old doating bachelor to marry a young giddy girl. They'd paragraph me in the news-papers, and make ballads on me.

Joſ. And yet, Sir Peter, I can't think that my Lady Teazle's honour——

Sir Pet. Ah, my dear friend, what's her honour oppoſed againſt the flattery of a handſome young fellow? —But Joſeph, ſhe has been upbraiding me of late, that I have not made her a ſettlement; and I think, in our laſt quarrel, ſhe told ſhe would not be ſorry if I was dead. Now, I have brought draughts of two deeds for your peruſal, and ſhe ſhall find, if I was to die, that I have not been inattentive to her welfare while living. By the one ſhe will enjoy eight hundred pounds a-year during my life; and by the other, the bulk of my fortune after my death.

Joſ. This conduct is truly generous.—I wiſh it may'nt corrupt my pupil. (*Aſide.*

Sir Pet. But I would not have her as yet acquainted with the leaſt mark of my affection.

Joſ. Not I—if I could help it. [*Aſide.*

Sir Pet. And now I have unburthened myſelf to you, let us talk over your affair with Maria.

Joſ. Not a ſyllable upon the ſubject now. (*Alarmed*)——Some other time; I am too much affected by

by your affairs, to think of my own. For the man who can think of his own happineſs, while his friend is in diſtreſs, deſerves to be hunted as a monſter out of ſociety.

Sir Pet. I am ſure of your affection for her.

Joſ. Let me intreat you, Sir Peter—

Sir Pet. And though you are ſo averſe to Lady Teazle's knowing it, I aſſure you ſhe is not your enemy, and I am ſenſibly chagrined you have made no further progreſs.

Joſ. Sir Peter, I muſt not hear you—The man who—(*Enter a Servant*) What do you want, ſirrah?

Serv. Your brother, Sir, is at the door talking to a gentleman; he ſays he knows you are at home, that Sir Peter is with you, and he muſt ſee you.

Joſ. I am not at home.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, you ſhall be at home.

Joſ. (*After ſome heſitation*) Very well, let him come up.

Sir Pet. Now, Joſeph, I'll hide myſelf, and do you tax him about the affair with my Lady Teazle, and ſo draw the ſecret from him.

Joſ. O fye, Sir Peter—what, join in a plot to trepan my brother!

Sir Pet. Oh aye, to ſerve your friend;—beſides, if he is innocent, as you ſay he is, it will give him an opportunity to clear himſelf, and make me very happy. Hark, I hear him coming——where ſhall I go?—behind this ſcreen—What the devil! here has been one liſtener already, for I'll ſwear I ſaw a petticoat.

Joſ. [*Affecting to laugh*] It's very ridiculous—Ha, ha, ha,—a ridiculous affair, indeed—ha, ha, ha—Hark'ye, Sir Peter, [*pulling him aſide*] though I hold a man of intrigue to be a moſt deſpicable character, yet you know it does not follow, that one is to be an abſolute Joſeph either. Hark'ye, 'tis a little French milliner, that calls upon me ſometimes, and hearing you were coming, and having ſome character to loſe, ſhe ſlipped behind the ſcreen.

Sir Pet.

Sir Pet. A French milliner! (*ſmiling*) cunning rogue! Joſeph—Sly rogue!—But zounds, ſhe has overheard every thing that has paſſed about my wife.

Joſ. Oh, never fear.—Take my word it will never go farther for her.

Sir Pet. Won't it?

Joſ. No, depend upon it.

Sir Pet. Well, well, if it will go no further—But—where ſhall I hide myſelf?

Joſ. Here, here, ſlip into the cloſet, and you may overhear every word.

L. Teaz. Can I ſteel away? [*Peeping.*]

Joſ. Huſh! huſh! don't ſtir.

Sir Pet. Joſeph, tax him home. (*Peeping.*)

Joſ. In, in, my dear Sir Peter.

L. Teaz. Can't you lock the cloſet door?

Joſ. Not a word—you'll be diſcovered.

Sir Pet. Joſeph, don't ſpare him.

Joſ. For heaven's ſake lie cloſe—A pretty ſituation I am in, to part man and wife in this manner. [*Aſide.*

Sir Pet. You're ſure the little French milliner won't blab.

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Why, how now, brother, your fellow denied you, they ſaid you were not at home.—What, have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

Joſ. Neither, brother, neither.

Char. But where's Sir Peter? I thought he was with you.

Joſ. He was, brother; but hearing you was coming, he left the houſe.

Char. What, was the old fellow afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Joſ. Borrow! no, brother; but I am ſorry to hear you have given that worthy man cauſe for great uneaſineſs.

Char. Yes, I am told I do that to a great many worthy men—But how do you mean, brother?

Joſ.

Joſ. Why, he thinks you have endeavoured to alienate the affections of Lady Teazle.

Char. Who, I alienate the affections of Lady Teazle! —Upon my word he accuſes me very unjuſtly. What, has the old gentleman found out that he has got a young wife; or, what is worſe, has the Lady found out that ſhe has got an old huſband?

Joſ. For ſhame, brother.

Char. 'Tis true, I did once ſuſpect her ladyſhip had a partiality for me, but upon my ſoul I never gave her the leaſt encouragement; for, you know my attachment was to Maria.

Joſ. This will make Sir Peter extremely happy— But if ſhe had a partiality for you, ſure you would not have been baſe enough——

Char. Why, look'ye, Joſeph, I hope I ſhall never deliberately do a diſhonourable action; but if a pretty woman ſhould purpoſely throw herſelf in my way, and that pretty woman ſhould happen to be married to a man old enough to be her father——

Joſ. What then?

Char. Why then, I believe I ſhould——have occaſion to borrow a little of your morality, brother.

Joſ. Oh fie, brother—The man who can jeſt—

Char. Oh, that's very true, as you were going to obſerve.—— But Joſeph, do you know that I am ſurpriſed at your ſuſpecting me with Lady Teazle. I thought you was always the favourite there.

Joſ. Me!

Char. Why yes, I have ſeen you exchange ſuch ſignificant glances.

Joſ. 'Pſha!

Char. Yes I have; and don't you remember when I came in here, and caught her and you at——

Joſ. I muſt ſtop him. (*Aſide*) [*Stops his mouth.*] Sir Peter has overheard every word that you have ſaid.

Char. Sir Peter! where is he?—what, in the cloſet? —'Foregad I'll have him out.

Joſ. No, no. [*Stopping him.*]

Char. I will—Sir Peter Teazle, come into court.

Enter

Enter SIR PETER.

What, my old guardian turn inquiſitor, and take evidence incog.

Sir Pet. Give me your hand—I own, my dear boy, I have ſuſpected you wrongfully; but you muſt not be angry with Joſeph; it was my plot, and I ſhall think of you as long as I live for what I overheard.

Char. Then 'tis well you did not hear more. Is it not, Joſeph?

Sir Pet. What, you would have retorted on Joſeph, would you?

Char. And yet you might have as well ſuſpected him as me. Might he not Joſeph?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. [*Whiſpering* Joſeph.] Lady Sneerwell, Sir, is juſt coming up, and ſays ſhe muſt ſee you.

Joſ. Gentlemen, I muſt beg your pardon; I have company waiting for me; give me leave to conduct you down ſtairs.

Char. No, no, ſpeak to them in another room; I have not ſeen Sir Peter a great while, and I want to talk with him.

Joſ. Well, I'll ſend away the perſon and return immediately. Sir Peter, not a word of the little French milliner. (*Aſide and exit.*

Sir Pet. Ah, Charles, what a pity you don't aſſociate more with your brother; we then might have ſome hopes of your reformation; he's a young man of ſuch ſentiments—Ah there is nothing in this world ſo noble as a man of ſentiment.

Char. Oh, he's too moral by half; and ſo apprehenſive of his good name, that I dare ſay he would as ſoon let a prieſt into his houſe as a wench.

Sir Pet. No, no, you accuſe him wrongfully—Though Joſeph is no rake, he is no ſaint.

Char. Oh! a perfect anchorite—a young hermit.

Sir Pet. Huſh, huſh; don't abuſe him, or he may chance to hear of it again.

Char. Why, you won't tell him, will you?

Sir Pet.

Sir Pet. No, no, but—I have a great mind to tell him. (*Aſide*) (*ſeems to heſitate*)—Hark'ye, Charles, have you a mind for a laugh at Joſeph?

Char. I ſhould like it of all things——let's have it.

Sir Pet. Gad, I'll tell him——I'll be even with Joſeph for diſcovering me in the cloſet ——(*Aſide*) ——Hark'ye, Charles, he had a girl with him when I called.

Char. Who, Joſeph? impoſſible!

Sir Pet. Yes, a little French milliner, (*takes him to the front*)—and the beſt of the joke is, ſhe is now in the room.

Char. The devil ſhe is!—Where?

Sir Pet. Huſh, huſh—behind the ſcreen.

Char. I'll have her out.

Sir Pet. No, no; no.

Char. Yes.

Sir Pet. No.

Char. By the Lord I will—So now for it.

Both run up to the ſcreen——The ſcreen falls, at the ſame time JOSEPH *enters.*

Char. Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful!

Sir Pet. Lady Teazle, by all that's horrible!

Char. Sir Peter, this is the ſmarteſt little French milliner I ever ſaw—But pray what is the meaning of all this? You ſeem to have been playing at hide and ſeek here, and for my part, I don't know who's in or who's out of the ſecret—Madam, will you pleaſe to explain? —Not a word—!—Brother, is it your pleaſure to illuſtrate?—Morality dumb too!—Well, though I can make nothing of it, I ſuppoſe you perfectly underſtand one another, good folks, and ſo I'll leave you. Brother, I am ſorry you have given that worthy man ſo much cauſe for uneaſineſs——Sir Peter, there is nothing in the world ſo noble as a man of ſentiment.—Ha, ha, ha. (*Exit.*

Joſ. Sir Peter, notwithſtanding appearances are againſt me—if—if you'll give me leave—I'll explain every thing to your ſatisfaction.

Sir Pet. If you pleaſe, Sir.

Joſ. Lady Teazle knowing my—Lady Teazle—I ſay—knowing my pretenſions—to your ward—Maria—and—Lady Teazle—I ſay—knowing the jealouſy of my—of your temper—ſhe called in here—in order that ſhe—that I——might explain——what theſe pretenſions were—And—hearing you were coming—and—as I ſaid before—knowing the jealouſy of your temper—ſhe—my Lady Teazle—I ſay—went behind the ſcreen—and—This is a full and clear account of the whole affair.

Sir Pet. A very clear account truly! and I dare ſay the lady will vouch for the truth of every word of it.

L. Teaz. [*Advancing*] For not one ſyllable, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. What the devil! don't you think it worth your while to agree in the lie?

L. Teaz. There's not a word of truth in what that gentleman has been ſaying.

Joſ. Zounds, madam, you won't ruin me.

L. Teaz. Stand out of the way, Mr Hypocrite, I'll ſpeak for myſelf.

Sir Pet. Aye, aye—let her alone—ſhe'll make a better ſtory of it than you did.

L. Teaz. I came here with no intention of liſtening to his addreſſes to Maria, and even ignorant of his pretenſions; but ſeduced by his inſidious arts, at leaſt to liſten to his addreſſes, if not to ſacrifice his honour, as well as my own, to his unwarrantable deſires.

Sir Pet. Now I believe the truth is coming indeed.

Joſ. What, is the woman mad?

L. Teaz. No, Sir, ſhe has recovered her ſenſes. Sir Peter, I cannot expect you'll credit me; but the tenderneſs you expreſſed for me, when I am certain you did not know I was within hearing, has penetrated ſo deep into my heart, that could I have eſcaped the mortification of this diſcovery, my future life ſhould have convinced you of my ſincere repentance. As for that ſmooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have ſeduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he pretended an honourable paſſion for his ward, I now view him in

ſo

ſo deſpicable a light, that I ſhall never again reſpect myſelf for having liſtened to his addreſſes. (*Exit.*

Joſ. Sir Peter—Notwithſtanding all this—Heaven is my witneſs——

Sir Pet. That you are a villain, and ſo I'll leave you to your meditations.——

Joſ. Nay, Sir Peter, you muſt not leave me—The man who ſhuts his ears againſt conviction——

Sir Pet. Oh damn your ſentiments——damn your ſentiments.—— (*Exit,* Joſeph *following.*

ACT V.

SCENE, JOSEPH SURFACE'S *Apartments.*

Enter JOSEPH *and a* SERVANT.

JOSEPH.

MR Stanley! why ſhould you think I would ſee Mr Stanley! you know well enough he comes intreating for ſomething.

Serv. They let him in before I knew of it; and old Rowley is with him.

Joſ. 'Pſha, you blockhead; I am ſo diſtracted with my own misfortunes, I am not in a humour to ſpeak with any one—but ſhew the fellow up. (*Exit Servant.*) Sure fortune never played a man of my policy ſuch a trick before—My character ruined with Sir Peter—my hopes of Maria loſt—I'm in a pretty humour to liſten to poor relations truly.—I ſhan't be able to beſtow even a benevolent ſentiment on old Stanley. Oh, here he comes; I'll retire, and endeavour to put a little charity in my face however. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR OLIVER *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. What, does he avoid us? That was him, was it not?

Rowl. Yes, Sir; but his nerves are too weak to bear the ſight of a poor relation: I ſhould have come firſt to break the matter to him.

Sir Oliv. A plague of his nerves!—yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the moſt benevolent way of thinking.

Rowl. Yes—he has as much ſpeculative benevolence as any man in the kingdom, though he is not ſo ſenſual as to indulge himſelf in the exerciſe of it.

Sir Oliv. Yet he has a ſtring of ſentiments, I ſuppoſe, at his finger ends.

Rowl. And his favourite one is, *That charity begins at home.*

Sir Oliv. And his, I preſume, is of that domeſtick ſort, which never ſtirs abroad at all.

Rowl. Well, Sir, I'll leave you to introduce yourſelf as old Stanley; I muſt be here again to announce you in your real character.

Sir Oliv. True—and you'll afterwards meet me at Sir Peter's.

Rowl. Without loſing a moment. (*Exit* ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. Here he comes—I don't like the complaiſance of his features.

Enter JOSEPH.

Joſ. Sir, your moſt obedient; I beg pardon for keeping you a moment——Mr Stanley, I preſume.

Sir Oliv. At your ſervice, Sir.

Joſ. Pray, be ſeated, Mr Stanley, I intreat you, Sir.

Sir Oliv. Dear Sir, there's no occaſion. Too ceremonious by half. (*Aſide.*

Joſ. Though I have not the pleaſure of your acquaintance, I am very glad to ſee you look ſo well.—I think, Mr Stanley, you was nearly related to my mother.

Sir Oliv. I was, Sir; ſo nearly, that my preſent poverty I fear may do diſcredit to her wealthy children; elſe I would not preſume to trouble you now.

Joſ. Ah, Sir, don't mention that—For the man who is in diſtreſs has ever a right to claim kindred with the wealthy; I am ſure I wiſh I was of that number, or that it was in my power even to afford you a ſmall relief.

Sir Oliv. If your uncle Sir Oliver was here, I ſhould have a friend.

Joſ.

Joſ. I wiſh he was, Sir, you ſhould not want an advocate with him, believe me.

Sir Oliv. I ſhould not need one, my diſtreſſes would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty had enabled you to be the agent of his charities.

Joſ. Ah, Sir, you are miſtaken; avarice, avarice, Mr Stanley, is the vice of age; to be ſure it has been ſpread abroad that he has been very bountiful to me, but without the leaſt foundation, though I never choſe to contradict the report.

Sir Oliv. And has he never remitted you bullion, rupees, or pagodas?

Joſ. Oh, dear Sir, no ſuch thing. I have indeed received ſome trifling preſents from him, ſuch as ſhawls, avadavats, and Indian crackers; nothing more, Sir.

Sir Oliv. There's gratitude for twelve thouſand pounds! (*Aſide*) Shawls, avadavats, and Indian crackers!

Joſ. Then there's my brother, Mr Stanley; one would ſcarce believe what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

Sir Oliv. Not I for one. [*Aſide.*]

Joſ. Oh, the ſums I have lent him!——Well 'twas an amiable weakneſs——I muſt own I can't defend it, tho' it appears more blameable at preſent, as it prevents me from ſerving you, Mr Stanley, as my heart directs.

Sir Oliv. Diſſembler—[*Aſide*]—then you cannot aſſiſt me.

Joſ. I am very unhappy to ſay it's not in my power at preſent; but you may depend upon hearing from me when I can be of any ſervice to you.

Sir Oliv. Sweet Sir, you are too good.

Joſ. Not at all, Sir; to pity without the power to relieve, is ſtill more painful than to aſk and to be denied. Indeed, Mr Stanley, you have deeply affected me. Sir, your moſt devoted; I wiſh you health and ſpirits.

Sir Oliv. Your ever grateful and perpetual (*bowing low*) humble ſervant.

Joſ. I am extremely ſorry, Sir, for your misfortunes—Here, open the door——Mr Stanley, your moſt devoted.

Sir Oliv. Your moſt obliged ſervant. Charles, you are my heir. *(Aſide, and Exit.*

Joſ. This is another of the evils that attends a man having ſo good a character—It ſubjects him to the importunity of the neceſſitous—the pure and ſterling ore of charity is a very expenſive article in the catalogue of a man's virtues; whereas, the ſentimental French plate I uſe anſwers the purpoſe full as well, and pays no tax. *(Going.*

Enter ROWLEY.

Rowl. Mr Surface, your moſt obedient; I wait on you from your uncle who is juſt arrived. *(Gives him a note.)*

Joſ. How! Sir Oliver arrived!——Here, Mr—— call back Mr Stanley.

Rowl. It's too late, Sir, I met him going out of the houſe.

Joſ. Was ever any thing ſo unfortunate! *(Aſide.)* —I hope my uncle has enjoyed good health and ſpirits.

Rowl. Oh, very good, Sir; he bid me inform you he'll wait on you within this half hour.

Joſ. Preſent him my kind love and duty, and aſſure him I'm quite impatient to ſee him. *(Bowing.)*

Rowl. I ſhall, Sir. [*Exit* Rowley.

Joſ. Pray do, Sir, *(bows)*—This was the moſt curſed piece of ill luck. [*Exit* Joſeph.

SCENE, Sir PETER TEAZLE's Houſe.

Enter MRS CANDOUR *and* MAID.

Maid. Indeed, madam, my lady will ſee no one at preſent.

Mrs Cand. Did you tell her it was her friend Mrs Candour?

Maid. I did, madam, and ſhe begs to be excuſed.

Mrs Cand. Go again, for I am ſure ſhe muſt be greatly diſtreſſed. *(Exit* maid.) How provoking to be kept waiting!—I am not miſtreſs of half the circumſtances:—I ſhall have the whole affair in the news-papers, with the parties names at full length, before I have dropped the ſtory at a dozen houſes. *Enter*

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Mrs Cand. Oh, Sir Benjamin, I am glad you are come; have you heard of Lady Teazle's affair? Well, I never was ſo ſurpriſed—and I am ſo diſtreſſed for the parties.

Sir Benj. Nay, I can't ſay I pity Sir Peter, he was always ſo partial to Mr Surface.

Mrs Cand. Mr Surface! Why it was Charles.

Sir Benj. Oh, no, madam, Mr Surface was the gallant.

Mrs Cand. No, Charles was the lover; and Mr Surface, to do him juſtice, was the cauſe of the diſcovery: he brought Sir Peter; and——

Sir Benj. Oh, my dear madam, no ſuch thing: for I had it from one——

Mrs Cand. Yes, and I had it from one, that had it from one that knew——

Sir Benj. And I had it from one——

Mrs Cand. No ſuch thing—but here comes my Lady Sneerwell, and perhaps ſhe may have heard the particulars.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

L. Sneer. Oh, dear Mrs Candour, here's a ſad affair about our friend Lady Teazle.

Mrs Cand. Why, to be ſure, poor thing, I am much concerned for her.

L. Sneer. I proteſt ſo am I—though I muſt confeſs ſhe was always too lively for me.

Mrs Cand. But ſhe had a great deal of good nature.

Sir Benj. And had a very ready wit.

Mrs Cand. But do you know all the particulars? *To* Lady Sneerwell.]

Sir Benj. Yet who could have ſuſpected Mr Surface!

Mrs Cand. Charles you mean.

Sir Benj. No, Mr Surface.

Mrs Cand. Oh, 'twas Charles.

L. Sneer. Charles!

Mrs Cand. Yes, Charles.

Sir Benj. I'll not pretend to diſpute with you, Mrs Candour; but be it as it may, I hope Sir Peter's wounds won't prove mortal.

Mrs Cand.

Mrs Cand. Sir Peter's wounds! what! did they fight? I never heard a word of that.

Sir Benj. No!——

Mrs Cand. No!——

L. Sneer. Nor I, a ſyllable: Do, dear Sir Benjamin, tell us.

Sir Benj. Oh, my dear madam, then you don't know half the affair—Why—why—I'll tell you—— Sir Peter, you muſt know, had a long time ſuſpected Lady Teazle's viſits to Mr Surface.

Mrs Cand. To Charles you mean.

Sir Benj. No, Mr Surface;—and upon going to his houſe, and finding Lady Teazle there, Sir, ſays Sir Peter, you are a very ungrateful fellow.

Mrs Cand. Aye, that was Charles.

Sir Benj. Mr Surface.—And old as I am, ſays he, I demand immediate ſatisfaction: Upon this, they both drew their ſwords, and to it they fell.

Mrs Cand. That muſt be Charles; for it is very unlikely that Mr Surface ſhould fight him in his own houſe.

Sir Benj. 'Sdeath, madam, not at all. Lady Teazle, upon ſeeing Sir Peter in ſuch danger, ran out of the room in ſtrong hyſtericks, and was followed by Charles, calling out for hartſhorn and water. They fought, and Sir Peter received a wound in his right ſide by the thruſt of a ſmall ſword.

Enter CRABTREE.

Crab. Piſtols! piſtols! nephew.

Mrs Cand. Oh, Mr Crabtree, I am glad you are come; now we ſhall have the whole affair.

Sir Benj. No, no, it was a ſmall ſword, uncle.

Crab. Zounds, nephew, I ſay it was a piſtol.

Sir Benj. A thruſt in ſecond, through the ſmall guts.

Crab. A bullet lodged in the thorax.

Sir Benj. But give me leave, dear uncle, it was a ſmall ſword.

Crab. I tell you it was a piſtol—Won't you ſuffer any body to know any thing but yourſelf?—It was a piſtol, and Charles.——

Mrs Cand. Aye! I knew it was Charles.

Sir Benj. Mr Surface, uncle.

Crab.

Crab. Why, zounds! I ſay it was Charles; muſt nobody ſpeak but yourſelf? I'll tell you how the whole affair was.

L. Sneer. } Aye do, do pray tell us.
Mrs Cand. }

Sir Benj. I ſee my uncle knows nothing at all about the matter.

Crab. Mr Surface, you muſt know, ladies, came late from Salt-hill, where he had been the evening before with a particular friend of his, who has a ſon at Eton; his piſtols were left on the bureau, and unfortunately loaded, and on Sir Peter's taxing Charles———

Sir Benj. Mr Surface you mean.

Crab. Do pray, nephew, hold your tongue, and let me ſpeak ſometimes—I ſay, Ladies, upon his taking Charles to account, and taxing him with the baſeſt ingratitude———

Sir Benj. Aye, Ladies, I told you Sir Peter taxed him with ingratitude.

Crab. They agreed each to take a piſtol—They fired at the ſame inſtant—Charles's ball took place, and lodged in the thorax. Sir Peter's miſſed, and what is very extraordinary, the ball grazed againſt a little bronze Shakeſpeare that ſtood over the chimney, flew off through the window, at right angles, and wounded the poſtman, who was juſt come to the door with a double letter from Northamptonſhire.

Sir Benj. I heard nothing of all this! I muſt own, ladies, my uncle's account is more circumſtantial, though I believe mine is the true one.

L. Sneer. I am more intereſted in this affair than they imagine, and muſt have better information.

[*Aſide and exit.*

Sir Benj. Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very eaſily accounted for.

Crab. Why, yes; they do ſay—but that's neither here nor there.

Mrs Cand. But pray where is Sir Peter now? I hope his wound won't prove mortal.

Crab. He was carried home immediately, and has given poſitive orders to be denied to every body.

Sir Benj.

Sir Benj. And I believe Lady Teazle is attending him.

Mrs Cand. I believe ſo too.

Crab. Certainly—I met one of the faculty as I came in.

Sir Benj. Gad ſo! and here he comes.

Crab. Yes, yes, that's the doctor.

Mrs Cand. That certainly muſt be the phyſician.—Now we ſhall get information.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Dear doctor, how is your patient?

Sir Benj. I hope his wounds are not mortal.

Crab. Is he in a fair way of recovery?

Sir Benj. Pray, doctor, was he not wounded by a thruſt of a ſword through the ſmall guts?

Crab. Was it not by a bullet that lodged in the thorax?

Sir Benj. Nay, pray anſwer me.

Crab. Dear, dear doctor, ſpeak. [*All pulling him.*

Sir Oliv. Hey, hey, good people, are you all mad?—Why, what the devil is the matter?—a ſword through the ſmall guts, and a bullet lodged in the thorax? What would you all be at?

Sir Benj. Then perhaps, Sir, you are not a doctor.

Sir Oliv. If I am, Sir, I am to thank you for my degree.

Crab. Only a particular friend, I ſuppoſe.

Sir Oliv. Nothing more, Sir.

Sir Benj. Then I ſuppoſe, as you are a friend, you can be better able to give us ſome account of his wounds.

Sir Oliv. Wounds!

Mrs Cand. What! hav'n't you heard he was wounded—the ſaddeſt accident!

Sir Benj. A thruſt with a ſword through the ſmall guts.

Crab. A bullet in the thorax.

Sir Oliv. Good people, ſpeak one at a time, I beſeech you——You both agree that Sir Peter is dangerouſly wounded.

Crab.
Sir Benj. } Ay, ay, we both agree in that. *Sir Oliv.*

Sir Oliv. Then I will be bold to ſay, Sir Peter is one of the moſt imprudent men in the world, for here he comes, walking as if nothing had happened.

Enter SIR PETER.

My good friend, you are certainly mad to walk about in this condition; you ſhould go to bed, you that have had a ſword through your ſmall guts, and a bullet lodged in your thorax.

Sir Pet. A ſword through my ſmall guts, and a bullet lodged in my thorax.

Sir Oliv. Yes, theſe worthy people would have killed you without law or phyſic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, in order to make me an accomplice.

Sir Pet. What is all this?

Sir Benj. Sir Peter, we are very glad to find the ſtory of the duel is not true.

Crab. And exceedingly ſorry for your other misfortunes.

Sir Pet. So, ſo all over the town already. (*Aſide.*

Mrs Cand. Though, as Sir Peter was ſo good a huſband, I pity him ſincerely.

Sir Pet. Plague of your pity!

Crab. As you continued ſo long a bachelor, you was certainly to blame to marry at all.

Sir Pet. Sir, I deſire you'll conſider this is my own houſe.

Sir Benj. However, you muſt not be offended at the jeſts you'll meet on this occaſion.

Crab. It is no uncommon caſe, that's one thing.

Sir Pet. I inſiſt upon being maſter here; in plain terms, I deſire you'll leave my houſe immediately.

Mrs Cand. Well, well, Sir, we are going, and you may depend upon it, we ſhall make the beſt of the ſtory. [*Exit.*

Sir Benj. And tell how badly you have been treated.

Sir Pet. Leave my houſe directly. [*Exit* Sir Benj.

Crab. And how patiently you bear it. [*Exit* Crab.

Sir Pet. Leave my houſe, I ſay—Fiends, furies, there is no bearing of it!

Enter ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. Well, Sir Peter I have ſeen my nephews.

Rowl.

Rowl. And Sir Oliver is convinced your judgment is right after all.

Sir Oliv. Aye, Joſeph is the man.

Rowl. Such ſentiments.

Sir Oliv. And acts up to the ſentiments he profeſſes.

Rowl. Oh, 'tis edification to hear him talk.

Sir Oliv. He is a pattern to the young men of the age—But how comes it, Sir Peter, that you don't join in his praiſes?

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, we live in a damn'd wicked world, and the fewer we praiſe the better.

Sir Oliv. Right, right, my old friend—But was you always ſo moderate in your judgment?

Rowl. Do you ſay ſo, Sir Peter, you who was never miſtaken in your life?

Sir Pet. Oh, the plague of your jokes—I ſuppoſe you are acquainted with the whole affair.

Rowl. I am indeed, Sir.—I met Lady Teazle returning from Mr Surface's, ſo humbled, that ſhe deign'd to beg even me to become her advocate.

Sir Pet. What! does Sir Oliver know it too?

Sir Oliv. Aye, aye, every circumſtance.

Sir Pet. What! about the cloſet and the ſcreen.

Sir Oliv. Yes, and the little French milliner too. I never laughed more in my life.

Sir Pet. And a very pleaſant jeſt it was.

Sir Oliv. This is your man of ſentiment, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Oh, damn his ſentiments.

Sir Oliv. You muſt have made a pretty appearance when Charles dragged you out of the cloſet.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, that was very diverting.

Sir Oliv. And egad, Sir Peter, I ſhould like to have ſeen your face when the ſcreen was thrown down.

Sir Pet. My face when the ſcreen was thrown down! Oh yes!—There's no bearing this. (*Aſide.*

Sir Oliv. Come, come, my old friend, don't be vexed, for I can't help laughing for the ſoul of me.—Ha, ha, ha.

Sir Pet. Oh, laugh on.—I am not vexed—no, no, it is the pleaſanteſt thing in the world. To be the ſtanding jeſt of all one's acquaintance, 'tis the happieſt ſituation imaginable. *Rowl.*

Rowl. See, Sir, yonder's my Lady Teazle coming this way, and in tears; let me beg of you to be reconciled.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, I'll leave Rowley to mediate between you, and take my leave; but you muſt make haſte after me to Mr Surface's, where I go, if not to reclaim a libertine, at leaſt to expoſe hypocriſy. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. I'll be with you at the diſcovery; I ſhould like to ſee it, though it is a vile unlucky place for diſcoveries. Rowley, (*looking out*) ſhe's not coming this way.

Rowl. No, Sir, but ſhe has left the room door open, and waits your coming.

Sir Pet. Well, certainly mortification is very becoming in a wife—Don't you think I had beſt let her pine a little longer?

Rowl. Oh, Sir, that's being too ſevere.

Sir Pet. I don't think ſo; the letter I found from Charles was evidently intended for her.

Rowl. Indeed, Sir Peter, you are much miſtaken.

Sir Pet. If I was convinced of that——ſee, Mr Rowley, ſhe looks this way—what a remarkable elegant turn of the head ſhe has——I have a good mind to go to her.

Rowl. Do, dear Sir.

Sir Pet. But when it is known that we are reconciled, I ſhall be laughed at more than ever.

Rowl. Let them laugh on, and retort their malice upon themſelves, by ſhewing them you can be happy in ſpite of their ſlander.

Sir Pet. Faith, and ſo I will, Mr Rowley, and my Lady Teazle and I may ſtill be the happieſt couple in the country.

Rowl. O fye, Sir Peter, he that lays aſide ſuſpicion—

Sir Pet. My dear Rowley, if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter any thing like a ſentiment again; I have had enough of that to laſt the remainder of my life. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, JOSEPH'S Library.

Enter JOSEPH *and Lady* SNEERWELL.

L. Sneer. Impoſſible! Will not Sir Peter be immediately reconciled to Charles, and no longer oppoſe his union to Maria?

Joſ. Can paſſion mend it?

L. Sneer. No, nor cunning neither. I was a fool to league with ſuch a blunderer.

Joſ. Sure, my Lady Sneerwell, I am the greateſt ſufferer in this affair, and yet, you ſee, I bear it with calmneſs.

L. Sneer. Becauſe the diſappointment does not reach your heart; your intereſt was only concerned. Had you felt for Maria, what I do for that unfortunate libertine your brother, you would not be diſſuaded from taking every revenge in your power.

Joſ. Why will you rail at me for the diſappointment!

L. Sneer. Are you not the cauſe? Had you not a ſufficient field for your roguery in impoſing upon Sir Peter, and ſupplanting your brother, but you muſt endeavour to ſeduce his wife. I hate ſuch an avarice of crimes; 'tis an unfair monopoly, and never proſpers.

Joſ. Well, I own I am to blame——I have deviated from the direct rule of wrong. Yet, I cannot think circumſtances are ſo bad as your Ladyſhip apprehends.

L. Sneer. No!

Joſ. You tell me you have made another trial of Snake, that he ſtill proves ſteady to our intereſt, and that he is ready, if occaſion requires, to ſwear to a contract having been paſſed between Charles and your Ladyſhip.

L. Sneer. And what then?

Joſ. Why, the letters which have been ſo carefully circulated, will corroborate his evidence, and prove the truth of the aſſertion. But I expect my uncle every moment, and muſt beg your Ladyſhip to retire into the next room.

L. Sneer.

L. Sneer. But if he ſhould find me out?

Joſ. I have no fear of that—Sir Peter won't tell for his own ſake, and I ſhall ſoon find out Sir Oliver's weak ſide.

L. Sneer. Nay, I have no doubt of your abilities, only be conſtant to one villainy at a time.

Joſ. Well, I will, I will.—(*Exit Lady* Sneerwell.) —It is confounded hard, though, to be baited by one's confederates in wickedneſs—(*knocking*)—Whom have we got here? My uncle Oliver I ſuppoſe—Oh, old Stanley again! How came he here? He muſt not ſtay——

Enter SIR OLIVER.

I told you already, Mr Stanley, that it was not in my power to relieve you.

Sir Oliv. But I hear, Sir, that Sir Oliver is arrived, and perhaps he might.

Joſ. Well, Sir; you cannot ſtay now, Sir; but any other time, Sir, you ſhall certainly be relieved.

Sir Oliv. Oh, Sir Oliver and I muſt be acquainted.

Joſ. I muſt inſiſt upon your going. Indeed, Mr Stanley, you can't ſtay.

Sir Oliv. Poſitively I muſt ſee Sir Oliver.

Joſ. Then poſitively you ſhan't ſtay.

[*Puſhing him out.*

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Hey day! what's the matter? Why, who the devil have we got here! What! my little Premium! Oh, brother, you muſt not hurt my little broker. But hark'ye, Joſeph; what, have you been borrowing money too?

Joſ. Borrowing money! No, brother——We expect my uncle Oliver here every minute, and Mr Stanley inſiſts upon ſeeing him.

Char. Stanley! Why his name is Premium.

Joſ. No, no! I tell you his name is Stanley.

Char. But I tell you again his name is Premium.

Joſ. It don't ſignify what his name is.

Char. No more it don't, as you ſay, brother; for I ſuppoſe he goes by half an hundred names, beſides A.

B. at the coffee-houſes. But old Noll muſt not come and catch my little broker here neither.

Joſ. Mr Stanley, I beg——

Char. And I beg, Mr Premium——

Joſ. You muſt go indeed, Mr Stanley.

Char. Aye, you muſt go, Mr Premium.

(Both puſhing him.

Enter Sir PETER, *Lady* TEAZLE, MARIA, *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Pet. What, my old friend Sir Oliver! what's the matter?——In the name of wonder, were there ever two ſuch ungracious nephews, to aſſault their uncle at his firſt viſit.

L. Teaz. On my word, ſir, it was well we came to your reſcue.

Joſ. Charles!

Char. Joſeph!

Joſ. Now our ruin is complete.

Char. Very.

Sir Pet. You find, Sir Oliver, your neceſſitous character of old Stanley could not protect you.

Sir Oliv. No! nor Premium neither. The neceſſities of the former could not extract a ſhilling from that benevolent gentleman there; and with the other I ſtood a worſe chance than my anceſtors, and had like to have been knocked down without being bid for. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley, look upon that elder nephew of mine; you both know what I have done for him, and how gladly I would have looked upon half my fortune as held only in truſt for him. Judge then of my ſurpriſe and diſappointment, at finding him deſtitute of truth, charity and gratitude!

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, I ſhould be as much ſurpriſed as you, if I did not know him to be artful, ſelfiſh, and hypocritical.

L. Teaz. And if he pleads not guilty to all this, let him call on me to finiſh his character.

Sir Pet. Then I believe we need not add more; for if he knows himſelf, it will be a ſufficient puniſhment for him that he is known by the world.

Char.

Char. If they talk this way to Honeſty, what will they ſay to me by and by? (*Aſide.*

Joſ. Sir Oliver, will you not honour me with a hearing?

Char. Now if Joſeph would make one of his long ſpeeches, I ſhould have time to recollect myſelf. (*Aſide.*

Sir Pet. I ſuppoſe you would undertake to juſtify yourſelf entirely.

Joſ. I truſt I could, Sir.

Sir Oliv. 'Pſhaw! (*turns away from him*) and I ſuppoſe you could juſtify yourſelf too. (*To* Charles.)

Char. Not that I know of, ſir.

Sir Oliv. What, my little Premium was let too much into the ſecret.

Char. Why yes, ſir, but they were only family ſecrets, and ſhould go no farther.

Rowl. Come, come, Sir Oliver, I am ſure you cannot look upon Charles's follies with anger.

Sir Oliv. No, nor with gravity neither.—Do you know, Sir Peter, the young rogue has been ſelling me his anceſtors; I have bought judges and ſtaff officers by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as old china.

[*During this ſpeech* Charles *laughs behind his hat.*

Char. Why, that I have made free with the family canvas is true; my anceſtors may riſe in judgment againſt me, there's no denying it; but believe me when I tell you, (and upon my ſoul I would not ſay it if it was not ſo) if I don't appear mortified at the expoſure of my follies, it is, becauſe I feel at this moment the warmeſt ſatisfaction at ſeeing you my liberal benefactor. [*Embraces him.*

Sir Oliv. Charles, I forgive you; give me your hand again; the little ill-looking fellow over the ſettee has made your peace for you.

Char. Then, Sir, my gratitude to the original is ſtill increaſed.

L. Teaz. Sir Oliver, here is another, with whom I dare ſay Charles is no leſs anxious to be reconciled.

Sir Oliv. I have heard ſomething of that attachment before, and with the ladies leave—if I conſtrue right, that bluſh——

Sir Pet. Well, child, ſpeak for yourſelf.

Mar. I have little more to ſay, than that I wiſh him happy, and for any influence I might once have had over his affections, I moſt willingly reſign them to one who has a better claim to them.

Sir Pet. Hey! what's the matter now? While he was a rake and a profligate, you would hear of nobody elſe; and now that he is likely to reform, you won't have him. What's the meaning of all this?

Mar. His own heart, and lady Sneerwell, can beſt inform you.

Char. Lady Sneerwell!

Joſ. I am very ſorry, brother, I am obliged to ſpeak to this point; but juſtice demands it from me; and Lady Sneerwell's wrongs can be no longer concealed.

Enter Lady SNEERWELL.

Sir Pet. Another French milliner! I believe he has one in every room in the houſe.

L. Sneer. Ungrateful Charles! well you may ſeem confounded and ſurprized at the indelicate ſituation to which your perfidy has reduced me.

Char. Pray uncle, is this another of your plots? for, as I live, this is the firſt I ever heard of it.

Joſ. There is but one witneſs, I believe, neceſſary for the buſineſs.

Sir Pet. And that witneſs is Mr Snake—you were perfectly in the right in bringing him with you. Let him appear.

Rowl. Deſire Mr Snake to walk in.—It is rather unlucky, madam, that he ſhould be brought to confront, and not ſupport your Ladyſhip.

Enter SNAKE.

L. Sneer. I am ſurprized! what, ſpeak, villain! have you too conſpired againſt me?

Snake. I beg your Ladyſhip ten thouſand pardons; I muſt own you paid me very liberally for the lying queſtions, but I have unfortunately been offered double for ſpeaking the truth.

Sir Pet. Plot and counter-plot—I give your Ladyſhip much joy of your negociation.

L. Sneer.

L. Sneer. May the torments of deſpair and diſappointment light upon you all! [*Going.*]

L. Teaz. Hold, Lady Sneerwell; before you go, give me leave to return you thanks, for the trouble you and this gentleman took, in writing letters in my name to Charles, and anſwering them yourſelf;—and, at the ſame time, I muſt beg you will preſent my compliments to the ſcandalous college, of which you are preſident, and inform them, that Lady Teazle licentiate, returns the diploma they granted her, as ſhe leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

L. Sneer. You too, madam! Provoking, Inſolent!—may your huſband live theſe fifty years! [*Exit.*

L. Teaz. O Lord—what a malicious creature it is!

Sir Pet. Not for her laſt with, I hope.

L. Teaz. Oh, no, no.

Sir Pet. Well, Sir——what have you to ſay for yourſelf? [*To* Joſeph.]

Joſ. Sir, I am ſo confounded that Lady Sneerwell ſhould impoſe upon us all, by ſuborning Mr Snake, that I know not what to ſay—but—leſt her malice ſhould prompt her to injure my brother—I had better follow her. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Moral to the laſt.

Sir Oliv. Marry her, Joſeph, marry her if you can—Oil and vinegar—you'll do very well together.

Rowl. Mr Snake, I believe we have no further occaſion for you.

Snake. Before I go, I muſt beg pardon of theſe good ladies and gentlemen, for whatever trouble I have been the humble inſtrument of cauſing.

Sir Pet. You have made amends by your open confeſſion.

Snake. But I muſt beg as a favour that it may never be ſpoken of.

Sir Pet. What! are you aſhamed of having done one good action in your life?

Snake. Sir, I requeſt you to conſider that I live by the badneſs of my character, and if it was once known that I had been betrayed into an honeſt action, I ſhould loſe every friend I have in the world. [*Exit.*

Sir Oliv.

Sir Oliv. Never fear, we ſhan't traduce you by ſaying any thing in your praiſe.

Sir Pet. There's a ſpecious rogue for you.

L. Teaz. You ſee, Sir Oliver, it needed no great perſuaſion to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

Sir Oliv. So much the better; I'll have the wedding to morrow morning.

Sir Pet. What! before you aſk the girl's conſent!

Char. I have done that a long time ſince——above a minute ago——and ſhe look'd——

Mar. O fie, Charles—I proteſt, Sir Peter, there has not been a word ſaid.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, the leſs the better *(joining their hands)* there—and may your loves never know abatement.

Sir Pet. And may you live as happily together, as Lady Teazle and I—intend to do.

Char. I ſuſpect, Rowley, I owe much to you.

Sir Oliv. You do, indeed.

Rowl. Sir, if I have failed in my endeavours to ſerve you, you would have been indebted to me for the attempt. But deſerve to be happy, and you overpay me. ner

Sir Pet. Aye, honeſt Rowley always ſaid you would reform.

Char. Look ye, Sir Peter, as to reforming, I ſhall make no promiſes, and that I take to be the ſtrongeſt proof that I intend ſetting about it. But here ſhall be my monitor, my gentle guide—can I leave the virtuous path thoſe eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, ſhould'ſt wave thy beauty's ſway,
Thou ſtill muſt rule, becauſe I will obey;
An humble fugitive from folly view,
No ſanctuary near but love——and you;
You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,
For even ſcandal dies—if you approve.

(Omnes exeunt.

EPILOGUE.

Written by MR COLMAN.

Spoken in the character of LADY TEAZLE.

I, WHO was late ſo volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind, muſt now blow all one way;
Bend all my cares, my ſtudies and my vows,
To one old ruſty weather cock—my ſpouſe;
So wills our virtuous bard—the pye-bald Bayes
Of crying epilogues and laughing plays.
Old batchelors, who marry ſmart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate your lives!
Each bring his dear to town—all faults upon her—
London will prove the very ſource of honour.
Plung'd fairly in, like a cold bath, it ſerves,
When principles relax—to brace the nerves,
Such is my caſe—and yet I muſt deplore
That the gay dream of diſſipation's o'er;
And ſay, ye fair, was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the higheſt life,
Like me, untimely blaſted in her bloom;
Like me, condemn'd to ſuch a diſmal doom:
Save money—when I juſt knew how to waſte it!
Leave London—juſt as I began to taſte it!
Muſt I then watch the early crowing cock?
The melancholy ticking of a clock?
In the lone ruſtick hall for ever pounded,
With dogs, cats, rats, and ſqualling brats ſurrounded.
With humble curates can I now retire,
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the ſquire)
And at back-gammon mortify my ſoul,
That pants for Lu, or flutters at a Vole?
Seven's the main! dear ſound! that muſt expire,
Roaſt at hot cockles round a Chriſtmas fire!

The

The tranſient hour of faſhion too ſoon ſpent,
' Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content,
' Farewell the plumed head—the cuſhion'd tete,
' That takes the cuſhion from its proper ſeat!
' The ſpirit ſtirring drum! card drums I mean—
' Spadille, old Trick, Pam, Baſto, King and Queen.
' And you, ye knockers, that with brazen throat,
' The welcome viſitor's approach denote,
' Farewell! All quality of high renown,
' Pride, pomp, and circumſtance of glorious town,
' Farewell! your revels I partake no more,
' And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er!"
All this I told our bard; he ſmil'd, and ſaid 'twas clear
I ought to play deep tragedy next year:
Mean while he drew wiſe morals from his play,
And in theſe ſolemn periods ſtalk'd away.
" Bleſt were the fair, like you her faults who ſtopt,
' And cloſed her follies when the curtain dropt!
' No more in vice or error to engage,
' Or play the fool at large on life's great ſtage!

FINIS.

THE
RIVALS,
A COMEDY.

PROLOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

Spoken by MR WOODWARD *and* MR QUICK.

Enter SERJEANT *at* LAW, *and* ATTORNEY *following, and giving a Paper.*

Serj. WHAT's here—a vile cramp hand! I cannot ſee
Without my ſpectacles. *Att.* He means his fee.
Nay, Mr Serjeant, good Sir, try again. (*Gives money.*
Serj. The ſcrawl improves (*more*) O come, 'tis pretty plain.
Hey! how's this?—*Dibble!*—ſure it cannot be!
A Poet's Brief! A Poet and a Fee!
Att. Yea, Sir!—though *you* without reward, I know,
Would gladly plead the Muſe's cauſe— *Serj.* So—ſo!
And if the Fee offends—your wrath ſhould fall
On me— *Serj.* Dear *Dibble*, no offence at all—
Att. Some Sons of Phœbus—in the Courts we meet,
Serj. And fifty Sons of Phœbus in the Fleet!
Att. Nor pleads he worſe, who with a decent ſprig
Of Bays—adorns his legal waſte of wig.
Serj. Full-bottom'd Heroes thus, on ſigns, unfurl
A leaf of laurel—in a grove of curl!
Yet tell your Client, that, in adverſe days,
This wig is warmer than a buſh of Bays.
Att. Do you then, Sir, my Client's place ſupply,
Profuſe of robe, and prodigal of tye——
Do you, with all thoſe bluſhing pow'rs of face,
And wonted baſhful hefitating grace,
Rife on the Court, and flouriſh on the caſe. [*Exit.*
Serj. For practice then ſuppoſe—this Brief will ſhew it,—
Me, Serjeant *Woodward*,—Counſel for the Poet.

Us'd to the ground—I know 'tis hard to deal
With this dread *Court*, from whence there's *no appeal*;
No *Tricking* here, to blunt the edge of *Law*,
Or damn'd in *Equity*—eſcape by *Flaw*:
But *Judgment* given—*your Sentence* muſt remain;
—No *Writ of Error* lies—to *Drury-Lane!*
Yet when ſo kind you ſeem—'tis paſt diſpute,
We gain ſome favour, if not *Coſts of Suit.*
No ſpleen is here! I ſee no hoarded fury;
—I think I never fac'd a milder Jury!
Sad elſe our plight!—where frowns are tranſportation,
A hiſs the gallows,—and a groan, damnation!
But ſuch the public candour, without fear
My Client waves all *right of challenge* here.
No Newſmen from *our* Seſſion is diſmiſs'd,
Nor Wit nor Critic *we* ſcratch off the liſt;
His faults can never hurt another's eaſe,
His crime at worſt—a *bad attempt* to pleaſe:
Thus all reſpecting, he appeals to all,
And by the general voice will *ſtand* or *fall.*

PROLOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

Spoken on the Tenth Night by MRS BULKELEY.

GRANTED our Cauſe, our ſuit and trial o'er,
The worthy Serjeant need appear no more:
In pleading I a different Client chuſe,
He ſerv'd the Poet,—I would ſerve the Muſe:
Like him, I'll try to merit your applauſe,
A female counſel in a female's cauſe.
Look on this form *,—where Humour quaint and ſly,
Dimples the cheek, and points the beaming eye;

Where

---

*Pointing to the Figure of Comedy.

Where gay Invention ſeems to boaſt its wiles
In amorous hint, and half-triumphant ſmiles;
While her light maſks or covers Satire's ſtrokes,
All hide the conſcious bluſh her wit provokes.
—Look on her well—does ſhe ſeem form'd to teach?
Shou'd you *expect* to hear this lady—preach?
Is grey experience ſuited to her youth?
Do ſolemn ſentiments become that mouth?
Bid her be grave, thoſe lips ſhould rebel prove
To every theme that ſlanders mirth or love.
Yet thus adorn'd with every graceful art
To charm the fancy, and yet reach the heart——
Muſt we diſplace her? And inſtead advance
The Goddeſs of the woeful countenance—
The ſentimental Muſe!—Her emblems view,
The Pilgrim's Progreſs, and a ſprig of rue!
View her—too chaſte to look like fleſh and blood—
Primly pourtray'd on emblematic wood!
There fix'd in uſurpation ſhou'd ſhe ſtand,
She'll ſnatch the dagger from her ſiſter's hand:
And having made her votaries *weep a flood*,
Good heaven! ſhe'll end her Comedies in blood—
Bid *Harry Woodward* break poor *Dunſtall's* crown!
Impriſon *Quick*—and knock *Ned Shuter* down;
While ſad *Barſanti*—weeping o'er the ſcene—
Shall ſtab herſelf—or poiſon *Mrs Green*.——
Such dire encroachments to prevent in time,
Demands the Critic's voice—the Poet's rhime.
Can our light ſcenes add ſtrength to Holy laws?
Such puny patronage but hurts the cauſe:
Fair Virtue ſcorns our feeble aid to aſk;
And moral truth diſdains the trickſter's maſk.
For here their fav'rite ſtands *, whoſe brow—ſevere
And ſad—claims Youth's reſpect, and Pity's tear;
Who—when oppreſs'd by foes her worth creates—
Can point a poignard at the Guilt ſhe hates.

* *Pointing to Tragedy.*

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE, -	MR SHUTER.
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, -	MR WOODWARD.
FAULKLAND, - -	MR LEWIS.
ACRES, - -	MR QUICK.
SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER, -	MR CLINCH.
FAG, - - -	MR LEE LEWES.
DAVID, - -	MR DUNSTALL.
COACHMAN, - -	MR FEARON.

WOMEN.

MRS MALAPROP, - -	MRS GREEN.
LYDIA LANGUISH, -	MISS BARSANTI.
JULIA, - -	MRS BULKELEY.
LUCY, - -	MRS LESSINGHAM.

MAID, BOY, SERVANTS, &c.

SCENE, *BATH.*

TIME OF ACTION WITHIN ONE DAY.

THE

RIVALS,

A COMEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A STREET IN BATH.

COACHMAN *croſſes the Stage——Enter* FAG, *looking after him.*

Fag. WHAT!—Thomas!—Sure 'tis he—
What!—Thomas!—Thomas!

Coach. Hey! Odd's life!—Mr Fag!—give us your hand, my old fellow ſervant.

Fag. Excuſe my glove, Thomas!—I'm dev'liſh glad to ſee you, my lad; why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty! but who the deuce thought of ſeeing you in Bath!

Coach. Sure, Maſter, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs Kate, and the poſtillion be all come.

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Aye! Maſter thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a viſit:—ſo he'd a mind to gi't the ſlip, and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Aye, aye! haſty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Abſolute!

Coach. But tell us, Mr Fag, how does young Maſter? Odd! Sir Anthony will ſtare to ſee the Captain here!

Fag. I do not ſerve Captain Abſolute now.—

Coach. Why ſure!

Fag.

Fag. At preſent I am employ'd by Enſign Beverly.

Coach. I doubt, Mr Fag, you ha'nt changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! why didn't you ſay you had left young Maſter?

Fag. No.—Well, honeſt Thomas, I muſt puzzle you no farther;—briefly then—Captain Abſolute and Enſign Beverly are one and the ſame perſon.

Coach. The devil they are!

Fag. So it is indeed, Thomas; and the *Enſign*—half of my maſter being on guard at preſent—the *Captain* has nothing to do with me.

Coach. So, ſo!—what, this is ſome freak, I warrant!—Do tell us, Mr Fag, the meaning o't—you know I ha' truſted you.

Fag. You'll be ſecret, Thomas?

Coach. As a coach-horſe.

Fag. Why then the cauſe of all this is—LOVE,—Love, Thomas, who (as you may get read to you) has been a maſquerader ever ſince the days of Jupiter.

Coach. Aye, aye;—I gueſſed there was a lady in the caſe;—but pray why does your Maſter paſs only for *Enſign?*—now if he had ſhamm'd *General* indeed—

Fag. Ah! Thomas, there lies the myſtery o' the matter.—Hark'ee, Thomas, my maſter is in love with a lady of a very ſingular taſte; a lady who likes him better as a *half pay Enſign*, than if ſhe knew he was ſon and heir to Sir Anthony Abſolute, a baronet of three thouſand a-year.

Coach. That is an odd taſte indeed!—but has ſhe got the ſtuff, Mr Fag; is ſhe rich, hey?

Fag. Rich!—why, I believe ſhe owns half the ſtocks!—Z—ds! Thomas, ſhe could pay the national debt as eaſily as I could my waſherwoman!—She has a lap dog that eats out of gold,—ſhe feeds her parrot with ſmall pearls,—and all her thread-papers are made of bank notes!

Coach. Bravo!—faith!—Odds! I warrant ſhe has a ſet of thouſands at leaſt:—but does ſhe draw kindly with the Captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miſs Lydia Languiſh—But there is an old tough aunt in the way;—though by the bye—ſhe has never ſeen my Maſter—for he got acquainted with Miſs while on a viſit in Glouceſterſhire.

Coach. Well—I wiſh they were once harneſſed together in matrimony.—But pray, Mr Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath?—I ha' heard a deal of it—here's a mort o'merry making—hey?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge; in the morning we go to the pump room (though neither my Maſter nor I drink the waters;) after breakfaſt we ſaunter on the parades, or play a game at billiards; at night we dance: but d—n the place, I'm tired of it; their regular hours ſtupify me—not a fiddle nor a card after eleven!—however, Mr Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties;—I'll introduce you there, Thomas—you'll like him much.

Coach. Sure I know Mr Du Peign—you know his Maſter is to marry Madam Julia.

Fag. I had forgot.—But, Thomas, you muſt poliſh a little—indeed you muſt——Here now—this wig! —what the devil do you do with a *wig*, Thomas?—none of the London whips of any degree of ton wear *wigs now*.

Coach. More's the pity! more's the pity, I ſay—Odd's life! when I heard he[illegible]atter? lawyers and doctors had took to their own hai[illegible]ght how 'twould go next:—Odd rabbit it! when [illegible]uſan[illegible]ſhion had got foot on the bar, I gueſs'd 'twould mount to the Box! —but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr Fag: and look'ye, I'll never gi' up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that.

Coach. Why, bleſs you, the gentlemen of they profeſſion's ben't all of a mind—for in our village now, theſſ *Jack Gauge* the *exciſeman* has ta'en to his carrots, there's little Dick the farrier ſwears he'll never forſake his *bob*, tho' all the college ſhould appear with their own heads!

Fag.

Fag. Indeed! well ſaid Dick! but hold—mark! mark! Thomas.

Coach. Zooks! 'tis the Captain—Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No! no! that is Madam Lucy—my Maſter's miſtreſs's maid,—They lodge at that houſe—but I muſt after him to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd! he's giving her money!—well, Mr Fag———

Fag. Good bye, Thomas.—I have an appointment in Gyd's Porch this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE II,

A Dreſſing-room in MRS MALAPROP'S *Lodgings.*
LYDIA *ſitting on a Sopha, with a Book in her hand.*
LUCY, *as juſt returned from a Meſſage.*

Lucy. Indeed, Ma'am, I travers'd half the town in ſearch of it: I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lydia. And could not you get "The Reward of Conſtancy?"

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lydia. Nor "The Fatal Connection?"

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lydia. Nor "The Miſtakes of the Heart?"

Lucy. Ma'am, Anthuck would have it, Mr Bull ſaid Miſs Sukey ear. ater had juſt fetch'd it away.

Lydia. Heigh-ho!—Did you enquire for "The Delicate Diſtreſs?"

Lucy. ———Or "The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?" Yes indeed, ma'am.—I aſked every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had juſt ſent it home, had ſo ſoiled and dog's-ear'd it, it wa'n't fit for a chriſtian to read.

Lydia. Heigh ho!—Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me.—She has a moſt obſerving thumb; and I believe cheriſhes her nails for making

making marginal notes.—Well, child, what *have* you brought me?

Lucy. Oh! here ma'am.

[*Taking books from under her cloak, and from her pockets.*]

This is "The Gordian Knot."—and this "Peregrine Pickle." Here are "The Tears of Senſibility," and "Humphrey Clinker." This is "The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, written by herſelf."—and here the ecnd volume of "The Sentimental Journey."

Lydia. Heigh-ho!—What are thoſe books by the glaſs?

Lucy. The great one is only "The Whole Duty of Man," where I preſs a few blonds, Ma'am.

Lydia. Very well—give me the *ſal volatile.*

Lucy. Is it in a blue cover, Ma'am.

Lydia. My ſmelling bottle, you ſimpleton!

Lucy. Oh, the drops!—here, Ma'am.

Lydia. Hold!—here's ſome one coming—quick, ſee who it is—— (*Exit* Lucy.

Surely I heard couſin Julia's voice!

(*Re-enter* Lucy.

Lucy. Lud! Ma'am, here is Miſs Melville.

Lydia. Is it poſſible!——

Enter JULIA.

Lydia. My deareſt Julia, how delighted am I! (*Embrace*) How unexpected was this happineſs.

Julia. True, Lydia—and our pleaſure is the greater;—but what has been the matter?—you were denied to me at firſt!

Lydia. Ah, Julia, I have a thouſand things to tell you!—but firſt inform me what has conjur'd you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Julia. He is—we arrived within this hour—and I ſuppoſe he will be hear to wait on Mrs Malaprop as ſoon as he is dreſs'd.

Lydia. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you ſome of my diſtreſs!—I know your gentle nature will ſympathize with me, tho' your prudence may condemn me!—My letters have informed you of

my

my whole connection with Beverly;—but I have loſt him, Julia!—my aunt has diſcovered our intercourſe by a note ſhe intercepted, and has confined me ever ſince!—Yet, would you believe it? ſhe has fallen abſolutely in love with a tall Iriſh Baronet ſhe met one night ſince we have been here at Lady Macſhuffle's rout.

Julia. You jeſt, Lydia!

Lydia. No, upon my word.—She really carries on a kind of correſpondence with him, under a feigned name though, till ſhe chuſes to be known to him;—but it is a *Delia* or a *Celia*, I aſſure you.

Julia. Then, ſurely, ſhe is now more indulgent to her niece.

Lydia. Quite the contrary. Since ſhe has diſcovered her own frailty, ſhe has become more ſuſpicious of mine. Then I muſt inform you of another plague!—That odious *Acres* is to be in Bath to-day; ſo that I proteſt I ſhall be teazed out of all ſpirits!

Julia. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the beſt—Sir Anthony ſhall uſe his intereſt with Mrs Malaprop.

Lydia. But you have not heard the worſt. Unfortunately I had quarrel'd with my poor Beverly, juſt before my aunt made the diſcovery, and I have not ſeen him ſince, to make it up.

Julia. What was his offence?

Lydia. Nothing at all!—But, I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel!—And, ſomehow, I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity.—So, laſt Thurſday I wrote a letter to myſelf, to inform myſelf that Beverly was at that time paying his addreſſes to another woman.—I ſign'd it *your Friend unknown*, ſhew'd it to Beverly, charg'd him with his falſhood, put myſelf in a violent paſſion, and vow'd I'd never ſee him more.

Julia. And you let him depart ſo, and have not ſeen him ſince?

Lydia. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out; I intended only to have teaſed him three days and a half, and now I've loſt him for ever.

Julia,

Julia. If he is as deſerving and ſincere as you have repreſented him to me, he will never give you up ſo. Yet conſider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an Enſign, and you have thirty thouſand pounds!

Lydia. But you know I loſe moſt of my fortune if I marry without my aunt's conſent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do, ever ſince I knew the penalty.—Nor could I love the man, who would wiſh to wait a day for the alternative.

Julia. Nay, this is caprice!

Lydia. What, does Julia tax me with caprice?—I thought her lover Faulkland had enured her to it.

Julia. I do not love even *his* faults.

Lydia. But a-propos—you have ſent to him I ſuppoſe?

Julia. Not yet, upon my word—nor has he the leaſt idea of my being in Bath.—Sir Anthony's reſolution was ſo ſud den, I could not inform him of it.

Lydia. Well, Julia, you are your own miſtreſs, (though under the protection of Sir Anthony) yet have you, for this long year been a ſlave to the caprice, to the whim, the jealouſy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay aſſuming the right of a huſband, while you ſuffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Julia. Nay, you are wrong entirely.—We were contracted before my father's death.—That, and ſome conſequent embarraſſments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's moſt ardent wiſh.—He is too generous to trifle on ſuch a point.—And for his character, you wrong him there too.—No, Lydia, he's too proud, too noble to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without diſſembling; if fretful, without rudeneſs.—Unus'd to the fopperies of love, he is negligent to the little duties expected from a lover—but being unhackney'd in the paſſion, his affection is ardent and ſincere; and as it engroſſes his whole ſoul, he expects every thought and emotion of his miſtreſs to move in uniſon with his.—Yet, though his pride calls for this full return—his humility makes him undervalue thoſe qualities in him, which would entitle him to it; and not feeling why he ſhould be lov'd to the degree he wiſhes, he

ſtill ſuſpects that he is not lov'd enough :—This temper, I muſt own, has coſt me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myſelf his debtor, for thoſe imperfections which ariſe from the ardour of his attachment.

Lydia. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him.—But tell me candidly, Julia, had he never ſav'd your life, do you think you ſhould have been attach'd to him as you are?—Believe me, the rude blaſt that overſet your boat was a proſperous gale of love to him.

Julia. Gratitude may have ſtrengthen'd my attachment to Mr Faulkland, but I lov'd him before he had preſerv'd me; yet ſurely that alone were an obligation ſufficient———

Lydia. Obligation!——Why a water ſpaniel would have done as much?—Well, I ſhould never think of giving my heart to a man becauſe he could ſwim!

Julia. Come, Lydia, you are too inconſiderate.

Lydia. Nay, I do but jeſt.—What's here?

Enter LUCY *in a hurry.*

Lucy. O Ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Abſolute juſt come home with your aunt.

Lydia. They'll not come here.—Lucy do you watch. (*Exit* Lucy.

Julia. Yet I muſt go.—Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to ſhew me the town.—I'll take another opportunity of paying my reſpects to Mrs Malaprop, when ſhe ſhall treat me, as long as ſhe chooſes, with her ſelect words ſo ingeniouſly *miſapplied*, without being *miſpronounced*.

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. O Lud! ma'am, they are both coming up ſtairs.

Lydia. Well, I'll not detain you, Coz.—Adieu, my dear Julia, I'm ſure you are in haſte to ſend to Faulkland.——There—through my room you'll find another ſtair-caſe.

Julia. Adieu.—(*Embrace*) (*Exit* Julia.

Lydia. Here, my dear Lucy, hide theſe books.—Quick, quick.—Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet—throw *Roderick Random* into the cloſet—put *The Innocent*

Innocent Adultery into *The whole duty of man*—thruſt *Lord Aimworth* under the ſopha—cram *Ovid* behind the bolſter—there—put *The Man of Feeling* into your pocket—ſo, ſo, now lay *Mrs Chapone* in ſight, and leave *Fordyce's Sermons* open on the table.

Lucy. O burn it, Ma'am, the hair-dreſſer has torn away as far as *Proper Pride.*

Lydia. Never mind—open at—*Sobriety.*—Fling me *Lord Cheſterfield's Letters.*—Now for 'em.

Enter MRS MALAPROP *and* SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Mrs Mal. There, Sir Anthony, there ſits the deliberate ſimpleton, who wants to diſgrace her family, and laviſh herſelf on a fellow not worth a ſhilling.

Lydia. Madam, I thought you once———

Mrs Mal. You thought, Miſs?—I don't know any buſineſs you have to think at all.—Thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would requeſt of you is, that you will promiſe to forget this fellow—to illiterate him quite from your memory.

Lydia. Ah, Madam! our memories are independent of our wills.—It is not ſo eaſy to forget.

Mrs Mal. But I ſay it is, Miſs; there is nothing on earth ſo eaſy as to *forget,* if a perſon chooſes to ſet about it.—I'm ſure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never exiſted—and thought it my duty ſo to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, theſe violent memories don't become a young woman.

Sir Anth. Why ſure ſhe won't pretend to remember what ſhe's order'd not!—aye, this comes of her reading!

Lydia. What crime, Madam, have I committed to be treated thus?

Mrs Mal. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourſelf from the matter; you know I have proof contravertible of it.—But tell me, will you promiſe to do as you're bid?—Will you take a huſband of your friend's chooſing?

Lydia. Madam, I muſt tell you plainly, that had I no preference for any one elſe, the choice you have made would be my averſion.

Mrs Mal. What buſineſs have you, Miſs, with *preference* and *averſion?* They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis ſafeſt in matrimony to begin with a little *averſion.* I am ſure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a black-a-moor—and yet, Miſs, you are ſenſible what a wife I made!—and when it pleas'd heaven to releaſe me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I ſhed!—But ſuppoſe we were going to give you another choice, will you promiſe us to give up this Beverly?

Lydia. Could I belie my thoughts ſo far, as to give that promiſe, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs Mal. Take yourſelf to your room.—You are fit company for nothing elſe but your ill-humours.

Lydia. Willingly, Ma'am, I cannot change for the worſe. [*Exit* Lydia.

Mrs Mal. There's a little intricate huſſy for you!

Sir Anth. It is not to be wonder'd at, Ma'am—all this is the natural conſequence of teaching girls to read.—Had I a thouſand daughters, by heaven! I'd as ſoon have them taught the black art as the alphabet!

Mrs Mal. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an abſolute miſanthrope.

Sir Anth. In my way hither, Mrs Malaprop, I obſerved your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library!—She had a book in each hand—they were half bound volumes, with marble covers!—From that moment I gueſs'd how full of duty I ſhould ſee her miſtreſs!

Mrs Mal. Thoſe are vile places, indeed!

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an ever green tree of diabolical knowledge!—It bloſſoms through the year!—And depend on it, Mrs Malaprop, that they who are ſo fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at laſt.

Mrs Mal. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony, you ſurely ſpeak laconically.

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs Mal.

Mrs Mal. Obſerve me, Sir Anthony.—I would by no means wiſh a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think ſo much learning becomes a young woman; for inſtance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or ſuch inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be neceſſary for her to handle any of your mathematical, aſtronomical, diabolical inſtruments:—But, Sir Anthony, I would ſend her, at nine years old, to a boarding-ſchool, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice.—Then, Sir, ſhe ſhould have a ſupercilious knowledge in accounts; —and as ſhe grew up, I would have her inſtructed in geometry, that ſhe might know ſomething of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, ſhe ſhould be miſtreſs of orthodoxy, that ſhe might not miſ ſpell, and miſ-pronounce words ſo ſhamefully as girls uſually do; and likewiſe that ſhe might reprehend the true meaning of what ſhe is ſaying.—This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a ſuperſtitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs Malaprop, I will diſpute the point no further with you; though I muſt confeſs, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almoſt every word you ſay is upon my ſide of the queſtion.—But, Mrs Malaprop, to the more important point in debate,—you ſay, you have no objection to my propoſal.

Mrs Mal. None, I aſſure you.—I am under no poſitive engagement with Mr Acres, and as Lydia is ſo obſtinate againſt him, perhaps your ſon may have better ſucceſs.

Sir Anth. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a ſyllable of this yet, though I have for ſome time had the propoſal in my head. He is at preſent with his regiment.

Mrs Mal. We have never ſeen your ſon, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his ſide——

Sir Anth. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs Malaprop, Jack knows that the leaſt demur puts me in a phrenzy directly.—My proceſs was

always very ſimple—in their younger days, 'twas "Jack, do this;"—if he demurr'd—I knock'd him down—and if he grumbled at that—I always ſent him out of the room.

Mrs Mal. Aye, and the propereſt way, o'my conſcience!—nothing is ſo conciliating to young people as ſeverity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I ſhall give Mr Acres his diſcharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your ſon's invocations;—and I hope you will repreſent *her* to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir Anth. Madam, I will handle the ſubject prudently.—Well, I muſt leave you—and let me beg you, Mrs Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl;—take my advice—keep a tight hand—if ſhe rejects this propoſal—clap her under lock and key: and if you were juſt to let the ſervants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how ſhe'd come about! [*Exit* Sir Anth.

Mrs Mal. Well, at any rate I ſhall be glad to get her from under my intuition.—She has ſomehow diſcovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ſure, Lucy can't have betray'd me!—No, the girl is ſuch a ſimpleton, I ſhould have made her confeſs it.—Lucy!—Lucy!—*(calls.)*—Had ſhe been one of your artificial ones, I ſhould never have truſted her.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs Mal. Yes, girl.—Did you ſee Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am, not a glimpſe of him.

Mrs Mal. You are ſure, Lucy, that you never mentioned——

Lucy. O Gemini! I'd ſooner cut my tongue out.

Mrs Mal. Well, don't let your ſimplicity be impos'd on.

Lucy. No, Ma'am.

Mrs Mal. So, come to me preſently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius;—but mind, Lucy—if ever you betray what you are entruſted with—(unleſs it be other people's ſecrets to me) you forfeit my malevolence

malevolence for ever; and your being a ſimpleton ſhall be no excuſe for your locality. [*Exit* Mrs Mal.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha!—So, my dear *Simplicity*, let me give you a little reſpite—*(altering her manner)*—let girls in my ſtation be as fond as they pleaſe of appearing expert, and knowing in their truſts; commend me to a maſk of *ſtillneſs*, and a pair of ſharp eyes for my own intereſt under it!—Let me ſee to what account have I turn'd my *Simplicity* lately.—*(looks at a paper.)*—For *abetting Miſs Lydia Languiſh in a deſign of running away with an Enſign!—in money—ſundry times—twelve pound twelve—gowns, five—hats, ruffles, caps, &c. &c.—numberleſs!—From the ſaid Enſign, within this laſt month, ſix guineas and a half.*—About a quarter's pay!—Item, *from Mrs Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her*—when I found matters were likely to be diſcovered—*two guineas, and a black paduaſoy*—Item *from Mr Acres, for carrying divers letters*—which I never deliver'd—*two guineas and a pair of buckles.*—Item, *from Sir Lucius O'Trigger—three crowns—two gold pocket pieces—and a ſilver ſnuff-box!*—Well done, *Simplicity!* yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe, that he was correſponding, not with the *Aunt*, but with the *Niece:* for though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to ſacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the neceſſities of his fortune. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. Captain Absolute's *Lodgings.*

Captain Absolute *and* Fag.

Fag. SIR, while I was there Sir Anthony came in: I told him, you had ſent me to enquire after his health, and to know if he was at leiſure to ſee you.

Abſ. And what did he ſay, on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life I never ſaw an elderly gentleman more aſtoniſhed! He ſtarted back two or three paces,

paces, rapt out a dozen interjected oaths, and aſked, what the devil had brought you here?

Abſ. Well, Sir, and what did you ſay?

Fag. O, I lied, Sir—I forgot the preciſe lie, but you may depend on't, he got no truth from me. Yet, with ſubmiſſion, for fear of blunders in future, I ſhould be glad to fix what *has* brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little conſiſtently.—Sir Anthony's ſervants were curious, Sir, very curious indeed.

Abſ. You have ſaid nothing to them?——

Fag. O, not a word, Sir—not a word.—Mr Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the diſcreeteſt of whips)—

Abſ. 'Sdeath!—you raſcal! you have not truſted him!

Fag. O, *no*, Sir—no—no—not a ſyllable, upon my veracity!—He was, indeed, a little inquiſitive; but I was ſly, Sir, deviliſh ſly!—My maſter, (ſaid I,) honeſt Thomas, (you know, Sir, one ſays *honeſt* to one's inferiors) is come to Bath to *recruit*—Yes, Sir—I ſaid, *to recruit*—and whether for men, money, or conſtitution, you know, Sir, is nothing to him, nor any one elſe.

Abſ. Well—*recruit* will do—let it be ſo—

Fag. O, Sir, recruit will do ſurpriſingly—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas, that your honour had already inliſted five diſbanded chairmen, ſeven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard markers.

Abſ. You blockhead, never ſay more than is neceſſary.

Fag. I beg pardon, Sir—I beg pardon—But with ſubmiſſion, a lie is nothing unleſs one ſupports it.—Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge indorſements as well as the bill.

Abſ. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit, by offering too much ſecurity.—Is Mr Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, Sir, changing his dreſs.

Abſ. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miſs Melville's arrival?

Fag.

Fag. I fancy not, Sir; he has ſeen no one ſince he came in, but his gentleman, who was with him at Briſtol.—I think, Sir, I hear Mr Faulkland coming down——

Abſ. Go, tell him, I am here.

Fag. Yes, Sir—*(going)* I beg pardon, Sir, but ſhould Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember, that we are *recruiting*, if you pleaſe.

Abſ. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderneſs to my character, if your honour could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I ſhall eſteem it as an obligation; for though I never ſcruple a lie to ſerve my maſter, yet it hurts one's conſcience to be found out. [*Exit.*

Abſ. Now for my whimſical friend—if he does not know that his miſtreſs is here, I'll teaſe him a little before I tell him——

Enter FAULKLAND.

Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me, when I had finiſhed the buſineſs I went on. Well, what news ſince I left you? How ſtand matters between you and Lydia?

Abſ. Faith, much as they were; I have not ſeen her ſince our quarrel; however, I expect to be recalled every hour.

Faulk. Why don't your perſuade her to go off with you at once?

Abſ. What, and loſe two-thirds of her fortune? You forget that, my friend.—No, no, I could have brought her to that long ago.

Faulk. Nay then, you trifle too long—if you are ſure of *her*, propoſe to the aunt *in your own character*, and write to Sir Anthony for his conſent.

Abſ. Softly, ſoftly, for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Enſign Beverly, yet am I by no means certain that ſhe would take me with the impediment of our friend's conſent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reverſion of a good fortune

on

on my ſide; no, no, I muſt prepare her gradually for the diſcovery, and make myſelf neceſſary to her, before I riſk it.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the Hotel?

Faulk. Indeed I cannot; I am not in ſpirits to be of ſuch a party.

Abſ. By Heavens! I ſhall forſwear your company. You are the moſt teaſing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man.

Faulk. I own I am unfit for company.

Abſ. Am not *I* a lover; aye, and a romantic one too? Yet do I carry every where with me ſuch a confounded farrago of doubts, fears, hopes, wiſhes, and all the flimſy furniture of a country Miſs's brain!

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and ſoul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object.—You throw for a large ſtake, but loſing—you could ſtake, and throw again:—but I have ſet my ſum of happineſs on this caſt, and not to ſucceed, were to be ſtript of all.

Abſ. But for Heaven's ſake! what grounds for apprehenſion can your whimſical brain conjure up at preſent?

Faulk. What grounds for apprehenſion did you ſay? Heavens! are there not a thouſand! I fear for her ſpirits—her health—her life—My abſence may fret her; her anxiety for my return, her fears for me, may oppreſs her gentle temper. And for her health—does not every hour bring me cauſe to be alarmed? If it rains, ſome ſhower may even then have chilled her delicate frame!—If the wind be keen, ſome rude blaſt may have affected her! The heat of noon, the dews of the evening, may endanger the life of her, for whom only I value mine. O! Jack, when delicate and feeling ſouls are ſeparated, there is not a feature in the ſky, not a movement of the elements, not an aſpiration of the breeze, but hints ſome cauſe for a lover's apprehenſion!

Abſ. Aye, but we may chuſe whether we will take the hint or not.—So then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia were well and in ſpirits, you would be intirely content.

Faulk.

Faulk. I ſhould be happy beyond meaſure—I am anxious only for that.

Abſ. Then to cure your anxiety at once—Miſs Melvil'e is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

Abſ. She is arrived here with my father within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be ſerious?

Abſ. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be ſurpriſed at a ſudden whim of this kind.—Serionſly then, it is as I tell you—upon my honour.

Faulk. My dear friend!—Hollo, Du Peigne!—my hat—my dear Jack—now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneaſineſs.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, Mr Acres juſt arrived is below.

Abſ. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he ſhall tell you how your miſtreſs has been ever ſince you left her.—Fag, ſhew the gentleman up. [*Exit* Fag.

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Abſ. O, very intimate: I inſiſt on your not going: beſides, his character will divert you.

Faulk. Well, I ſhould like to aſk him a few queſtions.

Abſ. He is likewiſe a rival of mine—that is of my *other ſelf*, for he does not think his friend Captain Abſolute ever ſaw the lady in queſtion;—and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of *one Beverley*, a concealed ſculking rival, who—

Faulk. Huſh!—He's here.

Enter ACRES.

Acres. Hah, my dear friend, noble captain, and honeſt Jack, how do'ſt thou? juſt arrived faith, as you ſee.—Sir, your humble ſervant. Warm work on the roads, Jack—Odds whips and wheels! I've travelled like a Comet, with a tail of duſt all the way as long as the Mall.

Abſ. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an excentric Planet, but we know your attractions hither give me leave to introduce

introduce Mr Faulkland to you; Mr Faulkland, Mr Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am moſt heartliy glad to ſee you: Sir, I ſolicit your connections.—Hey, Jack—what this is Mr Faulkland, who———

Abſ. Aye, Bob, Miſs Melville's Mr Faulkland.

Acres. Od'ſo! ſhe and your father can be but juſt arrived before me—I ſuppoſe you have ſeen them.—Ah! Mr Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man.

Faulk. I have not ſeen Miſs Melville yet, Sir,—I hope ſhe enjoyed full health and ſpirits in Devonſhire?

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, Sir,—never better.—Odd's Bluſhes and Blooms! ſhe has been as healthy as the German Spa.

Faulk. Indeed!—I did hear that ſhe had been a little indiſpoſed.

Acres. Falſe, falſe, Sir, only ſaid to vex you: Quite the reverſe I aſſure you.

Faulk. There, Jack, you ſee ſhe has the advantage of me; I had almoſt fretted myſelf ill.

Abſ. Now are you angry with your miſtreſs for not having been ſick.

Faulk. No, no, you miſunderſtand me:—Yet ſurely a little trifling indiſpoſition is not an unnatural conſequence of abſence from thoſe we love.—Now confeſs—isn't there ſomething unkind in this violent, robuſt, unfeeling heath?

Abſ. O, it was very unkind of her to be well in your abſence to be ſure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack.

Faulk. Well, Sir, but you was ſaying Miſs Melville has been ſo *exceedingly* well—what then, ſhe has been merry and gay I ſuppoſe?—Always in ſpirits—hey?

Acres. Merry, Odds Crickets! ſhe has been the bell and ſpirit of the company wherever ſhe has been—ſo lively and entertaining! ſo full of wit and humour!

Faulk. There, Jack, there.—O, by my ſoul! there is an innate levity in woman, that nothing can overcome.—What! happy and I away!

Abſ. Have done:—how fooliſh this is! juſt now you were only apprehenſive for your miſtreſs's *ſpirits.*

Faulk.

Faulk. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and ſpirit of the company?

Abſ. No, indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Abſ. O, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humour?

Abſ. No, faith, to do you juſtice, you have been confoundedly ſtupid indeed.

Acres. What's the matter with the gentleman?

Abſ. He is only expreſſing his great ſatisfaction at hearing Julia has been ſo well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faulk. Oh! I am rejoiced to hear it—yes, yes, ſhe has a *happy* diſpoſition!

Acres. That ſhe has indeed—then ſhe is ſo accompliſhed—ſo ſweet a voice—ſo expert at her harpſichord—ſuch a miſtreſs of flat and ſharp, ſquallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month—Odds Minums and Crotchets! how ſhe did chirup at Mrs Piano's Concert.

Faulk. There again, what ſay you to this? you ſee ſhe has been all mirth and ſong—not a thought of me!

Abſ. Pho! man, is not muſic the food of love?

Faulk. Well, well, it may be ſo.—Pray, Mr——, what's his d—d name?—Do you remember what ſongs Miſs Melville ſung?

Acres. Not I indeed.

Abſ. Stay now, they were ſome pretty, melancholy purling ſtream airs, I warrant; perhaps you may recollect;—did ſhe ſing—"*When abſent from my ſoul's delight?*"

Acres. No that wa'n't it.

Abſ. Or,—"*Go, gentle gales!*"—*Go, gentle gales!*"—(ſings.)

Acres. O no! nothing like it.—Odds! now I recollect one of them—"*My heart's my own, my will is free.*"—(ſings.)

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happineſs on ſuch a trifler! S'death! to make herſelf the pipe and ballad monger of a circle! to ſoothe her light

heart with catches and glees!—What can you ſay to this, Sir?

Abſ. Why, that I ſhould be glad to hear my miſtreſs had been ſo merry, *Sir*.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not ſorry that ſhe has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—I would not have had her ſad or ſick—yet ſurely a ſympathetic heart would have ſhewn itſelf even in the choice of a ſong—ſhe might have been temperately healthy, and ſomehow plaintively gay;—but ſhe has been dancing too, I doubt not!

Acres. What does the gentleman ſay about dancing?

Abſ. He ſays the lady we ſpeak of dances as well as ſhe ſings.

Acres. Aye truly, does ſhe—there was at our laſt race ball———

Faulk. Hell and the devil! There! there—I told you ſo! I told you ſo! Oh! ſhe thrives in my abſence!—Dancing! but her whole feelings has been in oppoſition with mine;—I have been anxious, ſilent, penſive, ſedentary—my days have been hours of care, my nights of watchfulneſs.—She has been all health! ſpirit! laugh! ſong! dance!—Oh! d—n'd, d—n'd levity!

Abſ. For heaven's ſake! Faulkland, don't expoſe yourſelf ſo.—Suppoſe ſhe has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of ſociety often oblige—

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myſelf—perhaps as you ſay—for form ſake.—What, Mr Acres, you were praiſing Miſs Melville's manner of dancing a *minuet*—hey?

Acres. O I dare inſure her for that—but what I was going to ſpeak of was her *Country dancing*:—Odds ſwimmings! ſhe has ſuch an air with her!—

Faulk. Now diſappointment on her!—defend this, Abſolute, why don't you defend this?—Country-dances! jiggs, and reels! am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I ſhould not have minded that—I ſay I ſhould not have regarded a minuet—but *country-dances*! Z—ds! had ſhe made one in a *catillon*—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet through

a ſtring of amorous palming puppies!—to ſhew paces like a managed filly!—O Jack, there never can be but *one* man in the world, whom a truly modeſt and delicate woman ought to pair with in a *country dance*; and even then, the reſt of the couples ſhould be her great uncles and aunts!

Abſ. Aye, to be ſure!—grand-fathers and grandmothers!

Faulk. If there be one vicious mind in the ſet, 'twill ſpread like a contagion—the action of the pulſe beats to the laſcivious movement of the jigg—their quivering warm breath'd ſighs impregnate the very air—the atmoſphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous ſpark darts through every link of the chain!—I muſt leave you—I own I am ſomewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it. [*Going.*

Abſ. Nay, but ſtay, Faulkland, and thank Mr Acres for his good news.

Faulk. D—n his news! [*Exit* Faulkland.

Abſ. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland five minutes ſince—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneaſineſs!"

Acres. The gentleman wa'n't angry at my praiſing his miſtreſs, was he?

Abſ. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don't ſay ſo? Ha! ha! jealous of me—that's a good joke.

Abſ. There's nothing ſtrange in that, Bob; let me tell you, that ſprightly grace and inſinuating manner of your's will do ſome miſchief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! miſchief—ha! ha! but you know I am not my own property, my dear Lydia has foreſtalled me.—She could never abide me in the country, becauſe I uſed to dreſs ſo badly—but odds frogs and tambours! I ſhan't take matters ſo here—now ancient madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old cloaths know who's maſter—I ſhall ſtraitway caſhier the hunting-frock—and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training ſome time.

Abſ. Indeed!

Acres. Aye—and tho'ff the ſide curls are a little reſtive, my hind part takes it very kindly.

Abſ. O, you'll poliſh, I doubt not.

Acres. Abſolutely I propoſe ſo—then if I can find out this Enſign Beverly, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Abſ. Spoke like a man—but, pray, Bob, I obſerve you have got an odd kind of a new method of ſwearing——

Acres. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't *it?*—I did'nt invent it myſelf though; but a commander in our militia—a great ſcholar, I aſſure you—ſays that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and nothing but their antiquity makes them reſpectable;—becauſe, he ſays, the ancients would never ſtick to an oath or two, but would ſay by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the ſentiment—ſo that to ſwear with propriety, ſays my little Major, the "oath ſhould be an echo to the ſenſe;" and this we call the *oath referential*, or *ſentimental ſwearing*—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Abſ. Very genteel, and very new indeed—and I dare ſay will ſupplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Aye, aye, the beſt terms will grow obſolete—Damns have had their day.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below deſires to ſee you—Shall I ſhew him into the parlour?

Abſ. Aye—you may.

Acres. Well, I muſt begone——

Abſ. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, Sir.

Abſ. You puppy, why didn't you ſhew him up directly? [*Exit* Fag.

Acres. You have ſome buſineſs with Sir Anthony.—I expect a meſſage from Mrs Malaprop at my lodgings—I have ſent alſo to my dear friend Sir Lucius O'Trigger.—Adieu, Jack, we muſt meet at night, when you ſhall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

Abſ.

Abſ. That I will with all my heart. [*Exit* Acres.
Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the buſineſs that has brought me here—I wiſh the gout had held him faſt in Devonſhire, with all my ſoul!

Enter SIR ANTHONY.

Sir, I am delighted to ſee you here; and looking ſo well!—your ſudden arrival at Bath made me apprehenſive for your health.

Sir Anth. Very apprehenſive, I dare ſay, Jack,—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Abſ. Yes, Sir, I am on duty.

Sir Anth. Well, Jack, I am glad to ſee you, though I did not expect it, for I was going to write to you on a little matter of buſineſs.—Jack, I have been conſidering that I grow old and infirm, and ſhall probably not trouble you long.

Abſ. Pardon me, Sir, I never ſaw you look more ſtrong and hearty; and I pray frequently that you may continue ſo.

Sir Anth. I hope your prayers may be heard, with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been conſidering that I am ſo ſtrong and hearty, I may continue to plague a long time.—Now, Jack, I am ſenſible that the income of your commiſſion, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a ſmall pittance for a lad of your ſpirit.

Abſ. Sir, you are very good.

Sir Anth. And it is my wiſh, while yet I live, to have my boy make ſome figure in the world.—I have reſolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Abſ. Sir, your kindneſs overpowers me—ſuch generoſity makes the gratitude of reaſon more lively than the ſenſations even of filial affection.

Sir Anth. I am glad you are ſo ſenſible of my attention—and you ſhall be maſter of a large eſtate in a few weeks.

Abſ. Let my future life, Sir, ſpeak my gratitude; I cannot expreſs the ſenſe I have of your munificence.

—Yet, Sir, I preſume you would not wiſh me to quit the army?

Sir Anth. O, that ſhall be as your wife chuſes.

Abſ. My wife, Sir!

Sir Anth. Aye, aye, ſettle that between you—ſettle that between you.

Abſ. A *wife*, Sir, did you ſay?

Sir Anth. Aye, a wife—why, did not I mention her before?

Abſ. Not a word of her, Sir.

Sir Anth. Odd ſo!—I muſtn't forget *her* though.—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is ſaddled with a wife—but I ſuppoſe that makes no difference.

Abſ. Sir! Sir!—you amaze me!

Sir Anth. Why what the devil's the matter with the fool? Juſt now you were all gratitude and duty.

Abſ. I was, Sir, you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir Anth. Why—what difference does that make? Odd's life, Sir! if you have the eſtate, you muſt take it with the live ſtock on it, as it ſtands.

Abſ. If my happineſs is to be the price, I muſt beg leave to decline the purchaſe.——Pray, Sir, who is the lady?

Sir Anth. What's that to you, Sir?—Come, give me your promiſe to love, and to marry her directly.

Abſ. Sure, Sir, this is not very reaſonable, to ſummon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir Anth. I am ſure, Sir, 'tis more unreaſonable in you to *object* to a lady you know nothing of.

Abſ. Then, Sir, I muſt tell you plainly, that my inclinations are fix'd on another—my heart is engaged to an angel.

Sir Anth. Then pray let it ſend an excuſe.—It is very ſorry—but *buſineſs* prevents it's waiting on her.

Abſ. But my vows are pledged to her.

Sir Anth. Let her foreclоſe, Jack; let her foreclоſe; they are not worth redeeming; beſides, you have the angel's vows in exchange, I ſuppoſe; ſo there can be no loſs there.

Abſ.

Abſ. You muſt excuſe me, Sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Hark'ee, Jack;—I have heard you for ſome time with patience—I have been cool,—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itſelf—when I am not thwarted;—no one more eaſily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

Abſ. Sir, I muſt repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Now d—n me! if ever I call you *Jack* again while I live!

Abſ. Nay, Sir, but hear me.

Sir Anth. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! ſo give me your promiſe by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you don't by——

Abſ. What, Sir, promiſe to link myſelf to ſome maſs of uglineſs! to——

Sir Anth. Z——ds! ſirrah! the lady ſhall be as ugly as I chooſe; ſhe ſhall have a hump on each ſhoulder; ſhe ſhall be as crooked as the Creſcent; her one eye ſhall roll like the Bull's in Cox's Muſæum—ſhe ſhall have a ſkin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—ſhe ſhall be all this, ſirrah!—yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and ſit up all night to write ſonnets on her beauty.

Abſ. This is reaſon and moderation indeed!

Sir Anth. None of your ſneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes?

Abſ. Indeed, Sir, I never was in a worſe humour for mirth in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis falſe, Sir, I know you are laughing in your ſleeve; I know you'll grin when I am gone, ſirrah!

Abſ. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir Anth. None of your paſſion, Sir! none of your violence; if you pleaſe—It won't do with me, I promiſe you.

Abſ. Indeed, Sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir Anth.

Sir Anth. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a paſſion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! but it won't do.

Abſ. Nay, Sir, upon my word.

Sir Anth. So you will fly out! can't you be cool, like me? What the devil good can *Paſſion* do!—*Paſſion* is of no ſervice, you impudent, inſolent, overbearing reprobate!—There you ſneer again!—don't provoke me!—but you rely upon the mildneſs of my temper—you do, you dog!—you play upon the meekneſs of my diſpoſition!—Yet take care—the patience of a ſaint may be overcome at laſt!—but mark! I give you ſix hours and a half to conſider of this; if you then agree without any condition, to do every thing on earth that I chuſe, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you—If not, z——ds! don't enter the ſame hemiſphere with me! don't dare to breathe the ſame air, or uſe the ſame light with me; but get an atmoſphere and a ſun of your own! I'll ſtrip you of your commiſſion; I'll lodge a five and-three pence, in the hands of truſtees, and you ſhall live on the intereſt.—I'll diſown you, I'll diſinherit you! and d—n me! if ever I call you Jack again! [*Exit* Sir Anth.

ABSOLUTE *ſolus.*

Abſ. Mild, gentle, conſiderate father—I kiſs your hands—What a tender method of giving his opinion in theſe matters Sir Anthony has! I dare not truſt him with the truth.—I wonder what old wealthy hag it is that he wants to beſtow on me!—yet he married himſelf for love! and was in his youth a bold intriguer, and a gay companion!

Enter FAG.

Fag. Aſſuredly, Sir, your father is wrath to a degree; he comes down ſtairs eight or ten ſteps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the banniſters all the way; I, and the cook's dog, ſtand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a ſtroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my maſter, then kicking the turnſpit into the area, d—ns us all for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, Sir, were I in your

your place, and found my father ſuch very bad company, I ſhould certainly drop his acquaintance.

Abſ. Ceaſe your impertinence, Sir, at preſent.—Did you come in for nothing more?——Stand out of the way! [*Puſhes him aſide and exit.*

FAG *ſolus.*

Fag. Soh! Sir Anthony trims my maſter; he is afraid to reply to his father—then vents his ſpleen on poor Fag!—When one is vexed by one perſon, to revenge one's ſelf on another, who happens to come in the way—is the vileſt injuſtice; Ah! it ſhews the worſt temper—the baſeſt——

Enter ERRAND BOY.

Boy. Mr Fag! Mr Fag! your maſter calls you.

Fag. Well! you little, dirty puppy, you need not baul ſo!—The meaneſt diſpoſition! the——

Boy. Quick, quick, Mr Fag.

Fag. Quick! quick! you impudent jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you too? you little, impertinent, inſolent, kitchen-bred—— [*Exit kicking and beating him.*

SCENE II. *The North Parade.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. So—I ſhall have another rival to add to my miſtreſs's liſt—Captain Abſolute.——However, I ſhall not enter his name till my purſe has received notice in form. Poor Acres is diſmiſſed!—Well, I have done him a laſt friendly office, in letting him know that Beverley was here before him.—Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his *dear Delia*, as he calls her:—I wonder he's not here!—I have a little ſcruple of conſcience from this deceit; though I ſhould not be paid ſo well, if my hero knew that *Delia* was near fifty, and her own miſtreſs.

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir Luc. Hah! my little ambaſſadreſs—upon my conſcience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half-hour. *Lucy.*

Lucy. *(Speaking ſimply)* O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worſhip on the North.

Sir Luc. Faith!—may be, that was the reaſon we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out and I not ſee you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-houſe, and I choſe the *window* on purpoſe that I might not miſs you.

Lucy. My ſtars! Now I'd wager a ſixpence I went by while you were aſleep.

Sir Luc. Sure enough it muſt have been ſo—and I never dreamt it was ſo late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir Luc. O faith! I gueſſed you weren't come empty-handed—well—let me ſee what the dear creature ſays.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius. *(Gives him a letter).*

Sir Luc. (Reads) "*Sir—there is often a ſudden incentive pulſe in love, that has a greater induction than years of domeſtick combination: ſuch was the commotion I felt at the firſt ſuperfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger.*" Very pretty, upon my word. "*Female punctuation forbids me to ſay more; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the laſt criterion of my affections.*

DELIA."

Upon my conſcience! Lucy, your Lady is a great miſtreſs of language. Faith, ſhe's quite the queen of the dictionary!—for the devil a word dare refuſe coming at her call—though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy. Aye, Sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir Luc. Experience! what at ſeventeen?

Lucy. O true, Sir—but then ſhe reads ſo—my ſtars! how ſhe will read off hand!

Sir Luc. Faith, ſhe muſt be very deep read to write this way—though ſhe is rather an arbitrary writer too—for here are a great many poor words preſſed into the ſervice of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Chriſtendom.

Lucy.

Lucy. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how ſhe talks of you!

Sir Luc. O tell her, I'll make her the beſt huſband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain! —But we muſt get the old gentlewoman's conſent— and do every thing fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be ſo nice!

Sir Luc. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it:—I am ſo poor, that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money, I'd ſteal your miſtreſs and her fortune with a great deal of pleaſure. —However, my pretty girl, *(gives her money,)* here's a little ſomething to buy you a ribband; and meet me in the evening, and I'll give you an anſwer to this. So, huſſy, take a kiſs before-hand, to put you in mind.

[*Kiſſes her.*]

Lucy. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never ſeed ſuch a gemman! my lady won't like you if you're ſo impudent.

Sir Luc. Faith ſhe will, Lucy—that ſame—pho! what's the name of it!—*Modeſty!*—is a quality in a lover more praiſed by the women than liked; ſo, if your miſtreſs aſks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiſs, tell her fifty—my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir Luc. Ah then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth preſently.

Lucy. For ſhame now; here is ſome one coming.

Sir Luc. O faith, I'll quiet your conſcience!

[*Sees* FAG.—*Exit, humming a tune.*

Enter FAG.

Fag. So, ſo, Ma'am. I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O lud!—now, Mr Fag—you flurry one ſo.

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one bye—ſo a little leſs ſimplicity, with a grain or too more ſincerity, if you pleaſe——You play falſe with us, Madam.—— I ſaw you give the Baronet a letter.—My maſter ſhall know this—and if he don't call him out—I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are ſo haſty.—That letter was from Mrs Malaprop, ſimpleton.—She is taken with Sir Lucius's addreſs.

Fag.

Fag. How! what taſtes ſome people have!—Why I ſuppoſe I have walked by her window an hundred times.—But what ſays our young lady? Any meſſage to my maſter?

Lucy. Sad news! Mr Fag.—A worſe rival than Acres! Sir Anthony Abſolute has propoſed his ſon.

Fag. What, Captain Abſolute?

Lucy. Even ſo.—I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha! very good, faith,—Good bye, Lucy, I muſt away with this news.

Lucy. Well—you may laugh—but it is true, I aſſure you. [*Going.*]

But—Mr Fag—tell your maſter not to be caſt down by this.

Fag. O, he'll be ſo diſconſolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Abſolute.

Fag. Never fear!—never fear!

Lucy. Be ſure—bid him keep up his ſpirits.

Fag. We will—we will. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The North Parade.*

Enter ABSOLUTE.

Abſ. 'TIS juſt as Fag told me, indeed.—Whimſical enough, faith! My father wants to *force* me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with!—He muſt not know of my connection with her yet a-while.—He has too ſummary a method of proceeding in theſe matters.—However, I'll read my recantation inſtantly.—My converſion is ſomething ſudden, indeed—but I can aſſure him it is very *ſincere*.—So, ſo,—here he comes.—He looks plaguy gruff. [*Steps aſide.*

Enter SIR ANTHONY.

Sir. Anth. No—I'll die ſooner than forgive him.—*Die*, did I ſay? I'll live theſe fifty years to plague him.

him.—At our laſt meeting, his impudence had almoſt put me out of temper.—An obſtinate, paſſionate, ſelf-willed boy!—Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and ſiſters!—for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a-year, beſides his pay, ever ſince!—But I have done with him;—he's any body's ſon for me.—I never will ſee him more,—never—never—never—never.

Abſ. Now for a penitential face.

Sir Anth. Fellow, get out of my way.

Abſ. Sir, you ſee a penitent before you.

Sir Anth. I ſee an impudent ſcoundrel before me.

Abſ. A ſincere penitent.—I am come, Sir, to acknowledge my error, and to ſubmit entirely to your will.

Sir Anth. What's that?

Abſ. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and conſidering on your paſt goodneſs, and kindneſs, and condeſcenſion to me.

Sir Anth. Well, Sir?

Abſ. I have been likewiſe weighing and balancing what you were pleaſed to mention concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir Anth. Well, puppy?

Abſ. Why then, Sir, the reſult of my reflections is—a reſolution to ſacrifice every inclination of my own to your ſatisfaction.

Sir Anth. Why now, you talk ſenſe—abſolute ſenſe—I never heard any thing more ſenſible in my life.—Confound you; you ſhall be Jack again.

Abſ. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir Anth. Why, then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is.——Nothing but your paſſion and violence, you ſilly fellow, prevented my telling you at firſt. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare.——What think you of Miſs Lydia Languiſh?

Abſ. Languiſh? What, the Languiſhes of Worceſterſhire?

Sir Anth. Worceſterſhire! No. Did you never meet Mrs Malaprop and her niece, Miſs Languiſh, who came into our country juſt before you were laſt ordered to your regiment?

Abſ. Malaprop! Languiſh! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, ſtay—I think I do recollect ſomething.——*Languiſh! Languiſh!* She ſquints, don't ſhe?——A little red-haired girl.

Sir Anth. Squints!——A red-haired girl!——Z——ds! no.

Abſ. Then I muſt have forgot; it can't be the ſame perſon.

Sir Anth. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing ſeventeen?

Abſ. As to that, Sir, I am quite indifferent.—If I can pleaſe you in the matter, 'tis all I deſire.

Sir Anth. Nay, but Jack, ſuch eyes! ſuch eyes! ſo innocently wild! ſo baſhfully irreſolute! Not a glance but ſpeaks and kindles ſome thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack! ſo deeply bluſhing at the inſinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then Jack, her lips!—O Jack, lips ſmiling at their own diſcretion; and if not ſmiling, more ſweetly pouting; more lovely in ſullenneſs!

Abſ. That's ſhe indeed. Well done, old gentleman.

Sir Anth. Then, Jack, her neck.—O Jack! Jack!

Abſ. And which is to be mine, Sir, the Niece or the Aunt?

Sir Anth. Why, you unfeeling, inſenſible puppy, I deſpiſe you. When I was of your age, ſuch a deſcription would have made me fly like a rocket! The *Aunt*, indeed!—Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly to gain an empire.

Abſ. Not to pleaſe your father, Sir?

Sir Anth. To pleaſe my father!——Z—ds! not to pleaſe———O my father ——Oddſo!——yes—yes; if my father indeed had deſired——that's quite another matter——Tho' he wa'n't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Abſ. I dare ſay not, Sir.

Sir Anth.

Sir Anth. But, Jack, you are not ſorry to find your miſtreſs is ſo beautiful.

Abſ. Sir, I repeat it; if I pleaſe you in this affair, 'tis all I deſire. Not that I think a woman the worſe for being handſome; but, Sir, if you pleaſe to recollect, you before hinted ſomething of a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I ſhould rather chooſe a wife of mine to have the uſual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and tho' *one* eye may be very agreeable, yet as the prejudice has always run in favour of *two*, I would not wiſh to affect a ſingularity in that article.

Sir Anth. What a phlegmatic ſot it is! Why, ſirrah, you're an Anchorite!—a vile inſenſible ſtock—You a ſoldier!—You're a walking block, fit only to duſt the company's regimentals on!—Odds life! I've a great mind to marry the girl myſelf!

Abſ. I am entirely at your diſpoſal, Sir; if you ſhould think of addreſſing Miſs Languiſh yourſelf, I ſuppoſe you would have me marry the *Aunt*; or if you ſhould change your mind, and take the old lady—'tis the ſame to me—I'll marry the *Niece*.

Sir Anth. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or———but, come, I know your indifference on ſuch a ſubject muſt be all a lie—I'm ſure it muſt—come, confeſs, Jack—you have been lying—ha'n't you? You have been playing the hypocrite, hey!—I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Abſ. I'm ſorry, Sir, that the reſpect and duty which I bear to you ſhould be ſo miſtaken.

Sir Anth. Hang your reſpect and duty! But, come along with me, I'll write a note to Mrs Malaprop, and you ſhall viſit the lady directly. Her eyes ſhall be the Promethian torch to you,—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back, ſtark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, egad, I'll marry the girl myſelf! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. JULIA's *Dreſſing-room.*

FAULKLAND, *ſolus.*

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly; I wonder ſhe is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unſatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! Yet I know not that I indulge it in any other point:—but on this one ſubject, and to this one ſubject, whom I think I love beyond my life, I am ever ungraciouſly fretful, and madly capricious!—I am conſcious of it—yet I cannot correct myſelf! What tender honeſt joy ſparkled in her eyes when we met!—How delicate was the warmth of her expreſſions!—I was aſhamed to appear leſs happy—though I had come reſolved to wear a face of coolneſs and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's preſence prevented my propoſed expoſtulations:—yet I muſt be ſatisfied that ſhe has not been ſo *very* happy in my abſence.—She is coming!—Yes!—I know the nimbleneſs of her tread, when ſhe thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her ſtay.

Enter JULIA.

Julia. I had not hop'd to ſee you again ſo ſoon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my firſt welcome—reſtrained as we were by the preſence of a third perſon?

Julia. O Faulkland, when your kindneſs can make me thus happy, let me not think that I diſcovered ſomething of coldneſs in your firſt ſalutation.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia.—I *was* rejoiced to ſee you—to ſee you in ſuch health—Sure I had no cauſe for coldneſs?

Julia. Nay then, I ſee you have taken ſomething ill.—You muſt not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well, then—ſhall I own to you that my joy at hearing of your health and your arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was ſomewhat damped by his dwelling much on the high ſpirits you had enjoyed in Devonſhire—on your mirth—your ſinging—dancing, and I know not what!—For ſuch is my temper, Julia!

tha

that I ſhould regard every mirthful moment in your abſence as a treaſon to conſtancy:—The mutual tear that ſteals down the cheek of parting lovers is a compact, that no ſmile ſhall live there till they meet again.

Julia. Muſt I never ceaſe to tax my Faulkland with this teaſing minute caprice?—Can the idle reports of a ſilly boor weigh in your breaſt againſt my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: No, no—I am happy if you have been ſo—yet only ſay, that you did not ſing with *mirth*—ſay that you *thought* of Faulkland in the dance.

Julia. I never can be happy in your abſence.—If I wear a countenance of content, it is to ſhew that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth.—If I ſeem'd ſad—it were to make malice triumph; and ſay, that I had fixed my heart on one, who left me to lament his roving, and my own credulity.—Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I ſay, that I have have often dreſſed ſorrow in ſmiles, leſt my friends ſhould gueſs whoſe unkindneſs had cauſed my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodneſs to me.—I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your conſtancy!

Julia. If ever without ſuch cauſe from you, as I will not ſuppoſe poſſible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial ſcoff for levity, and baſe ingratitude.

Faulk. Ah! Julia, that laſt word is grating to me. I would I had no title to your *gratitude!* Search your heart, Julia; perhaps what you have miſtaken for love, is but the warm effuſion of a too thankful heart!

Julia. For what quality muſt I love you?

Faulk. For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or underſtanding, were only to *eſteem* me. And for perſon—I have often wiſh'd myſelf deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation *there* for any part of your affection.

Julia. Where Nature has beſtowed a ſhew of nice attention in the features of a man, he ſhould laugh at it, as miſplaced. I have ſeen men, who in *this* vain article,

perhaps, might rank above you; but my heart never aſked my eyes if it were ſo or not.

Faulk. Now this is not well from *you*, Julia.—I deſpiſe perſon in a man—yet, if you lov'd me as I wiſh, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none ſo fair.

Julia. I ſee you are determined to be unkind—The *contract* which my poor father bound us in gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raiſe ideas that feed and juſtify my doubts.——I would not have been more free—no—I am proud of my reſtraint.——Yet—yet—perhaps your high reſpect alone for this ſolemn compact has fettered your inclinations, which elſe had made a worthier choice.—How ſhall I be ſure, had you remained unbound in thought and promiſe, that I ſhould ſtill have been the object of your perſevering love?

Julia. Then try me now.—Let us be free as ſtrangers as to what is paſt: my heart will not feel more liberty!

Faulk. There now! ſo haſty, Julia! ſo anxious to be free?—If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loſe your hold, even though I wiſh'd it!

Julia. O! you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it.

Faulk. I do not mean to diſtreſs you.—If I lov'd you leſs, I ſhould never give you an uneaſy moment.—But hear me.—All my fretful doubts ariſe from this—Women are not uſed to weigh, and ſeparate the motives of their affections: The cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty, may ſometimes be miſtaken for the pleadings of the heart.——I would not boaſt—yet let me ſay, that I have neither age, perſon, or character, to found diſlike on;—my fortune ſuch as few ladies could be charged with *indiſcretion* in the match.—O Julia! when *love* receives ſuch countenance from *prudence*, nice minds will be ſuſpicious of its birth.

Julia. I know not whither your inſinuations would tend:—But as they ſeem preſſing to inſult me—I will ſpare you the regret of having done ſo.—I have given you no cauſe for this! [*Exit in tears.*

Faulk.

Faulk. In tears! ſtay, Julia: ſtay but for a moment. ——The door is faſtened!—Julia;—my ſoul—but for one moment: I hear her ſobbing.—'Sdeath! what a brute am I to uſe her thus! Yet ſtay.—Aye—ſhe is coming now:—how little reſolution there is in woman!—how a few ſoft words can turn them!——No, faith! ſhe is *not* coming either.——Why, Julia—my love—ſay but that you forgive me—come but to tell me that—now, this is being *too* reſentful: ſtay! ſhe is coming to—I thought ſhe would—no *ſteadineſs* in any thing! her going away muſt have been a mere trick then—ſhe ſha'n't ſee that I was hurt by it.—I'll affect indifference—(*hums a tune: then liſtens*)——No—Z—ds! ſhe's *not* coming!—nor don't intend it, I ſuppoſe.—This is not *ſteadineſs*, but *obſtinacy*! Yet I deſerve it.—What! after ſo long an abſence, to quarrel with her tenderneſs!—'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I ſhould be aſhamed to ſee her now.—I'll wait till her juſt reſentment is abated—and when I diſtreſs her ſo again, may I loſe her for ever! and be linked inſtead to ſome antique virago, whoſe gnawing paſſions, and long hoarded ſpleen, ſhall make me curſe my folly half the day, and all the night. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Mrs* MALAPROP's *Lodgings.*

Mrs MALAPROP, *with a letter in her hand, and Captain* ABSOLUTE.

Mrs Mal. Your being Sir Anthony's ſon, Captain, would itſelf be a ſufficient accommodation; but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deſerve the character here given of you.

Abſ. Permit me to ſay, madam, that as I never yet have had the pleaſure of ſeeing Miſs Languiſh, my principal inducement in this affair at preſent is the honour of being allied to Mrs Malaprop; of whoſe intellectual accompliſhments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is ſilent.

Mrs Mal.

Mrs Mal. Sir, you do me infinite honour!—I beg, Captain, you'll be ſeated.—*(Sit)*—Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineſſectual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman!—Men have no ſenſe now but for the worthleſs flower of beauty!

Abſ. It is but too true indeed, ma'am;—yet I fear our ladies ſhould ſhare the blame—they think our admiration of *beauty* ſo great, that *knowledge* in *them* would be ſuperfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they ſeldom ſhew fruit, till time has robb'd them of the more ſpecious bloſſom.—Few, like Mrs Malaprop and the orange tree, are rich in both at once!

Mrs Mal. Sir—you overpower me with good breeding—He is the very pine-apple of politeneſs! You are not ignorant, Captain, that this giddy girl has ſomehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, ſtrolling, eve's-dropping Enſign, whom none of us have ſeen, and nobody knows any thing of.

Abſ. O, I have heard the ſilly affair before.—I'm not at all prejudiced againſt her on *that* account.

Mrs Mal. You are very good, and very conſiderate, Captain.—I am ſure I have done every thing in my power ſince I exploded the affair! long ago I laid my poſitive conjunctions on her, never to think on the fellow again;—I have ſince laid Sir Anthony's propoſition before her;—but, I am ſorry to ſay, ſhe ſeems reſolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her.

Abſ. It muſt be very diſtreſſing, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs Mal. Oh! it gives me the hydroſtatics to ſuch a degree;—I thought ſhe had perſiſted from correſponding with him; but, behold, this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow; I believe I have it in my pocket.

Abſ. O the devil! my laſt note. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Mal. Aye, here it is.

Abſ. Aye, my note indeed! O the little traitreſs Lucy. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Mal. There, perhaps, you may know the writing. [*Gives him the letter.*

Abſ.

Abſ. I think I have ſeen the hand before—yes I certainly muſt have ſeen this hand before :——

Mrs Mal. Nay, but read it, Captain.

Abſ. (*Reads*) "*My ſoul's idol, my ador'd Lydia!*"—Very tender, indeed!

Mrs Mal. Tender! aye and prophane too, o' my conſcience!

Abſ. "*I am exceſſively alarmed at the intelligence you* '*ſend me, the more ſo as my new rival*"——

Mrs Mal. That's *you*, Sir.

Abſ. "*Has univerſally the character of being an accom-* '*pliſhed gentleman, and a man of honour.*"—Well, that's handſome enough.

Mrs Mal. O, the fellow has ſome deſign in writing ſo.—

Abſ. That he had, I'll anſwer for him, ma'am.

Mrs Mal. But go on, Sir,—you'll ſee preſently.

Abſ. "*As for the old weather-beaten ſhe-dragon who* '*guards you*"—Who can he mean by that?

Mrs Mal. Me, Sir,—*me*—he means *me* there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Abſ. Impudent ſcoundrel!—"*It ſhall go hard but I* '*will elude her vigilance, as I am told that the ſame re-* '*diculous vanity, which makes her dreſs up her coarſe* '*features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which* '*ſhe don't underſtand*——"

Mrs Mal. There, Sir, an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aſperſion upon my parts of ſpeech! was ever ſuch a brute! Sure if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the uſe of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs!

Abſ. He deſerves to be hang'd and quarter'd! let me ſee—"*ſame ridiculous vanity*"——

Mrs Mal. You need not read it again, Sir.

Abſ. I beg pardon, Ma'am; "*does alſo lay her open* '*to the groſſeſt deceptions from flattery and pretended ad-* '*miration*"—an impudent coxcomb!—"*ſo that I have* '*a ſcheme to ſee you ſhortly with the old harridan's con-* '*ſent, and even to make her a go between in our inter-* '*views.*"——Was ever ſuch aſſurance!

Mrs Mal.

Mrs Mal. Did you ever hear any thing like it?—he'll elude my vigilance, will he—yes, yes! ha! ha! he's very likely to enter theſe doors!—we'll try who can plot beſt!

Abſ. So we will, Ma'am—ſo we will.—Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy, ha! ha! ha!——Well, but Mrs Malaprop, as the girl ſeems ſo infatuated by this fellow, ſuppoſe you were to wink at her correſponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her eſcape—while *I*, juſt in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his ſtead.

Mrs Mal. I am delighted with the ſcheme, never was any thing better perpetrated!

Abſ. But, pray, could not I ſee the lady for a few minutes now?—I ſhould like to try her temper a little.

Mrs Mal. Why, I don't know——I doubt ſhe is not prepared for a viſit of this kind.——There is a decorum in theſe matters.

Abſ. O Lord! ſhe won't mind *me*—only tell her Beverly———

Mrs Mal. Sir!

Abſ. Gently, good tongue. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Mal. What did you ſay of Beverly?

Abſ. O, I was going to propoſe that you ſhould tell her, by way of jeſt, that it was Beverly who was below—ſhe'd come down faſt enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs Mal. 'Twould be a trick ſhe well deſerves—beſides you know the fellow tells her he'll get my conſent to ſee her—ha! ha!—Let him if he can, I ſay again.—Lydia, come down here!—[*Calling*]—He'll make me a *go-between in their interviews!*—ha! ha! ha! Come down, I ſay, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing, ha! ha! ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Abſ. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my ſoul, Ma'am—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs Mal. The little huſſey won't hear.—Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—ſhe ſhall know that

Captain

Captain Abſolute is come to wait on her.—And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Abſ. As you pleaſe, Ma'am.

Mrs Mal. For the preſent, Captain, your ſervant—Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I ſee—*elude my vigilance!* yes, yes, ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Abſ. Ha! ha! ha! one would think now that I might throw off all diſguiſe at once, and ſeize my prize with ſecurity—but ſuch is Lydia's caprice, that to undeceive were probably to loſe her.—I'll ſee whether ſhe knows me. [*Walks aſide and ſeems engaged in looking at the pictures.*

Enter LYDIA.

Lydia. What a ſcene am I now to go through! ſurely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to liſten to the loathſome addreſſes of a ſtranger to one's heart.—I have heard of girls perſecuted as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favoured lover to the generoſity of his rival; ſuppoſe I were to try it—there ſtands the hated rival—an officer too!—but O how unlike my Beverly! I wonder he don't begin—truly he is a very negligent wooer!—quite at his eaſe, upon my word! I'll ſpeak firſt.—Mr Abſolute.

Abſ. Ma'am. [*turns round.*

Lydia. O heav'ns! Beverly!

Abſ. Huſh!—huſh, my life!—ſoftly! be not ſurpriſed!

Lydia. I am ſo aſtoniſhed! and ſo terrified! and ſo overjoyed! for heaven's ſake how came you here?

Abſ. Briefly—I have deceived your aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to viſit here this evening, and contriving to have kept him away, have paſſed myſelf on *her* for Captain Abſolute.

Lydia. O, charming!—And ſhe really takes you for young Abſolute?

Abſ. O, ſhe's convinced of it.

Lydia. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing to think how her ſagacity is over-reached!

Abſ. But we trifle with our precious moments—ſuch another opportunity may not occur—then let me now conjure

conjure my kind, my condeſcending angel, to fix the time when I may reſcue her from undeſerving perſecution, and with a licenſed warmth plead for my reward.

Lydia. Will you then, Beverly, conſent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?—that burden on the wings of love?

Abſ. O come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness—Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia—for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverly can repay.

Lydia. How perſuaſive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him!

Abſ. Ah! my ſoul, what a life will we then live? Love ſhall be our idol and ſupport! we will worſhip him with a monaſtic ſtrictneſs; abjuring all worldly toys, to center every thought and action there.—Proud of calamity, we will enjoy the wreck of wealth; while the ſurrounding gloom of adverſity ſhall make the flame of our pure love ſhow doubly bright.—By heav'ns! I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the ſcene where I might claſp my Lydia to my boſom, and ſay, the world affords no ſmile to me—but here——[*Embracing her*]——If ſhe holds out now, the devil is in it! (*Aſide.*

Lydia. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes! but my perſecution is not yet come to a criſis.

Enter Mrs Malaprop *liſtening.*

Mrs Mal. I am impatient to know how the little huſſy deports herſelf. [*Aſide.*

Abſ. So penſive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs Mal. Warmth abated!—ſo!—ſhe has been in a paſſion, I ſuppoſe.

Lydia. No,—nor ever can while I have life.

Mrs Mal. An ill-temper'd little devil!—She'll be in a paſſion all her life—will ſhe?

Lydia. Think not the idle threats of my ridiculous aunt can ever have any weight with me.

Mrs Mal. Very dutiful upon my word!

Lydia. Let her choice be *Captain Abſolute*, but Beverly is mine. *Mrs Mal.*

Mrs Mal. I am aſtoniſhed at her aſſurance!—to his face—this is to his face!

Abſ. Thus then let me enforce my ſuit. [*kneeling.*

Mrs Mal. Aye—poor young man!—down on his knees entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer.—Why, thou vixen!—I have overheard you.

Abſ. O confound her vigilance. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Mal. Captain Abſolute—I know not how to apologize for her ſhocking rudeneſs.

Abſ. So—all's ſafe, I find.—[*Aſide*]—I have hopes, Madam, that time will bring the young lady———

Mrs Mal. O, there's nothing to be hoped for from her; ſhe's as headſtrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lydia. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs Mal. Why, thou unbluſhing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face, that you lov'd another better?—didn't you ſay you never would be his?

Lydia. No, Madam—I did not.

Mrs Mal. Good heav'ns! what aſſurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman!—Didn't you boaſt that *Beverly*—that ſtroller *Beverly*, poſſeſſed your heart?—Tell me that, I ſay.

Lydia. 'Tis true, Ma'am, and none but *Beverly*—

Mrs Mal. Hold;—hold, aſſurance!—you ſhall not be ſo rude.

Abſ. Nay, pray Mrs Malaprop, don't ſtop the young lady's ſpeech:—ſhe's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt *me* in the leaſt, I aſſure you.

Mrs Mal. You are *too* good, Captain—*too* amiably patient—but come with me, Miſs—let us ſee you again ſoon, Captain—remember what we have fixed.

Abſ. I ſhall, Ma'am.

Mrs Mal. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lydia. May every bleſſing wait on my *Beverly*, my lov'd *Bev*———

Mrs Mal. Huſſy! I'll choak the word in your throat!—come along—come along. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

[Abſolute *kiſſing his hand to* Lydia—Mrs Malaprop *ſtopping her from ſpeaking.*

SCENE IV. Acres' *Lodgings.*

Acres *and* David.

Acres *as juſt Dreſs'd.*

Acres. Indeed, David—do you think I become it ſo?

David. You are quite another creature, believe me, maſter, by the maſs! an' we've any luck, we ſhall ſee the Devon monkeyrony in all the print-ſhops in Bath!

Acres. Dreſs *does* make a difference, David.

David. 'Tis all in all, I think—difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod-Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: Mr Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs Pickle would cry, "Lard preſerve me!" our dairy-maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Teſter, your honour's favourite, would bluſh like my waiſtcoat—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the houſe but would bark, and I queſtion whether *Phillis* would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Aye, David, there's nothing like poliſhing.

David. So I ſays of your honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr *De la-Grace* been here? I muſt rub up my balancing, and chaſing, and boring.

David. I'll call again, Sir.

Acres. Do—and ſee if there are any letters for me at the Poſt-Office.

David. I will.—By the maſs, I can't help looking at your head!—if I hadn't been by at the cooking, I wiſh I may die if I ſhould have known the diſh again myſelf! [*Exit.*

[Acres *comes forward, practiſing a dancing ſtep.*

Acres. Sink, ſlide—coupee—Confound the firſt inventors of Cotillons! ſay I—they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen—I can walk a minuet eaſy enough when I am forced!—and I have been accounted a good ſtick in a country-dance.—Odds jiggs and tabers!—I never valued your croſs-over to couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with either a Captain in the country!—but theſe outlandiſh heathen

heathen Allemandes and Cotillons are quite beyond me!—I ſhall never proſper at 'em, that's ſure—mine are true-born Engliſh legs—they don't underſtand their curſt French lingo!—their *Pas* this, and *Pas* that, and *Pas* t'other!—damn me! my feet don't like to be called Paws! no, 'tis certain I have moſt Antigallican toes!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, Sir.

Acres. Shew him in.

Enter SIR LUCIUS.

Sir Luc. Mr Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiſs your hands.

Sir Luc. Pray, my friend, what has brought you ſo ſuddenly to Bath?

Acres. Faith! I have followed Cupid's Jack-a-Lantern, and find myſelf in a quagmire at laſt.—In ſhort, I have been very ill-uſed, Sir Lucius.—I don't chuſe to mention names, but look on me as on a very ill-uſed gentleman.

Sir Luc. Pray what is the caſe?—I aſk no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius, I fell as deep as need be in love with a young lady——her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—ſend word of my arrival; and receive anſwer, that the lady is to be otherwiſe diſpoſed of.—This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-uſed.

Sir Luc. Very ill, upon my conſcience.—Pray, can you divine the cauſe of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter; ſhe has another lover, one *Beverly*, who, I am told, is now in Bath—Odds ſlanders and lies! he muſt be at the bottom of it.

Sir Luc. A rival in the caſe, is there?—and you think he has ſupplanted you unfairly.

Acres. Unfairly! to be ſure he has.—He never could have done it fairly.

Sir Luc. Then ſure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my ſoul.

Sir Luc. We wear no ſwords here, but you underſtand me?

Acres. What! fight him!

Sir Luc. Aye, to be ſure; what can I mean elſe?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir Luc. Now, I think he has given you the greateſt provocation in the world.—Can a man commit a more heinous offence againſt another than to fall in love with the ſame woman? O, by ſoul, it is the moſt unpardonable breach of friendſhip.

Acres. Breach of friendſhip! aye, aye; but I have no acquaintance with this man.—I never ſaw him in my life.

Sir Luc. That's no argument at all—he has the leſs right then to take ſuch a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace! Odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right of my ſide?

Sir Luc. What the devil ſignifies *right*, when your *honour* is concerned? Do you think, *Achilles*, or my little *Alexander the Great* ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my ſoul, they drew their broad-ſwords, and left the lazy ſons of peace to ſettle the juſtice of it.

Acres. Your words are as a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage muſt be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valour riſing as it were—— a kind of courage, as I may ſay—— Odds flints and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir Luc. Ah! my little friend! if I had *Blunderbuſs-Hall* here—I could ſhew you a range of anceſtry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furniſh the new room; every one of whom have killed his man!—For though the manſion-houſe and dirty acres have ſlipt through my fingers, I thank heav'n our honour and the family pictures are as freſh as ever.

Acres. O, Sir Lucius! I have had anceſtors too!—every man of 'em colonel or captain in the militia!—Odds balls and barrels! ſay no more—I'm brac'd for it.——The thunder of your words has ſoured the milk of human kindneſs in my breaſt!——Z——ds! as the man in the play ſays, "I could do ſuch deeds—"

Sir Luc.

Sir Luc. Come, come, there muſt be no paſſion at all in the caſe—theſe things ſhould always be done civilly.

Acres. I muſt be in a paſſion, Sir Lucius——I muſt be in a rage——Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me——Come, here's pen and paper.—(*Sits down to write.*)—I would the ink were red!—Indite, I ſay indite!—How ſhall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand, however.

Sir Luc. Pray compoſe yourſelf.

Acres. Come—now, ſhall I begin with an oath! Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

Sir Luc. Pho! Pho! do the thing decently, and like a chriſtian. Begin now—"*Sir*"——

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir Luc. "*To prevent the confuſion that might ariſe*"

Acres. Well——

Sir Luc. "*From our both addreſſing the ſame lady.*"

Acres. Aye—there's the reaſon—"*ſame lady*"—Well——

Sir Luc. "*I ſhall expect the honour of your company*"—

Acres. Z——ds! I'm not aſking him to dinner.

Sir Luc. Pray be eaſy.

Acres. Well then, "honour of your company."

Sir Luc. "*To ſettle our pretenſions*"

Acres. Well.——

Sir Luc. Let me ſee, aye, *King's Mead-fields* will do——"*in King's Mead fields.*"

Acres. So that's done.—— Well, I'll fold it up preſently; my own creſt—a hand and dagger ſhall be the ſeal.

Sir Luc. You ſee now this little explanation will put a ſtop at once to all confuſion or miſunderſtanding that might ariſe between you.

Acres. Aye, we fight to prevent any miſunderſtanding.

Sir Luc. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time.—Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then let the worſt come of it, 'twill be off your mind to morrow.

Acres. Very true,

Sir Luc. So I ſhall ſee nothing more of you unleſs it be by letter, till the evening.——I would do myſelf the honour to carry your meſſage; but, to tell you a ſecret, I believe I ſhall have juſt ſuch another affair on my hands. There is a gay captain here, who put a jeſt on me lately, at the expence of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman, to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I ſhould like to ſee you fight firſt! Odds life! I ſhould like to ſee you kill him, if it was only to get a little leſſon.

Sir Luc. I ſhall be very proud of inſtructing you.—Well for the preſent——but remember now, when you meet your antagoniſt, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner.——Let your courage be as keen, but at the ſame time as poliſhed as your ſword.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

ACT. IV.

SCENE I. ACRES's *Lodgings.*

ACRES *and* DAVID.

David. THEN, by the Maſs, Sir! I would do no ſuch thing—ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom ſhould make me fight, when I wa'n't ſo minded. Oons! what will the old lady ſay, when ſhe hears o't!

Acres. Ah! David, if you had heard Sir Lucius!—Odds ſparks and flames! he would have rous'd your valour.

David. Not he, indeed. I hates ſuch blood-thirſty cormorants. Look'ye, maſter, if you'd wanted a bout at boxing, quarter-ſtaff, or ſhort-ſtaff, I ſhould never be the man to bid you cry off: But for your curſt ſharps and ſnaps, I never knew any good come of 'em.

Acres. But my honour, David, my honour! I muſt be very carefull of my honour.

David. Aye, by the maſs! and I would be very carefull of it; and I think in return my *honour* could'nt do leſs than be very carefull of *me.*

Acres.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever riſk the loſs of his honour!

David. I ſay then it would be but civil in *honour* never to riſk the loſe of a *gentleman.*——Look'ee, maſter, this *honour* ſeems to me to be a marvellous falſe friend: aye, truly, a very courtier-like ſervant.—Put the caſe, I was gentleman (which, thank God, no one can ſay of me;) well—my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance,—So—we fight. (Pleaſant enough that) Poh!—I kill him—(the more's my luck.) Now, pray who gets the profit of it?—Why, my *honour*—But put the caſe that he kills me!——by the maſs! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy.

Acres. No, David—in that caſe!—Odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave.

David. Now, that's juſt the place where I could make a ſhift to do without it.

Acres. Z——ds! David you are a coward!—It doesn't become my valour to liſten to you.—What! ſhall I diſgrace my anceſtors?—Think of that, David—think what it would be to diſgrace my anceſtors!

David. Under favour, the ſureſt way of not diſgracing them is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look'ee now, maſter, to go to them in ſuch haſte—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I ſhould think might as well be let alone. Our anceſtors are very good kind of folks; but they are the laſt people I ſhould chuſe to have a viſiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But, David, now, you don't think there is ſuch very, very, *very* great danger, hey?—Odds' life! people often fight without any miſchief done!

David. By the maſs, I think 'tis ten to one againſt you!——Qons! here to meet ſome lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his d—n'd double-barrell'd ſwords, and cut-and-thruſt piſtols! Lord bleſs us! it makes me tremble to think o't——Thoſe be ſuch deſperate bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide 'em!—from a child I never could fancy 'em!—I ſuppoſe there

a'n't

a'n't been ſo mercileſs a beaſt in the world as your loaded piſtol!

Acres. Z——ds! I *won't* be afraid—Odds fire and fury! you ſhan't make me afraid.——Here is the challenge, and I have ſent for my dear friend Jack Abſolute to carry it for me.

David. Aye, i'the name of miſchief, let *him* be the meſſenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the beſt horſe in your ſtable. By the maſs! it don't look like another letter!—It is, as I may ſay, a deſigning and malicious-looking letter!—and I warrant ſmell's of gunpowder like a ſoldier's pouch!—Oons wouldn't ſwear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon!—you ha'n't the valour of a graſs-hopper.

David. Well, I ſay no more—'twill be ſad news, to be ſure, at Clod Hall!—but I ha' done.—How Phyllis will howl when ſhe hears of it!—Aye, poor bitch, ſhe little thinks what ſhooting her maſter's going after!—And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, theſe ten years, will curſe the hour he was born. *(Whimpering.)*

Acres. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight—ſo get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Captain Abſolute, Sir.

Acres. O! ſhew him up. [*Exit* Servant.

David. Well, Heaven ſend we be all alive this time to morrow.

Acres. What's that!—Don't provoke me, David!

David. Good bye, Maſter. *(Whimpering.)*

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, daſtardly croaking raven, [*Exit* David.

Enter ABSOLUTE.

Abſ. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, ſheep-hearted blockhead!—If I hadn't the valour of St George and the dragon to boot—

Abſ. But what do you want with me, Bob?

Acres. O!—There— *(Gives him the challenge.*

Abſ.

Abſ. "*To Enſign Beverley.*" So—what's going on now! [*Aſide.*
Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Abſ. Indeed!—Why, you won't fight him; will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad but I will, Jack.—Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage—and I'll fight this evening, that ſo much good paſſion mayn't be waſted.

Abſ. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know ſomething of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Abſ. Well, give it to me, and truſt me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Abſ. Not in the leaſt—I beg you won't mention it.—No trouble in the world, I aſſure you.

Acres. You are very kind.——What it is to have a friend!——You couldn't be my ſecond—could you, Jack?

Abſ. Why no, Bob—not in *this* affair—it would not be quite ſo proper.

Acres. Well, then, I muſt get my friend Sir Lucius. I ſhall have your good wiſhes, however, Jack.

Abſ. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir Anthony Abſolute is below, inquiring for the Captain.

Abſ. I'll come inſtantly.——Well, my little hero, ſucceſs attend you. (*Going.*

Acres. Stay—ſtay, Jack.——If Beverly ſhould aſk you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

Abſ. To be ſure I ſhall.——I'll ſay you are a determined dog—hey, Bob!

Acres. Aye, do, do—and if that frightens him, 'egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a-week; will you, Jack?

Abſ.

Abſ. I will, I will; I'll ſay you are called in the country "*Fighting Bob.*"

Acres. Right, right—'tis all to prevent miſchief; for I don't want to take his life if I clear my honour.

Abſ. No!—that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wiſh me to kill him—do you, Jack?

Abſ. No, upon my ſoul, I do not.—But a devil of a fellow, hey? (*Going.*

Acres. True, true—but ſtay—ſtay, Jack—you may add, that you never ſaw me in ſuch a rage before—a moſt devouring rage!

Abſ. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack——a determined dog!

Abſ. Aye, aye, "*Fighting Bob.*"

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE II. Mrs Malaprop's *Lodgings.*

Mrs Malaprop *and* Lydia.

Mrs Mal. Why, thou perverſe one!—tell me what you can object to him?—Isn't he a handſome man?—tell me that.—A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lydia. She little thinks whom ſhe is praiſing! (*Aſide.*)—So is Beverly, ma'am.

Mrs Mal. No capariſons, Miſs, if you pleaſe.—Capariſons don't become a young woman.—No! Captain Abſolute is indeed a fine gentleman!

Lydia. Aye, the Captain Abſolute *you* have ſeen. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Mal. Then he's *ſo* well bred;—*ſo* full of alacrity and adulation!—and has *ſo much* to ſay for himſelf:—in ſuch good language too!—His phyſiognomy ſo grammatical!—Then his preſence ſo noble!—I proteſt, when I ſaw him, I thought of what Hamlet ſays in the play:—"Heſperian curls—the front of *Job* himſelf!—an eye, like *March*, to threaten at command!—a Station, like Harry Mercury, new—" Something about

about kiſſing—on a hill—however, the ſimilitude ſtruck me directly.

Lydia. How enraged ſhe'll be preſently when ſhe diſcovers her miſtake! [*Aſide.*

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir Anthony and Captain Abſolute are below, Ma'am.

Mrs Mal. Shew them up here. [*Exit* Servant. Now, Lydia, I inſiſt on your behaving as becomes a young woman.—Shew your good breeding, at leaſt, though you have forgot your duty.

Lydia. Madam, I have told you my reſolution!—I ſhall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even ſpeak to, or look at him.

[*Flings herſelf into a chair, with her face from the door.*

Enter SIR ANTHONY *and* ABSOLUTE.

Sir Anth. Here we are, Mrs Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow.—I don't know what's the matter; but if I had not held him by force, he'd have given me the ſlip.

Mrs Mal. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair.—I am aſhamed for the cauſe! Lydia, Lydia, riſe I beſeech you!—pay your reſpects! [*Aſide to her.*

Sir Anth. I hope, Madam, that Miſs Languiſh has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice, and *my* alliance —Now, Jack, ſpeak to her. [*Aſide to him.*

Abſ. What the d—l ſhall I do! [*Aſide.*]—You ſee, Sir, ſhe won't even look at me, whilſt you are here.—I knew ſhe wouldn't!—I told you ſo.—Let me intreat you, Sir, to leave us together!

(Abſolute *ſeems to expoſtulate with his father.*

Lydia. (*Aſide*) I wonder I ha'n't heard my aunt exclaim yet! ſure ſhe can't have look'd at him!——— perhaps their regimentals are alike, and ſhe is ſomething blind.

Sir Anth. I ſay, Sir, I won't ſtir a foot yet.

Mrs Mal.

Mrs Mal. I am ſorry to ſay, Sir Anthony, that my influence over my niece is very ſmall.—Turn round, Lydia, I bluſh for you! [*Aſide to her.*

Sir Anth. May I not flatter myſelf, that Miſs Languiſh will aſſign what cauſe for diſlike ſhe can have to my ſon!—Why don't you begin, Jack?—Speak, you puppy,—ſpeak! (*Aſide to him.*

Mrs Mal. It is impoſſible, Sir Anthony, ſhe can have any.—She will not ſay ſhe has.———Anſwer, huſſy! why don't you anſwer? (*Aſide to her.*

Sir Anth. Then, Madam, I truſt that a childiſh and haſty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happineſs. ——Z—ds! ſirrah! why don't you ſpeak? (*Aſide to him.*

Lydia. (*Aſide*) I think my lover ſeems as little inclined to converſation as myſelf.——How ſtrangely blind my aunt muſt be!

Abſ. Hem! hem! Madam—hem! (Abſolute *attempts to ſpeak, then turns to* Sir Anthony)—Faith, Sir, I am ſo confounded!—and ſo—ſo—confuſed!—I told you I ſhould be ſo, Sir,—I knew it.—The—the tremor of my paſſion entirely takes away my preſence of mind.

Sir Anth. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it?—Go up, and ſpeak to her directly!

[Abſolute *makes ſigns to* Mrs Malaprop *to leave them together.*

Mrs Mal. Sir Anthony, ſhall we leave them together?—Ah you ſtubborn little vixen! [*Aſide to her*

Sir Anth. Not yet, Ma'am, not yet!—what the d—l are you at! unlock your jaws, ſirrah, or—— [*Aſide to him.*

(Absolute *draws near* Lydia.)

Abſ. Now heav'n ſend ſhe may be too ſullen to look round!—I muſt diſguiſe my voice. (*Aſide.*)

(*Speaks in a low hoarſe tone.*

—Will not Miſs Languiſh lend an ear to the mild accents of true love?—Will not———

Sir Anth. What the d—l ails the fellow? Why don't you ſpeak out?—not ſtand croaking like a frog in a quinſey!

Abſ.

Abſ. The—the—exceſs of my awe, and my—my—my modeſty, quite choak me!

Sir Anth. Ah! your *modeſty* again!—I'll tell you what, Jack; if you don't ſpeak out directly, and glibly too, I ſhall be in ſuch a rage!—Mrs Malaprop, I wiſh the lady would favour us with ſomething more than a ſide-front.

(Mrs Malaprop *ſeems to chide* Lydia.

Abſ. So!—all will out, I ſee!

Goes up to Lydia, *ſpeaks ſoftly.*

Be not ſurpriſed, my Lydia, ſuppreſs all ſurpriſe at preſent.

Lydia. [*Aſide.*] Heav'ns! 'tis Beverly's voice!—Sure he can't have impoſed on Sir Anthony too!

[*Looks round by degrees, then ſtarts up.*

Is this poſſible!—my Beverly!—how can this be?—my Beverly?

Abſ. Ah! 'tis all over. (*Aſide.*

Sir Anth. Beverly!—the devil—Beverly!—What can the girl mean?—This is my ſon, Jack Abſolute.

Mrs Mal. For ſhame, huſſy! for ſhame!—your head runs ſo on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes!—beg Captain Abſolute's pardon, directly.

Lydia. I ſee no Captain Abſolute, but my lov'd Beverly!

Sir Anth. Z—ds! the girl's mad!—her brain's turn'd by reading!

Mrs Mal. O' my conſcience, I believe ſo!—what do you mean by Beverly, huſſy?—You ſaw Captain Abſolute before to-day; there he is, your huſband that ſhall be.

Lydia. With all my ſoul, ma'am—when I refuſe my Beverly——

Sir Anth. O! ſhe's as mad as Bedlam!—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick!—Come here, ſirrah, who the d—l are you?

Abſ. Faith, Sir, I am not quite clear myſelf; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir Anth. Are you my ſon or not?—anſwer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Mrs Mal. Aye, Sir, who are you? O mercy! I begin to ſuſpect!——

Abſ. Ye powers of Impudence, befriend me! (*aſide*) Sir Anthony, moſt aſſuredly I am your wife's ſon; and that I ſincerely believe myſelf to be *your's* alſo, I hope my duty has always ſhewn.—Mrs Malaprop, I am your moſt reſpectful admirer—and ſhall be proud to add affectionate nephew.—I need not tell my Lydia, that ſhe ſees her faithful *Beverly*, who, knowing the ſingular generoſity of her temper, aſſum'd that name, and a ſtation, which has proved a teſt of the moſt diſintereſted love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lydia. So,—there will be no elopement after all? [*Sullenly.*]

Sir Anth. Upon my ſoul, Jack, thou art a very impudent follow! to do you juſtice, I think I never ſaw a piece of more conſummate aſſurance!

Abſ. O, you flatter me, Sir,—you compliment—'tis my *modeſty* you know, Sir—my *modeſty* that has ſtood in my way.

Sir Anth. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, inſenſible varlet you pretended to be, however!—I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am——So this was your *penitence*, your *duty*, and *obedience!*—I thought it was d—n'd ſudden!—You *never heard their names before*, not you!—*What*, the LANGUISHES *of* Worceſterſhire, hey?—*if you could pleaſe me in the affair, 'twas all you deſired!*—Ah! you diſſembling villain!—What! *(pointing to* Lydia*) ſhe ſquints, don't ſhe?—a little red-haired girl!*—hey?—Why you hypocritical young raſcal—I wonder you a'n't aſhamed to hold up your head!

Abſ. 'Tis with difficulty, Sir—I *am* confus'd—very much confus'd, as you may perceive.

Mrs Mal. O lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me!—hey!—how! what! Captain, did *you* write the letters then?—What!—am I to thank *you* for the elegant compilation of "*an old weather-beaten ſhe-dragon*"—hey?—O mercy!—was it *you* that reflected on my parts of ſpeech?

Abſ.

Abſ. Dear Sir, my modeſty will be overpower'd at laſt, if you don't aſſiſt me.—I ſhall certainly not be able to ſtand it.

Sir Anth. Come, come, Mrs Malaprop, we muſt forget and forgive;—odd's life! matters have taken ſo clever a turn all of a ſudden, that I could find in my heart to be ſo good humour'd! and ſo gallant!—hey! Mrs Malaprop?

Mrs Mal. Well, Sir Anthony, ſince *you* deſire it, we will not anticipate the paſt;—ſo mind, young people—our retroſpection will now be all to the future.

Sir Anth. Come, we muſt leave them together; Mrs Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant!—Jack—is'n't the cheek as I ſaid,—hey? Come, Mrs Malaprop, we'll not diſturb their tenderneſs—their's is the time of life for happineſs!——"*Youth's the ſeaſon made for joy*"—(ſings)—hey!—Odd's life! I'm in ſuch ſpirits,—I don't know what I could not do!—Permit me, Ma'am—[*gives his hand to* Mrs Malaprop.] (ſings) Tol-de-rol—'gad I ſhould like to have a little fooling myſelf—Tol-de-rol! de-rol! [*Exit ſinging, and handing* Mrs Malaprop.]

(Lydia *ſits ſullenly in her chair.*

Abſ. So much thought bodes no good (*aſide*)—So grave, Lydia?

Lydia. Sir?

Abſ. So!—egad! I thought as much!—that d—n'd monoſyllable has froze me! (*aſide*)—What, Lydia, now that we are happy in our friends conſent, as in our mutual vows——

Lydia. Friends conſent, indeed! (*peeviſhly.*)

Abſ. Come, come, we muſt lay aſide ſome of our romance—a little *wealth* and *comfort* may be endured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers ſhall make ſuch ſettlements as——

Lydia. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

Abſ. Nay, then, we will not wait for their lingering forms, but inſtantly procure the licence, and—

Lydia. The *licence!*—I hate licence!

Abſ. O, my love! be not ſo unkind!—thus let me intreat—— (*Kneeling.*

Lydia. Pſha!—what ſignifies kneeling, when you know I *muſt* have you.

Abſ. (*Riſing*) Nay, Madam, there ſhall be no reſtraint upon your inclinations, I promiſe you.—If I have loſt your heart,—I reſign the reſt.—'Gad I muſt try what a little *ſpirit* will do. (*Aſide.*

Lydia. [*Riſing*] Then, Sir, let me tell you, the intereſt you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly impoſition, and deſerves the puniſhment of fraud.—What, you have been treating *me* like a child!—humouring my romance! and laughing, I ſuppoſe, at your ſucceſs!

Abſ. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear——

Lydia. So while *I* fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flatter'd myſelf that I ſhould outwit and incenſe them all—behold my hopes are to be cruſh'd at once, by my aunt's conſent and approbation—am *I* myſelf the only dupe at laſt! [*Walking about in a heat.*]—But here, Sir, here is the picture—*Beverley's* picture! (*taking a miniature from her boſom*) which I have worn, night and day, in ſpite of threats and entreaties!—There, Sir, (*flings it to him*) and be aſſured I throw the original from my heart as eaſily.

Abſ. Nay, nay, Ma'am, we will not differ as to that—Here, (*taking out a picture*) here is Miſs Lydia Languiſh.—What a difference!—aye, *there* is the heav'nly aſſenting ſmile, that firſt gave ſoul and ſpirits to my hopes!—thoſe are the lips which ſeal'd a vow, as yet ſcarce dry in Cupid's calendar!—and there the half-reſentful bluſh, that *would* have check'd the ardour of my thanks—Well, all that's paſt!—all over indeed!—There, Madam—in beau ty, that is not equal to you, but in my mind it's merit over the original, in being ſtill the ſame, is ſuch—that—I cannot find in my heart to part with it. [*Puts it up again.*

Lydia. (*Softening*) 'Tis *your own* doing, Sir—I, I, I ſuppoſe you are perfectly ſatisfied.

Abſ. O, moſt certainly—ſure, now, this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha! ha!—there's ſome ſpirit in *this!*—What ſignifies breaking ſome ſcores of

of ſolemn promiſes:—all that's of no conſequence you know.—To be ſure people will ſay, that Miſs didn't know her own mind—but never mind that:—or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forſook her—but don't let that fret you.

Lydia. There's no bearing his inſolence.

[*Burſts into tears.*

Enter MRS MALAPROP *and* SIR ANTHONY.

Mrs Mal. (Entering) Come, we muſt interrupt your billing and cooing a while.

Lydia. This is worſe than your treachery and deceit, you baſe ingrate. [*Sobbing.*

Sir Anth. What the devil's the matter now!—Z—ds! Mrs Malaprop, this is the *oddeſt billing* and *cooing* I ever heard!—but what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I'm quite aſtoniſh'd!

Alſ. Aſk the lady, Sir.

Mrs Mal. O, mercy!—I'm quite analys'd for my part!—why, Lydia, what is the reaſon of this?

Lydia. Aſk the gentleman, Ma'am.

Sir Anth. Z—ds! I ſhall be in a phrenzy!—why Jack, you are not come out to be any one elſe, are you?

Mrs Mal. Aye, Sir, there's no more trick, is there?—you are not like Cerberus, *three* gentlemen at once, are you.

Abſ. You'll not let me ſpeak—I ſay the lady can account for this much better than I can.

Lydia. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverly again—there is the man—I now obey you:—for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever. [*Exit* Lydia.

Mrs Mal. O mercy! and miracles! what a turn here is—why ſure, Captain you haven't behaved diſreſpectfully to my niece.

Sir Anth. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I ſee it—Ha! ha! ha!—now I ſee it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Abſ. Nay, Sir, upon my word——

Sir Anth. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm ſure *'twas* ſo.

Mrs Mal. O Lud, Sir Anthony!—O fie, Captain!

Abſ. Upon my ſoul, Ma'am——

Sir Anth. Come, no excuſes, Jack;—why, your father, you rogue, was ſo before you:—the blood of the Abſolutes was always impatient.—Ha! ha! ha! poor little Lydia!—why, you've frighten'd her, you dog, you have.

Abſ. By all that's good, Sir——

Sir Anth. Z—ds! ſay no more, I tell you—Mrs Malaprop ſhall make your peace.—You muſt make his peace, Mrs Malaprop:—you muſt tell her 'tis Jack's way—tell her 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family!—Come, away, Jack, ha! ha! ha! Mrs Malaprop—a young villain! [*Puſhes him out.*

Mrs Mal. O Sir Anthony!—O fie, Captain!

SCENE IV. *The North Parade.*

Enter Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Sir Luc. I wonder where this Captain Abſolute hides himſelf.—Upon my conſcience!—theſe officers are always in one's way in love affairs:—I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a Major, who ran away with her before ſhe could get a ſight of me!—And I wonder too what it is the ladies can ſee in them to be ſo fond of them.—unleſs it be a touch of the old ſerpent in 'em, that makes the little creatures be-caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth.—Hah!—isn't this the Captain coming?—faith it is!—There is a probability of ſucceeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! Who the devil is he talking to?

[*Steps aſide.*

Enter Absolute.

Abſ. To what fine purpoſe I have been plotting! a noble reward for all my ſchemes, upon my ſoul!—a little gypſey!—I did not think her romance could have made her ſo d—n'd abſurd either.—'Sdeath, I never was in a worſe humour in my life!—I could cut my

my own throat, or any other perſon's, with the greateſt pleaſure in the world.

Sir Luc. O, faith! I'm in the luck of it.—I never could have found him in a ſweeter temper for my purpoſe—to be ſure I'm juſt come in the nick; now to enter into converſation with him, and ſo quarrel genteelly. (Sir Lucius *goes up to* Abſolute. ——With regard to that matter, Captain, I muſt beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Abſ. Upon my word, then, you muſt be a very ſubtle diſputant:—becauſe, Sir, I happen'd juſt now to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir Luc. That's no reaſon—For give me leave to tell you, a man may *think* an untruth as well as ſpeak one.

Abſ. Very true, Sir; but if a man never utters his thoughts, I ſhould think they might ſtand a chance of eſcaping controverſy.

Sir Luc. Then, Sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the ſame thing.

Abſ. Hark'ee, Sir Lucius,—if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my ſoul, I ſhould not have diſcovered it at this interview:—for what you drive at, unleſs you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive.

Sir Luc. I humbly thank you, Sir, for the quickneſs of your apprehenſion. [*Bowing.* —You have nam'd the very thing I would be at.

Abſ. Very well, Sir—I ſhall certainly not baulk your inclinations:——but I ſhould be glad you would pleaſe to explain your motives.

Sir Luc. Pray, Sir, be eaſy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it ſtands—we ſhould only ſpoil it, by trying to explain it.—However, your memory is very ſhort—or you could not have forgot an affront you paſſed on me within this laſt week.—So, no more, but name your time and place.

Abſ. Well, Sir, ſince you are ſo bent on it, the ſooner the better;—let it be this evening—here by the Spring Gardens.—We ſhall ſcarcely be interrupted.

Sir Luc.

Sir Luc. Faith! that ſame interruption in affairs of this nature ſhews very great ill breeding——I don't know what's the reaſon, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make ſuch a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietneſs.—However, if it's the ſame to you, Captain, I ſhould take it as a particular kindneſs, if you'd let us meet in King's Mead Fields, as a little buſineſs will call me there about ſix o'clock, and I may diſpatch both matters at once.

Abſ. 'Tis the ſame to me exactly.—A little after ſix, then, we will diſcuſs this matter more ſeriouſly.

Sir Luc. If you pleaſe, Sir, there will be very pretty ſmall-ſword light, tho' it won't do for a long ſhot.—So that matter's ſettled! and my mind's at eaſe.

[*Exit* Sir Lucius.

Enter FAULKLAND, *meeting* ABSOLUTE.

Abſ. Well met.—I was going to look for you.—O, Faulkland! all the Dæmons of ſpite and diſappointment have conſpired againſt me! I'm ſo vex'd, that if I had not the proſpect of a reſource in being knock'd o'the head by and by, I ſhould ſcarce have ſpirits to tell you the cauſe.

Faulk. What can you mean?——Has Lydia chang'd her mind?—I ſhould have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the ſame object.

Abſ. Aye, juſt as the eyes of a perſon who ſquints:—when her love eye was fix'd on me—t'other—her eye of duty, was finely obliqued:—but when duty bid her point that the ſame way—off t'other turn'd on a ſwivel, and ſecured its retreat with a frown!

Faulk. But what's the reſource you——

Abſ. O, to wind up the whole, a good natured Iriſhman here has (*mimicking* Sir Lucius) begg'd leave to have the pleaſure of cutting my throat—and I mean to indulge him—that's all.

Faulk. Prithee, be ſerious.

Abſ. 'Tis fact, upon my ſoul.——Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by ſight—for ſome affront, which I am ſure I never intended, has obliged me to

meet

meet him this evening at ſix o'clock :—'tis on that account I wiſhed to ſee you—you muſt go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there muſt be ſome miſtake, ſure.—Sir Lucius ſhall explain himſelf—and I dare ſay matters may be accommodated ;—but this evening, did you ſay ?—I wiſh it had been any other time.

Abſ. Why ?—there will be light enough :—there will be light enough :—there will (as Sir Lucius ſays) "be very pretty ſmall-ſword light, tho' it will not do for a long ſhot."—Confound his long ſhots !

Faulk. But I am myſelf a good deal ruffled, by a difference I have had with Julia—my vile tormenting temper has made me treat her ſo cruelly, that I ſhall not be myſelf till we are reconciled.

Abſ. By Heav'ns, Faulkland, you don't deſerve her.

Enter ſervant, gives FAULKLAND *a letter.*

Faulk. O Jack! this is from Julia—I dread to open it—I fear it may be to take a laſt leave—perhaps to bid me return her letters—and reſtore———O ! how I ſuffer for my folly !

Abſ. Here—let me ſee.

[*Takes the letter and opens it.*

Aye, a final ſentence, indeed !—'tis all over with you, faith !

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't keep me in ſuſpence.

Abſ. Hear then.—" *As I am convinced that my dear* ' Faulkland's *own reflections have already upbraided him* ' *for his laſt unkindneſs to me, I will not add a word on* ' *the ſubject.—I wiſh to ſpeak with you as ſoon as poſſible.* ' *—Yours ever and truly.* Julia."———There's ſtubbornneſs and reſentment for you ! [*Gives him the letter.* Why, man, you don't ſeem one whit the happier at this.

Faulk. O yes, I am—but—but———

Abſ. Confound your *buts*.—You never hear any thing that would make another man bleſs himſelf, but you immediately d—n it with a *but.*

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honeſtly—don't you think there is ſomething forward—ſomething indelicate in this haſte to forgive ?—Women ſhould never ſue for reconciliation :—that ſhould always come from us.—They ſhould retain their coldneſs till

woo'd to kindneſs—and the *pardon*, like their *love*, ſhould "not unſought be won."

Abſ. I have no patience to liſten to you:—thou'rt incorrigible!—ſo ſay no more on the ſubject.—I muſt go to ſettle a few matters—let me ſee you before ſix—remember—at my lodgings.—A poor induſtrious devil like me, who have toil'd, and drudg'd and plotted to gain my ends, and am at laſt diſappointed by other people's folly—may in pity be allowed to ſwear and grumble a little;—but a captious ſceptic in love,—a ſlave to fretfulneſs and whim—who has no difficulties but of his own creating—is a ſubject more fit for ridicule than compaſſion! [*Exit* Abſolute.

Faulk. I feel his reproaches:—yet I would not change this too exquiſite nicety, for the groſs content with which he tramples on the thorns of love.—His engaging me in this duel, has ſtarted an idea in my head, which I will inſtantly purſue.—I'll uſe it as the touchſtone of Julia's ſincerity and diſintereſtedneſs—if her love prove pure and ſterling ore—my name will reſt on it with honour!—and once I've ſtamp'd it there, I lay aſide my doubts for ever:—but if the droſs of ſelfiſhneſs, the alloy of pride predominate—'twill be beſt to leave her as a toy for ſome leſs cautious fool to ſigh for. [*Exit* Faulkland.

ACT V.

SCENE I. JULIA'S *Dreſſing room.*

JULIA *ſola.*

—HOW this meſſage has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can he mean? why ſuch charge to be alone?————O Faulkland!—how many unhappy moments!—how many tears have you coſt me—

Enter FAULKLAND.

Julia. What means this?—why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas! Julia, I am come to take a long farewell.

Julia.

Julia. Heav'ns! what do you mean?

Faulk. You ſee before you a wretch, whoſe life is forfeited.—Nay, ſtart not!—the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this miſery on me.—I left you fretful and paſſionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I muſt fly this kingdom inſtantly.—O Julia, had I been ſo fortunate as to have call'd you mine entirely, before this miſchance had fallen on me, I ſhould not ſo deeply dread my baniſhment!—

Julia. My ſoul is oppreſs'd with ſorrow at the nature of your misfortune: had theſe adverſe circumſtances ariſen from a leſs fatal cauſe, I ſhould have felt ſtrong comfort in the thought that I could now chaſe from your boſom every doubt of the warm ſincerity of my love.——My heart has long known no other guardian—I now truſt my perſon to your honour—we will fly together—When ſafe from purſuit, my father's will may be fulfilled—and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your ſorrows, and tendereſt comforter. Then on the boſom of your wedded Julia, you may lull your keen regret to ſlumbering; while virtuous love, with a Cherub's hand, ſhall ſmoothe the brow of upbraiding thought, and pluck the thorn from compunction.

Faulk. O Julia! I am a bankrupt in gratitude! but the time is ſo preſſing, it calls on you for ſo haſty a reſolution.—Would you not wiſh ſome hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compenſation poor Faulkland can make you beſide his ſolitary love?

Julia. I aſk not a moment.—No, Faulkland, I have lov'd you for yourſelf: and if I now, more than ever, prize the ſolemn engagement which ſo long has pledged us to each other, it is becauſe it leaves no room for hard aſperſions on my fame, and puts the ſeal of duty to an act of love.—But let us not linger.—Perhaps this delay——

Faulk. 'Twill be better I ſhould not venture out again till dark.—Yet am I griev'd to think what numberleſs diſtreſſes will preſs heavy on your gentle diſpoſition!

Julia,

Julia. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act.—I know not whether 'tis ſo—but ſure that alone can never make us unhappy.—The little I have will be ſufficient to ſupport us; and exile never ſhould be ſplendid.

Faulk. Aye, but in ſuch an abject ſtate of life, my wounded pride perhaps may increaſe the natural fretfulneſs of my temper, till I become a rude, moroſe companion, beyond your patience to endure. Perhaps the recollection of a deed my conſcience cannot juſtify, may haunt me in ſuch gloomy and unſocial fits, that I ſhall hate the tenderneſs that would relieve me, break from your arms, and quarrel with your fondneſs!

Julia. If your thoughts ſhould aſſume ſo unhappy a bent, you will the more want ſome mild and affectionate ſpirit to watch over and conſole you:—One who, by bearing *your* infirmities with gentleneſs and reſignation, may teach you *ſo* to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this uſeleſs device I throw away all my doubts. How ſhall I plead to be forgiven this laſt unworthy effect of my reſtleſs, unſatisfied diſpoſition?

Julia. Has no ſuch diſaſter happened as you related?

Faulk. I am aſhamed to own that it was all pretended; yet in pity, Julia, do not kill me with reſenting a fault which never can be repeated: But ſealing, this once, my pardon, let me to-morrow, in the face of heaven, receive my future guide and monitreſs, and expiate my paſt folly, by years of tender adoration.

Julia. Hold, Faulkland!—that you are free from a crime, which I before fear'd to name, heaven knows how ſincerely I rejoice!—Theſe are tears of thankfulneſs for that! But that your cruel doubts ſhould have urged you to an impoſition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang, more keen than I can expreſs!

Faulk. By heav'ns! Julia———

Julia. Yet hear me.———My father lov'd you, Faulkland! and you preſerv'd the life that tender parent gave me; in his preſence I pledged my hand—

joyfully

joyfully pledged it—where before I had given my heart. When, ſoon after, I loſt that parent, it ſeem'd to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, ſhewn me whither to transfer, without a pauſe, my grateful duty, as well as my affection: Hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another.—I will not upbraid you, by repeating how you have trifled with my ſincerity.——

Faulk. I confeſs it all! yet hear——

Julia. After ſuch a year of trial—I might have flattered myſelf that I ſhould not have been inſulted with a new probation of my ſincerity, as cruel as unneceſſary! I now ſee it is not in your nature to be content, or confident in love. With this conviction—I never will be yours. While I had hopes that my perſevering attention, and unreproaching kindneſs, might in time reform your temper, I ſhould have been happy to have gain'd a dearer influence over you; but I will not furniſh you with a licenſed power to keep alive an incorrigible fault, at the expence of one who never would contend with you.

Faulk. Nay, but Julia, by my ſoul and honour, if after this——

Julia. But one word more.—As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another.—I ſhall pray for your happineſs with the trueſt ſincerity; and the deareſt bleſſing I can aſk of heaven to ſend you, will be to charm from you that unhappy temper, which alone has prevented the performance of our ſolemn engagement.—All I requeſt of *you* is, that you will yourſelf reflect upon this infirmity, and when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of—let it not be your *leaſt* regret, that it loſt you the love of one—who would have follow'd you in beggary through the world! [*Exit.*

Faulk. She's gone!—for ever!—There was an awful reſolution in her manner, that rivetted me to my place——O fool!—dolt!—barbarian!—Curſt as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind fortune ſent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my ſide!—I muſt

now haſten to my appointment.—Well, my mind is turned for ſuch a ſcene.—I ſhall wiſh only to become a principal in it, and reverſe the tale my curſed folly put me upon forging here.——O love!—tormentor!—fiend!—whoſe influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull ſouls, make idiots of them, but meeting ſubtler ſpirits, betrays their courſe, and urges ſenſibility to madneſs! [*Exit.*

Enter MAID *and* LYDIA.

Maid. My miſtreſs, ma'am, I know, was here juſt now—perhaps ſhe is only in the next room. [*Exit* Maid.

Lydia. Heigh ho!—Though he has uſed me ſo, this fellow runs ſtrangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave couſin will make me recal him.

Enter JULIA.

Lydia. O, Julia, I am come to you with ſuch an appetite for conſolation.—Lud! child, what's the matter with you!—You have been crying!—I'll be hanged, if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Julia. You miſtake the cauſe of my uneaſineſs!—Something *has* flurried me a little.—Nothing that you can gueſs at.——I would not accuſe Faulkland to a ſiſter! [*Aſide.*

Lydia. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can aſſure you mine ſurpaſs them.——You know who Beverly proves to be?

Julia. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr Faulkland had before inform'd me of the whole affair. Had young Abſolute been the perſon you took him for, I ſhould not have accepted your confidence on the ſubject, without a ſerious endeavour to counteract your caprice.

Lydia. So, then, I ſee I have been deceived by every one!—but I don't care—I'll never have him.

Julia. Nay, Lydia——

Lydia. Why, is it not provoking? when I thought we were coming to the prettieſt diſtreſs imaginable, to find myſelf made a mere Smithfield bargain of at laſt—There, had I projected one of the moſt ſentimental elopements!—ſo becoming a diſguiſe!—ſo amiable a

ladder

ladder of ropes!—conſcious moon—four horſes—Scotch parſon—with ſuch ſurpriſe to Mrs Malaprop—and ſuch paragraphs in the newſpapers!—O, I ſhall die of diſappointment.

Julia. I don't wonder at it.

Lydia. Now—ſad reverſe!—what have I to expect, but, after a flimſy preparation with a biſhop's licence, and my aunt's bleſſing, to go ſimpering up to the altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country-church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk aſk the conſent of every butcher in the pariſh to join John Abſolute and Lydia Languiſh, ſpinſter! O, that I ſhould live to hear myſelf called ſpinſter!

Julia. Melancholy indeed!

Lydia. How mortifying, to remember the dear delicious ſhifts I uſed to be put to, to gain half a minute's converſation with this fellow!—How often have I ſtole forth, in the coldeſt night in January, and found him in the garden, ſtuck like a dripping ſtatue! —There would he kneel to me in the ſnow, and ſneeze and cough ſo pathetically! he ſhivering with cold, and I with apprehenſion! and while the freezing blaſt numb'd our joints, how warmly would he preſs me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!—Ah, Julia, that was ſomething like being in love.

Julia. If I were in ſpirits, Lydia, I ſhould chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it ſuits more the ſituation of my mind, at preſent, earneſtly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with ſincerity, ſuffer that unhappineſs from your caprice, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

Lydia. O lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter MRS MALAPROP, FAG, *and* DAVID.

Mrs Mal. So! ſo! here's fine work!—here's fine ſuicide, paracide, and ſimulation going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antiſtrophe!

Julia. For heaven's ſake, madam, what's the meaning of this?

Mrs Mal. That gentleman can tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lydia. Do, Sir, will you inform us. (*To* Fag.)

Fag. Ma'am, I ſhould hold myſelf very deficient in every requiſite that forms the man of breeding, if I delayed a moment to give all the information in my power to a lady ſo deeply intereſted in the affair as you are.

Lydia. But quick! quick, Sir!

Fag. True, ma'am, as you ſay, one ſhould be quick in divulging matters of this nature; for ſhould we be tedious, perhaps while we are flouriſhing on the ſubject, two or three lives may be loſt!

Lydia. O patience!—Do, ma'am, for heaven's ſake! tell us what is the matter?

Mrs Mal. Why! murder's the matter! ſlaughter's the matter! killing's the matter!—but he can tell you the perpendiculars.

Lydia. Then, prithee, Sir, be brief.

Fag. Why then, ma'am, as to murder—I cannot take upon me to ſay—and as to ſlaughter, or man-ſlaughter, that will be as the jury finds it.

Lydia. But who, Sir—who are engaged in this?

Fag. Faith, ma'am, one is a young gentleman whom I ſhould be very ſorry any thing was to happen to—a very pretty behaved gentleman!—We have lived much together, and always on terms.

Lydia. But who is this? who! who! who?

Fag. My maſter, ma'am—my maſter—I ſpeak of my maſter.

Lydia. Heavens! What, Captain Abſolute!

Mrs Mal. O, to be ſure, you are frightened now!

Julia. But who are with him, Sir?

Fag. As to the reſt, ma'am, this gentleman can inform you better than I.

Julia. Do ſpeak, friend. (*To* David.)

David. Look'ee, my Lady——by the maſs! there's miſchief going on. Folks don't uſe to meet for amuſement with fire-arms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-ſcreens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beſide!——This, my lady, I ſay, has an angry ſavour.

Julia.

Julia. But who is there beſide Captain Abſolute, friend?

David. My poor maſter—under favour for mentioning him firſt.—You know me, my lady—I am David—and my maſter of courſe is, or *was* Squire Acres.—Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Julia. Do, ma'am, let us inſtantly endeavour to prevent miſchief.

Mrs Mal. O fie—it would be very inelegant in us:—we ſhould only participate things.

David. Ah! do, Mrs Aunt, ſave a few lives—they are deſperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that blood-thirſty Philiſtine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger!—O mercy!—have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the ſcrape?—Why, how you ſtand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyſhire putrefactions!

Lydia. What are we to do, madam?

Mrs Mal. Why fly with the utmoſt felicity, to be ſure, to prevent miſchief!—here, friend—you can ſhew us the place?

Fag. If you pleaſe, ma'am, I will conduct you.—David, do you look for Sir Anthony. [*Exit* David.

Mrs Mal. Come, girls!—this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, Sir, you're our envoy—lead the way, and we'll precede.

Fag. Not a ſtep before the ladies for the world!

Mrs Mal. You're ſure you know the ſpot.

Fag. I think I can find it, ma'am; and one good thing is, we ſhall hear the report of the piſtols as we draw near, ſo we can't well miſs them;—never fear, ma'am, never fear. [*Exit, he talking.*

SCENE II. *South Parade.*

Enter ABSOLUTE, *putting his ſword under his great-coat.*

Abſ. A ſword ſeen in the ſtreets of Bath would raiſe as great an alarm as a mad dog.—How provoking this is in Faulkland!—never punctual! I ſhall be obliged to go without him at laſt.—O, the devil! here's Sir Anthony!——how ſhall I eſcape him?

[*Muffles up his face, and takes a circle to go off.*

Enter SIR ANTHONY.

Sir Anth. How one may be deceived at a little diſtance! only that I ſee he don't know me, I could have ſworn that was Jack!—Hey!—Gad's life! it is.—Why, Jack,—what are you afraid of? hey!—ſure I'm right.—Why, Jack—Jack Abſolute! [*Goes up to him.*

Abſ. Really, Sir, you have the advantage of me:—I don't remember ever to have had the honour——my name is Saunderſon, at your ſervice.

Sir Anth. Sir, I beg your pardon—I took you—hey!—why Z—ds! it is—ſtay——[*Looks up to his face.*] So, ſo—your humble ſervant, Mr Saunderſon!—Why, you ſcoundrel, what tricks are you after now?

Abſ. O! a joke, Sir, a joke!—I came here on purpoſe to look for you, Sir.

Sir Anth. You did! well, I am glad you were ſo lucky:—but what are you muffled up ſo for?—what's this for?—hey?

Abſ. 'Tis cool, Sir; isn't it?—rather chilly ſomehow:—but I ſhall be late—I have a particular engagement.

Sir Anth. Stay.——Why, I thought you were looking for me?—Pray, Jack, where is't you are going?

Abſ. Going, Sir!

Sir Anth. Aye—where are you going?

Abſ. Where am I going?

Sir Anth. You unmannerly puppy!

Abſ. I was going, Sir, to—to—to Lydia—Sir, to Lydia—to make matters up if I could;—and I was looking for you, Sir, to—to———

Sir Anth. To go with you, I ſuppoſe—Well come along.

Abſ. O! z—ds! no, Sir, not for the world!—I wiſh'd to meet with you, Sir,—to—to—to——You find it cool, I'm ſure, Sir—you'd better not ſtay out.

Sir Anth. Cool!—not at all—Well, Jack—and what will you ſay to Lydia?

Abſ. O, Sir, beg her pardon, humour her—promiſe and vow:—but I detain you, Sir—conſider the cold air on your gout.

Sir Anth.

Sir Anth. O, not at all!—not at all!—I'm in no hurry.—Ah! Jack, you youngſters, when once you are wounded here.—[*Putting his hand to* Abſolute's *breaſt.*] Hey! what the deuce have you got here?

Abſ. Nothing, Sir—nothing.

Sir Anth. What's this? here's ſomething d—d hard.

Abſ. O, trinkets, Sir! trinkets—a bauble for Lydia.

Sir Anth Nay, let me ſee your taſte.—[*Pulls his coat open, the ſword falls.*—Trinkets!—a bauble for Lydia!—z—ds! ſirrah, you are not going to cut her throat, are you?

Abſ. Ha! ha! ha!—I thought it would divert you, Sir, though I did'nt mean to tell you till afterwards.

Sir Anth. You did'nt?—Yes, this is a very diverting trinket, truly.

Abſ. Sir, I'll explain to you—You know, Sir, Lydia is romantic—dev'liſh romantic, and very abſurd of courſe:—now, Sir, I intend, if ſhe refuſes to forgive me—to unſheath this ſword—and ſwear—I'll fall upon its point, and expire at her feet!

Sir Anth. Fall upon a fiddle-ſtick's end!—why, I ſuppoſe it is the very thing that would pleaſe her—Get along you fool.——

Abſ. Well, Sir, you ſhall hear of my ſucceſs—you ſhall hear.—"O, Lydia!—forgive me, or this pointed ſteel"—ſays I.

Sir Anth. "O, booby! ſtab away, and welcome"—ſays ſhe—Get along!—and d—n your trinkets!

[*Exit* Abſolute.

Enter DAVID, *running.*

David. Stop him! ſtop him! Murder! Thief! Fire!—Stop fire! Stop fire!—O! Sir Anthony—call! call! bid'm ſtop! Murder! Fire!

Sir Anth. Fire! Murder! where?

David. Oons! he's out of ſight, and I'm out of breath, for my part; O, Sir Anthony! why didn't you ſtop him! why didn't you ſtop him!

Sir Anth. Z—ds! the fellow's mad!—Stop whom! ſtop Jack?

David.

David. Aye, the Captain, Sir!—there's murder and ſlaughter——

Sir Anth. Murder!

David. Aye, pleaſe you, Sir Anthony, there's all kinds of murder, all ſorts of ſlaughter to be ſeen in the fields: there's fighting going on, Sir—bloody ſword and gun fighting!

Sir Anth. Who are going to fight, Dunce?

David. Every body that I know of, Sir Anthony:—every body is going to fight, my poor maſter, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, your ſon, the Captain——

Sir Anth. O, the dog!—I ſee his tricks:—do you know the place?

David. King's Mead Fields.

Sir Anth. You know the way?

David. Not an inch;—but I'll call the Mayor—Aldermen—Conſtables—Church-wardens—and Beadles—we can't be too many to part them.

Sir Anth. Come along—give me your ſhoulder! we'll get aſſiſtance as we go—the lying villain!—Well, I ſhall be in ſuch a frenzy—So—this was the hiſtory of his trinkets! I'll bauble him! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *King's Mead-Fields.*

SIR LUCIUS *and* ACRES, *with Piſtols.*

Acres. By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good diſtance—Odds levels and aims!—I ſay it is a good diſtance.

Sir Luc. Is it for muſkets or ſmall field-pieces? upon my conſcience, Mr Acres, you muſt leave thoſe things to me.—Stay now—I'll ſhew you.

[*Meaſures paces along the ſtage*

there now, that is a very pretty diſtance—a pretty gentleman's diſtance.

Acres. Z—ds! we might as well fight in a ſentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I ſhall take my aim.

Sir Luc. Faith! then I ſuppoſe you would aim at him beſt of all if he was out of ſight.

Acres,

Acres. No, Sir Lucius—but I ſhould think forty or eight and thirty yards——

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! nonſenſe, three or four feet between the mouths of your piſtols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no!—by my valour! there is no merit in killing him ſo near: do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long ſhot:—a long ſhot, Sir Lucius, if you love me?

Sir Luc. Well—the gentleman's friend and I muſt ſettle that.—But tell me now, Mr Acres, in caſe of an accident, is there any little will or commiſſion I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I don't underſtand——

Sir Luc. Why, you muſt think there's no being ſhot at without a little riſk—and if an unlucky bullet ſhould carry a Quietus with it—I ſay it will be no time to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A Quietus!

Sir Luc. For inſtance, now—if that ſhould be the caſe—would you chuſe to be pickled and ſent home?—or would it be the ſame to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very ſnug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk ſo.

Sir Luc. I ſuppoſe, Mr Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir Luc. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being uſed to a thing.—Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's ſhot?

Acres. Odds files!—I've practiſed that—there, Sir Lucius—there—— [*Puts himſelf in an attitude.*—a ſide-front, hey?—Odd! I'll make myſelf ſmall enough:—I'll ſtand edge ways.

Sir Luc. Now—you're quite out—for if you ſtand ſo when I take my aim— [*Levelling at him.*

Acres. Z—ds! Sir Lucius—are you ſure it is not cock'd?

Sir Luc. Never fear.

Acres.

Acres. But—but!—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir Luc. Pho! be eaſy—Well now if I hit you in the body my, bullet has a double chance—for if it miſſes a vital part of your right ſide—'twill be very hard if it don't ſucceed on the left!

Acres. A vital part!

Sir Luc. But, there—fix yourſelf ſo——

[*Placing him.*

let him ſee the broad ſide of your full front—there—now a ball or two may paſs clean thro' your body, and never do any harm at all.

Acres. Clean thro' me!—a ball or two clean thro' me!

Sir Luc. Aye—may they—and it is much the genteeleſt attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Look'ye! Sir Lucius—I'd juſt as lieve be ſhot in an aukward poſture as a genteel one—ſo, by my valour! I will ſtand edge-ways,

Sir Luc. (*Looking at his watch.*) Sure they don't mean to diſappoint us—Hah!—no faith—I think I ſee them coming.

Acres. Hey!—what!—coming!——

Sir Luc. Aye—Who are thoſe yonder getting over the ſtile?

Acres. There are two of them, indeed,—well—let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we—we—won't run.—

Sir Luc. Run!

Acres. No—I ſay—we *won't* run, by my valour!

Sir Luc. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing—nothing—my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite ſo bold, ſomehow—as I did.

Sir Luc. O fie! conſider your honour.

Acres. Aye—true—my honour—Do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two every now and then about my honour.

Sir Luc. Well, here they're coming. [*Looking.*

Acres. Sir Lucius—if I wa'n't with you, I ſhould almoſt think I was afraid—if my valour ſhould leave me!—Valour will come and go.

Sir Luc.

Sir Luc. Then pray keep it faſt, while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes—my valour is certainly going!—it is ſneaking off!—I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands!

Sir Luc. Your honour—your honour.—Here they are.

Acres. O mercy!—now—that I was ſafe at *Clod-Hall!* or could be ſhot before I was aware.

Enter FAULKLAND *and* ABSOLUTE.

Sir Luc. Gentlemen, your moſt obedient—Hah!—what Captain Abſolute!—So, I ſuppoſe, Sir, you are come here, juſt like myſelf—to do a kind office, firſt for your friend—then to proceed to buſineſs on your own account.

Acres. What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

Abſ. Hark'ye, Bob, *Beverly's* at hand.

Sir Luc. Well, Mr Acres—I don't blame your ſaluting the gentleman civilly.—So, Mr Beverly, (*to* Faulkland) if you'll chuſe your weapons, the Captain and I will meaſure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, Sir.

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr Faulkland; theſe are my particular friends.

Sir Luc. What, Sir, did not you come to fight Mr Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, Sir.

Sir Luc. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpoſe for the game—you won't be ſo cantankerous as to ſpoil the party by ſitting out.

Abſ. O pray, Mr Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr Acres is ſo bent on the matter.

Acres. No, no, Mr Faulkland—I'll bear my diſappointment like a Chriſtian—Look'ee, Sir Lucius, there's no occaſion at all for me to fight; and if it is the ſame to you, I'd as leave let it alone.

Sir Luc. Obſerve me, Mr Acres—I muſt not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged ſomebody—

and

and you came here to fight him—Now, if that gentleman is willing to repreſent him—I can't ſee, for my ſoul, why it isn't juſt the ſame thing.

Acres. Why no—Sir Lucius—I tell you, 'tis one *Beverly* I've challenged—a fellow, you ſee, that dare not ſhew his face? If *he* were here, I'd make him give up his pretenſions directly!—

Abſ. Hold, Bob—let me ſet you right—there is no ſuch man as *Beverly* in the caſe.—The perſon who aſſumed that name is before you; and as his pretenſions are the ſame in both characters, he is ready to ſupport them in whatever way you pleaſe.

Sir Luc. Well, this is lucky—Now you have an opportunity——

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend Jack Abſolute—not if he were fifty *Beverly's!* Z—ds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me ſo unnatural.

Sir Luc. Upon my conſcience, Mr Acres, your valour has *oozed* away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the leaſt! Odds Backs and Abettors? I'll be your ſecond with all my heart—and if you ſhould get a *Quietus*, you may command me entirely. I'll get you *ſnug laid* in the *Abbey here*; or *pickle* you, and ſend you over to *Blunder-buſs-Hall*, or any thing of the kind, with the greateſt pleaſure.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a *Coward*; Coward was the word, by my valour!

Sir Luc. Well, Sir?

Acres. Look'ee, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word *Coward*—Coward may be ſaid in joke—But if you had call'd me a *Poltroon*, Odds Daggers and Balls——

Sir Luc. Well, Sir?

Acres. ——— I ſhould have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir Luc. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Abſ. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better ſecond than my friend, Acres—He is a moſt *determined*

dog

dog—call'd in the country, *fighting Bob*.—He generally *kills a man a-week*; don't you, Bob?

Acres. Aye—at home!

Sir Luc. Well then, Captain, 'tis we muſt begin—ſo come out, my little counſellor, [*draws his ſword.* and aſk the gentleman, whether he will reſign the lady, without forcing you to proceed againſt him?

Abſ. Come on then, Sir [*draws;*] ſince you won't let it be an amicable ſuit, here's my reply.

Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, *and the* Women.

David. Knock' em all down, ſweet Sir Anthony; knock down my maſter in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behaviour!

Sir Anth. Put up, Jack, or I ſhall be in a phrenzy—how came you in a duel, Sir?

Abſ. Faith, Sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he call'd on me, and you know, Sir, I ſerve his Majeſty.

Sir Anth. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me, he ſerves his Majeſty.—Zounds! ſirrah, then how durſt you draw the King's ſword againſt one of his ſubjects?

Abſ. Sir, I tell you, that gentleman call'd me out, without explaining his reaſons.

Sir Anth. Gad, Sir, how came you to call my ſon out, without explaining your reaſons?

Sir Luc. Your ſon, Sir, inſulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir Anth. Zounds! Jack, how durſt you inſult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs Mal. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies—Captain Abſolute, come here—How could you intimidate us ſo?—Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Abſ. For fear I ſhould be kill'd or eſcape, ma'am?

Mrs Mal. Nay, no deluſions to the paſt—Lydia is convinc'd; ſpeak, child.

Sir Luc. With your leave, ma'am, I muſt put in a word here—I believe I could interpret the young Lady's ſilence—Now mark—

Lydia. What is it you mean, Sir?

Sir Luc. Come, come, Delia, we muſt be ſerious now—this is no time for trifling.

Lydia. 'Tis true, Sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and ſolicit the return of his affections.

Abſ. O! my little angel, ſay you ſo?—Sir Lucius, —I perceive there muſt be ſome miſtake here.—With regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you, I can only ſay, that it could not have been intentional.—And as you muſt be convinced, that I ſhould not fear to ſupport a real injury—you ſhall now ſee that I am not aſhamed to atone for an inadvertency —I aſk your pardon.—But to this lady, while honour'd with her approbation, I will ſupport my claim againſt any man whatever.

Sir Anth. Well ſaid, Jack, and I'll ſtand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretenſions to any thing in the world—and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a batchelor.

Sir Luc. Captain, give me your hand—an affront handſomely acknowledged becomes an obligation—and as for the lady—if ſhe chuſes to deny her own handwriting here— [*Takes out letters.*

Mrs Mal. O, he will diſſolve my myſtery.—Sir Lucius, perhaps there's ſome miſtake—perhaps I can illuminate——

Sir Luc. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no buſineſs.—Miſs Languiſh, are you my Delia, or not?

Lydia. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

[Lydia *and* Abſolute *walk aſide.*

Mrs Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the ſoft impeachment—pardon my bluſhes, I am Delia.

Sir Luc. You Delia—pho! pho! be eaſy.

Mrs Mal. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—thoſe letters are mine—When you are more ſenſible of my benignity

benignity—perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addreſſes.

Sir Luc. Mrs Malaprop, I am extremely ſenſible of your condeſcenſion; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you.—And, to ſhew you I am not ungrateful, Captain Abſolute, ſince you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

Abſ. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's my friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir Luc. Hah! little valour—here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds wrinkles! No.—But give me your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of *pickling* me again, ſay Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

Sir Anth. Come, Mrs Malaprop, don't be caſt down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs Mal. O Sir Anthony!—men are all barbarians— [*All retire but* Julia *and* Faulkland.

Julia. He ſeems dejected and unhappy—not ſullen—there was ſome foundation, however, for the tale he told me—O woman! how true ſhould be your judgement, when your reſolution is ſo weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I ſue for what I ſo little deſerve? I dare not preſume—yet hope is the child of penitence.

Julia. Oh Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to reſent it. As my heart honeſtly bids me place my weakneſs to the account of love, I ſhould be ungenerous not to admit the ſame plea for your's.

Faulk. Now I ſhall be bleſt indeed!——

[Sir Anthony *comes forward.*

Sir Anth. What's going on here?—So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at laſt.—All the faults I have ever ſeen in my friend Faulkland, ſeemed to proceed from what he calls the *delicacy* and *warmth* of his affection for you

——There, marry him directly, Julia, you'll find he'll mend ſurpriſingly! [*The reſt come forward.*

Sir Luc. Come now, I hope there is no diſſatisfied perſon, but what is content; for as I have been diſappointed myſelf, it will be very hard if I have not the ſatisfaction of ſeeing other people ſucceed better——

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius.—So, Jack, I wiſh you joy—Mr Faulkland the ſame.—Ladies,—come now, to ſhew you I am neither vex'd nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I inſiſt on your all meeting me there.

Sir Anth. Gad, Sir, I like your ſpirit; and at night we ſingle lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a huſband to Mrs Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are ſtolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—*yours* for having checked in time the errors of an ill directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and *mine*, for having, by her gentleneſs and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved moſt, and tortured the heart he ought to have ador'd.

Abſ. Well, Jack, we have both taſted the bitters, as well as the ſweets, of love—with this difference only, that *you* always prepared the bitter cup for yourſelf, while *I*——

Lydia. Was always obliged to *me* for it, hey! Mr Modeſty?——But come, no more of that—our happineſs is now as unallay'd as general.

Julia. Then let us ſtudy to preſerve it ſo: and while hope pictures to us a flattering ſcene of future bliſs, let us deny its pencil thoſe colours which are too bright to be laſting.—When hearts deſerving happineſs would unite their fortunes, virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modeſt hurtleſs flowers; but ill-judging paſſion will force the gaudier roſe into the wreath, whoſe thorn offends them, when its leaves are dropt!

EPILOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

Spoken by MRS BULKELEY.

LADIES, for *you*—I heard our Poet ſay—
He'd try to coax ſome *Moral* from his Play:
"One moral's plain—cried I—without more fuſs;
'Man's ſocial happineſs all reſts on Us—
'Thro' all the Drama—whether damn'd or not—
'*Love* gilds the *Scene*, and *Women* guide the *plot*.
'From ev'ry rank, obedience is our due—
'D'ye doubt?—The world's great ſtage ſhall prove it true."

The Cit—well ſkill'd to ſhun domeſtic ſtrife—
Will ſup abroad;—but firſt—he'll aſk his *wife*:
John Trot, his friend, for once, will do the ſame,
But then—he'll juſt *ſtep home to tell his dame*.

The *ſurly 'Squire*—at noon reſolves to rule,
And half the day—Zounds! madam is a fool!
Convinc'd at night—the vanquiſh'd Victor ſays,
Ah! Kate! *you women have ſuch coaxing ways!*——

The *jolly Toper* chides each tardy blade,—
Till reeling Bacchus calls on love for aid:
Then with each Toaſt, he ſees fair bumpers ſwim,
And kiſſes Chloe on the ſparkling brim!

Nay, I have heard that Stateſmen—great and wiſe—
Will *ſometimes* counſel with a lady's eyes;
The ſervile ſuitors—watch her various face,
She ſmiles preferment—or ſhe frowns diſgrace—
Curtſies a penſion here—there nods a place.

Nor with leſs awe, in ſcenes of humbler life,
Is *viewd the miſtreſs*, or is *heard* the *wife*.

The pooreſt peaſant of the pooreſt ſoil,
The child of poverty, and heir to toil—
Early from radiant love's impartial light,
Steals one ſmall ſpark, to chear his world of night:
Dear ſpark!—that oft thro' winter's chilling woes,
Is all the warmth his little cottage knows!
The wand'ring *Tar*—who, not for *years*, has preſs'd
The widow'd partner of his *day* of reſt—
On the cold deck—far from her arms remov'd—
Still hums the ditty which his Suſan lov'd:
And while around the cadence rude is blown,
The Boatſwain whiſtles in a ſofter tone.

The *Soldier*, fairly proud of wounds and toil,
Pants for the *triumph* of his Nancy's ſmile;
But ere the battle, ſhould he liſt' her cries,
The lover trembles—and the hero dies!
That heart, by war and honour ſteel'd to fear,
Droops on a ſigh, and ſickens at a tear!

But Ye more cautious—ye nice-judging few,
Who give to Beauty only Beauty's due,
Tho' friends to love—*Ye* view with deep regret,
Our conqueſt marr'd—and triumphs incomplete,
'Till poliſh'd Wit more laſting charms diſcloſe,
And Judgment fix the dart which Beauty throws!
—In female breaſts did Senſe and Merit rule,
The lover's mind would aſk no other ſchool;
Sham'd into ſenſe—the Scholars of our eyes,
Our Beaux from *Gallantry* would ſoon be wiſe;
Would gladly light, their homage to improve,
The Lamp of Knowledge at the Torch of Love!

FINIS.

THE

DUENNA,

OR THE

DOUBLE ELOPEMENT,

A COMIC OPERA.

CHARACTERS.

MEN.

DON FERDINAND, - -	MR MATTOCKS.
DON ISAAC MENDOZA, -	MR QUICK.
DON JEROME, - -	MR EDWIN.
LOPEZ, - - -	MR WEWITZER.
FATHER PAUL, - -	MR MAHON.
DON CARLOS, - -	MR BRETT.
DON ANTONIO, - -	MR RHEINHOLD.

WOMEN.

DONNA LOUISA, - -	MRS MARTYR.
DONNA CLARA, - -	MISS HARPER.
DUENNA, - -	MRS WEBB.

FRIARS, MASKS, AND SERVANTS, &c.

THE

DUENNA,

OR THE

DOUBLE ELOPEMENT.

A COMIC OPERA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

DON JEROME'S *Houſe, at Night.*

Enter LOPEZ, *with a Lanthorn.*

Lop. WELL, ſurely, this is the hardeſt taſk in nature, to ſerve a man ſo far gone in love.—Why, my maſter neither eats, drinks, nor ſleeps; and here I am obliged to attend him, night and day, in the charming amuſements of faſting and waking:—This may be pleaſant to a lover; but as I am not one of the ſighing gentry, I could wiſh for more ſubſtantial entertainment.—At this rate, we ſhall make a black lent of the whole year;—in a fortnight I ſhall be ſhrunk to leſs than a ſizeable eel:—my cheeks are already thinner than parchment, and my jaws, for want of proper uſe, are almoſt lock'd:—This maſter of mine is ——but, here he comes.

Enter FERDINAND,

Ferd. Well, ſirrah, what are you doing here? Did I not order you home?

Lop. I was thinking, Sir, if you would but be perſuaded to go home, lie down, and take a little bit of a nap—if it was but by way of novelty, it—

Ferd. Who bid you think, raſcal? Begone! and let me no longer be troubled with your impertinence.

Lop.

Lop. Impertinence! Dear Sir, conſider my melancholy condition; and, if you will indulge any paſſion, pray let it be compaſſion for the hollow ſound of my ſtomach—

Ferd. Peace, cormorant! Thou haſt not an idea beyond the groſs ſenſation of eating.

Lop. I confeſs the charge, and heartily wiſh it more ſubſtantial than mere idea—

Ferd. No more, dolt! You muſt faſt and wake as long as I pleaſe; ſo begone home, as you fear correction. [*Exit* Ferdinand.

Lop. There he goes! Love has taken full poſſeſſion of his brain; and, until he comes to his ſober ſenſes, I ſhall have neither food nor reſt.—Plague of all your fine ſenſations, I ſay. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter ANTONIO, FERDINAND, *and* GENTLEMEN, *with Guittars and maſk'd; who approach under* LOUISA'S *window.*

SERENADE.

Ant. Tell me, my lute, can thy fond ſtrain,
So gently ſpeak thy maſter's pain;
So ſoftly ſing, ſo humbly ſigh,
That—tho' my ſleeping love ſhall know
Who ſings—who ſighs below,—
Her roſy ſlumbers ſhall not fly.
Thus may ſome viſion whiſper more
Than ever I durſt ſpeak before!

Ferd. 'Tis all in vain, Antonio; Louiſa will not hear you; and if ſhe does, 'twill be to little purpoſe.

Ant. I am not of your opinion, Ferdinand: a ſincere and tender lover ſhould never ſhrink at a faint repulſe; if ſhe is within hearing, I doubt not to convince you of your error.

AIR.

AIR.

Ant. The breath of morn bids hence the night;
Unveil thoſe beauteous eyes, my fair;
For all the dawn of love is there,
I feel no day——I own no light.
[*After the ſong* Louiſa *appears at the window.*

AIR.

Lou. Waking, I heard thy numbers chide,
Waking, the dawn did bleſs my ſight,
'Tis Phœbus ſure that wooes I cry'd,
Who ſpeaks in ſong, who moves in light.
[*Don Jerome above opens his window.*

AIR. TRIO.

Jer. What vagabonds are theſe I hear,
Fiddling, fluting, rhyming, ranting,
Piping, ſcraping, whining, canting,
Fly, ſcurvy minſtrels, fly!
Lou. Nay, pray thee father, why ſo rough?
Ant. An humble lover I!
Jer. How durſt you, daughter, lend an ear
To ſuch deceitful ſtuff?
Quick from the window, fly!
Lou. Adieu, Antonio! *Ant.* Muſt you go?
A. & L. We ſoon, perhaps, may meet again;
For tho' hard fortune is our foe,
The god of love will fight for us.——
Jer. Reach me the blunderbuſs!
A. & L. The god of love who knows our pain.
Jer. Hence, or theſe ſlugs are thro' your brain.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Chamber in* DON JEROME'S *Houſe.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* LOUISA.

Jer. 'Tis well the catterwauling puppy made his eſcape:—a minute more, and I would have made a riddle of his calicoe carcaſe.

Lou. Why, ſir, ſhould his honourable love ſubject him to ſuch cruel treatment?

Jer.

Jer. Honourable love! and cruel treatment!—fine romantic babble, truly!——But I'll make you know, ſighing, whining madam, that you are a daughter, born to obey, and I a father born to command,—abſolute in power and ſhrewd in diſcernment:—ſo no more tricks, d'ye hear?— [*Exeunt into the houſe*

SCENE IV. *Street.*

Enter FERDINAND *and* ANTONIO.

Ant. Nay, prithee, don't be grave, Ferdinand——I have my perplexities, yet bear up againſt them.

Ferd. I am the moſt unfortunate of all men living, Antonio——

Ant. What is the matter?—Has Clara and you had any difference?

Ferd. I am on the rack!—She is ſo much diſpleaſed, that I know not if ever I ſhall ſee her again.

Ant. What has ſhe taken ill!—You muſt have been much to blame; for Clara is all gentleneſs.

Ferd. Indeed I found it was impoſſible to attempt ſeeing her, the father kept ſo watchful an eye:—ſo that I attempted to ſee her maid; which ſucceeded to my wiſh, and ſhe conveyed me to her apartment.

Ant. A gallant youth, upon my word!—And, then I'll be ſworn you took ſome liberty that has ſhocked her delicacy.—Tell me, did you dare to take her hand?

Ferd. Moſt aſſuredly I did.

Ant. And did you preſume to treſpaſs on a kiſs without her conſent?

Ferd. A kiſs! I raviſh'd a dozen from her.—

Ant. And can you wonder at her diſpleaſure?

Ferd. Not in the leaſt; but I am diſtracted in having loſt her.

AIR.

Ferd. Cou'd I her faults remember,
Forgetting ev'ry charm,
Soon would impartial reaſon
The tyrant love diſarm:

But when enrag'd I number
Each failing of her mind,
Love ſtill ſuggeſts her beauty,
And ſees, while reaſon's blind.

Ferd. Antonio, you were once fond of Clara: how ſtands your affection now?

Ant. Your ſiſter now poſſeſſes all my ſoul.—I once thought Clara had charms; but the coldneſs and neglect with which ſhe treated me, recalled my heart to its wonted ſtate of indifference.

AIR.

Ant. I ne'er could any luſtre ſee
In eyes that would not look on me:
I ne'er ſaw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to ſip.
Has the maid who ſeeks my heart
Cheeks of roſe untouch'd by art?——
I will own the colour true,
When yielding bluſhes aid their hue.

Is her hand ſo ſoft and pure?——
I muſt preſs it, to be ſure:
Nor can I e'en be certain then,
'Till it grateful preſs again.
Muſt I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving boſom ſigh?
I will do ſo—when I ſee
That heaving boſom ſigh for me.

Ferd. I'll do all in my power to aſſiſt your ſuit with my ſiſter:—but I charge you not to attempt running away with her.—You ſhall have my intereſt as far as that can ſerve you.

Ant. Would you not, Ferdinand, run away with Clara, if ſhe would conſent?

Ferd. I muſt confeſs I ſhould not heſitate: but you will allow, we never do by other men's wives and daughters, as we wiſh they ſhould do by our's.

Ant. You need be under no uneaſineſs, on my account, in reſpect to Clara.

Ant.

Ant. Friendſhip is the bond of reaſon:
But, if beauty diſapprove,
Heav'n abſolves all other treaſon,
In the heart that's true to love.

The faith which to my friend I ſwore,
As a civil oath I view:
But to the charms which I adore,
'Tis religion to be true.

Then if to one I falſe muſt be;
Can I doubt which to prefer—
A breach of ſocial faith with thee,
Or ſacrilege to love and her.

[*Exit* Ant.

Ferd. Sure Antonio has no lurking paſſion for Clara. And, yet, methinks, this change muſt be all pretence: for who that has ever loved her can ceaſe to do ſo—But, from his try'd ſincerity, how can I doubt his friendſhip.

AIR.

Ferd. Tho' cauſe for ſuſpicion appears,
Yet proofs of her love too are ſtrong;
I'm a wretch if I'm right in my fears,
And unworthy of bliſs if I'm wrong.
What heart-breaking torments from jealouſy flow,
Ah! none but the jealous—the jealous can know!

When bleſt with the ſmiles of my fair,
I know not how much I adore;
Thoſe ſmiles let another but ſhare,
And I wonder I priz'd them no more.
Then whence can I hope a relief from my woe,
When the falſer ſhe ſeems, ſtill the fonder I grow!

SCENE V. *Chamber in* DON JEROME'S *houſe.*

Enter LOUISA *and* DUENNA.

Duen. Are you ſtill determined, my dear miſs, to take ſo raſh a ſtep?—Are you really ſo fond of Anto-

nio, as to marry him without a fortune? I fear you will hereafter repent, and reflect on the imprudence of your choice.

AIR.

Lou. Thou can'ſt not boaſt of fortune's ſtore,
My love! while me they wealthy call;
But I was glad to find thee poor——
For, with my heart, I'd give thee all:
And then the grateful youth ſhall own,
I lov'd him for himſelf alone.

But when his worth my hand ſhall gain,
No word or look of mine ſhall ſhow,
That I the ſmalleſt thought retain
Of what my bounty did beſtow:
Yet ſtill his grateful heart ſhall own,
I lov'd him for himſelf alone.

Duen. Indeed, Louiſa, I overheard your father ſay, you ſhall marry little Iſaac, the Jew, to-morrow:—— Now, if we ſucceed in our plot, you ſhall give him up to me entirely.

Lou. O yes, with all my heart!——But have you gained the maid to my intereſt?—My brother Ferdinand has promiſed his aſſiſtance.

Duen. All is as you wiſh——But I muſt have Antonio's laſt letter—that muſt be the cauſe of his ſuſpicion; and leave the reſt to me.

Lou. There it is; *(gives a letter)* and I wiſh you ſucceſs with all my heart.

Enter DON JEROME *and* FERDINAND.

Jer. What is all this ſcraping, fiddling, and ſerenading?—I deſire I may have no more of it.—And what have you been about, Sir?—diſturbing ſome honeſt family in the ſame manner, I ſuppoſe; Louiſa, to-morrow, child, I have determined you ſhall marry Iſaac Mendoza; and then—

Lou. O, Sir, do not make me miſerable!—

Jer. Any thing more?

Lou. Sir, he's a Jew——

Jer.

Jer. That's a miſtake; for he's changed his religion theſe ſix weeks—Any thing more?

Lou. Sir, he's a Portugueze.

Jer. That's another miſtake; for he has forſworn his country.—Any thing more?

Lou. Sir, he has to me the greateſt fault that ever a man had.

Jer. Hey-day!——What's that, pray?

Lou. He is my averſion.

Jer. Louiſa, I care not: I know he loves you, and has the money. The beſt experiment in nature, to obtain good fruit, is to graft on a crab.——You know my wife and I lived very happy; yet there was no love between us, and we expected none; therefore, we were not diſappointed:—and the poor woman, when ſhe died, I was ſo ſorry, that I did not care if ſhe had lived. I wiſh every man in Spain could ſay as much. And now, Sir, if you have any more advice to give your ſiſter, about diſobedience to her father, be brief; for I intend to lock her up in her room, and will not ſee her face, till ſhe returns to her duty.

Ferd. Sir, for my ſiſter's ſake, I cannot help ſpeaking——

Jer. Then, Sir, for my ſake, hold your tongue.

[*Exit* Ferdinand.

(Don Jerome *locks up* Louiſa, *and returning, meets the* Duenna.)

Jer. So, madam! have I found you out!—Here's a witch! engaged in Antonio's intereſt. How did you dare to encourage ſuch a piece of miſchief?

Duen. Well, and if I am in Antonio's intereſt, I am not aſhamed to own it; for I always delighted in the tender paſſions——

Jer. In the tender paſſions! O, you old piece of antiquity, you are an antidote to all the tender paſſions. Get out of my houſe, this moment; out of my houſe, I ſay! you, that I took in to my houſe to be a ſcarecrow, to become a decoy-duck!—Get along! you old piece of iniquity!

Duen. Well, Sir, I don't want to ſtay in your houſe; but I muſt go and lock up my wardrobe.

Jer. Your wardrobe! When you came into my houſe, you could carry your wardrobe in your comb caſe, you could, you old dragon!

Duen. And my veil, too,—I hope you would not have me go without my veil.

Jer. Your veil, you can't go without a veil, indeed! —I ſuppoſe you are afraid of your beauty. Well, go along and get your veil, you old devil! *(He lets the Duenna into Louiſa.)* A fine ſtory indeed! if parents are to be diſobeyed on account of love, liking, beauty, and ſuch nonſenſe:—But, as my father made me marry to pleaſe him, without caring two-pence for my bride; ſo my daughter ſhall marry to pleaſe me, though age, deformity, and avarice ſhould be my choice.

AIR.

If a daughter you have, ſhe's the plague of your life:
No peace you ſhall know—tho' you've buried your wife:
At twenty ſhe mocks at the duty you taught her,
O! what a plague is an obſtinate daughter!
Sighing and whining!
Dying and pining!
O! what a plague is an obſtinate daughter!

When ſcarce in their teens they have wit to perplex us,
With letters and lovers they conſtantly vex us;
While each ſtill rejects the fair ſuitor you've brought her;
O! What a plague is an obſtinate daughter!
Wrangling and jangling!
Flouting and pouting;
O! what a plague is an obſtinate daughter!

Jer. So, madam, you have got your veil:—now march off;—and, if you pleaſe, I'll ſee you clear of my houſe.—There, go, go to Antonio!—go to him; and do you hear?—ſince he has got you turned out of a good place, he had better make you amends, by taking you home with himſelf. [*Exit* Don Jerome.

SCENE

SCENE VI. *Town.*

Enter LOUISA, *who peeps through her veil.*

Lou. Good b'ye to you, Sir. [*Laughing.*

Enter CLARA *and* MAID.

[Louiſa *ſees them and retires.*

Maid. Well, madam, what ſteps do you intend to purſue, now that you have eſcaped from your father?

Cla. My intention is to viſit the convent of St Catharine's; and, perhaps, hereafter take the veil. Ferdinand has ſo much offended me, that I cannot forgive him.

Lou. *(Coming forward)* Now, I have left my father's houſe, I don't know where to go:—if I knew—Ha! who's here?—methinks it ſhould be Clara.

Cla. That muſt be Louiſa. [*Both lifting up their veils.*

Lou. Clara!

Cla. Louiſa!

Lou. Clara, I am aſham'd to inform you what I have done.——— Your good ſenſe will certainly condemn my conduct.

Cla. Tell me, my dear.——— I am your friend, and you may truſt me.

Lou. To be plain then, my dear Clara, I have elop'd from my father's houſe.

Cla. Indeed, Louiſa, I ſhould be angry at ſo mad an action, but that I have juſt now committed the ſame offence.

Lou. And how do you intend to avoid the ſearch of your family?

Cla. I am going to the convent of St Catharine's;—my father's ſeverity is paſt all bearing; and now your brother has ſo much offended me, that I ſhall never forgive him.

AIR.

Cla. When ſable night each drooping plant reſtoring,
Wept o'er the flow'rs her breath did cheer,

As

As ſome ſad widow o'er her babe deploring,
Wakes its beauty with a tear.

When all did ſleep, whoſe weary hearts could borrow
One hour from love and care to reſt—
Lo! as I preſs'd my couch in ſilent ſorrow
My lover caught me to his breaſt.

He vow'd he came to ſave me
From thoſe that would enſlave me.
Then kneeling,
Kiſſes ſteeling,
Endleſs faith he ſwore,
But ſoon I chid him thence;
For had his fond pretence
Obtain'd one favour then——
And had he preſs'd again,
I fear'd my treacherous heart would grant him more.

Cla. Where is Antonio?——Is he not the partner of your flight?

Lou. No, nor is he acquainted with my intention. My father cruelly inſiſted I ſhould marry Iſaac the Jew to-morrow:—this extraordinary command has compelled me to this diſagreeable ſtep:——Oh, yonder goes my brother, with the very man my father intended I ſhould marry.

Cla. Won't it be dangerous if he ſees you?

Lou. No, my dear, he never ſaw me; but his frequent viſits to my father, made him ſhew his odious figure very often before my window, from whence he was ſhewn to me.

Cla. He comes this way; I'll leave you: *(Going.)* —But, Louiſa, when you ſee your brother, be ſure you don't tell him I am gone to the convent of St. Catharine's, two doors down on the right ſide of the piazza.

Lou. Oh, you may depend upon it, I will tell him where you may not be found: *(Going.)* But my dear friend, will you allow me to make uſe of your name, as I may find occaſion?

Cla.

Cla. With all my heart; any thing in my power you may command. [*Exit* Clara.

Enter ISAAC.

Iſa. Aye, aye!——there's no doubt this little figure of mine will ſoon captivate the heart of Don Guzman's daughter.——But whom have we here?——a pretty girl, faith!——how ſhe eyes me! *(ſhe approaches)* aye, aye, ſhe is certainly ſtruck with my dreſs and figure: and I don't wonder at it; I have ſome reaſon to think they are particularly ſtriking.——

Lou. Sir, your ſervant:—good ſtranger, I hope you will excuſe this liberty;——I have a favour to requeſt of you——

Iſa. I am ſorry for you, young woman;—but I am poſitively engaged—

Lou. But, Sir, you don't ſeem to underſtand me——

Iſa. I can't make you any honourable propoſals;—and, if I was to offer any thing elſe, I ſuppoſe you have ſome good natured brother or couſin, that would run me through the guts.——You have no hopes, child; I am ſorry for you.

Lou. It is not your perſon I ſolicit; I have no ambition of that kind; my ſuit is of a very different nature: To be plain with you, Sir, I am told you are acquainted with Signior Antonio;——if it is not too much trouble, and you will lend your pity to a ſtranger, pleaſe to direct him to me.

Iſa. Oh,—then, 'tis not me you're fond of?——

Lou. You!—no, indeed.

Iſa. Why, then, I muſt tell you, that you are a little confident, ſelf-ſufficient minx, and not the perſon I took you for.—But pray, young woman, what is your name?

Lou. Clara, Sir, Don Guzman's daughter.—I have left my father's houſe in purſuit of my lover, who as yet knows nothing of the matter.

Iſa. Hum!—this may turn to my advantage;—for Louiſa, I know, is fond of Antonio, and, if ſhe ſhould be jealous of Clara, ſhe will then conſent to marry me, in revenge for Antonio's falſehood.—[*Aſide.*]—Well, Miſs

Miſs, to ſhew you my good nature, I'll forgive the affront you offered me; I will endeavour to find your lover, and ſend him to you immediately.——In the mean time, here comes a friend of mine, I can confide in; he will take care of you while I look for Antonio.

Enter CARLOS.

Iſa. Carlos, this is a young lady whoſe lover I am going in ſearch of; you will take her to my lodgings, 'till I find him.—Be ſure to take particular care of her.

Lou. Oh, Sir, now that you are acquainted with my ſituation, ſure you won't deceive me; if you do, it will render me miſerable!——

Car. Well ſaid, female politician.

AIR.

Car. Had I a heart for falſhood fram'd,
I ne'er could injure you:
For, though your tongue no promiſe claim'd,
Your charms would make me true.

To you no ſoul ſhall bear deceit,
No ſtranger offer wrong;
For friends in all the ag'd you'll meet,
And lovers in the young.

But when they learn that you have bleſt
Another with your heart,
They'll bid aſpiring paſſions reſt,
And act a brother's part.

Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
Nor fear to ſuffer wrong;
For friends in all the ag'd you'll meet,
And lovers in the young.

DIALOGUE.

Iſa. My miſtreſs expects me, and I muſt go to her,
Or how can I hope for a ſmile?
Lou. Soon may you return a proſperous wooer,
But think what I ſuffer the while!

Alon

Alone and away from the man that I love,
In ſtrangers I'm forced to confide.

Iſa. Dear lady, my friend, you may truſt, and he'll prove
Your ſervant, protector and guide.

AIR.

Car. Gentle maid, ah! why ſuſpect me?
Let me ſerve and then reject me.
Can'ſt thou truſt, and I deceive thee?
Art thou ſad, and ſhall I grieve thee?
Gentle maid, ah! why ſuſpect me?
Let me ſerve thee—then reject me.

TRIO.

Lou. Never may'ſt thou happy be,
If in ought thou'rt falſe to me!
Car. Never may I happy, &c.
Iſa. Never may he, &c.

Iſa. I am ſure my good friend will do all in his power to amuſe you, 'till I find Antonio, and ſend him to you.—I muſt on another errand. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Parlour in DON JEROME'S *Houſe.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* ISAAC, *meeting.*

Jer. AH! little Iſaac, I rejoice to ſee thee——I have been thinking of thee, and have been planning for thy happineſs.

Iſa. Don Jerome, you are too good to me; and I am much obliged to you.—I dare ſay you have thought me tardy in my viſit; but a circumſtance has detained me which I will inform you of—Your neighbour, Don Guzman's daughter, is run away from her father;—I met her in my way hither; and ſhe ſent me to ſeek Antonio.——You ſee I can keep a ſecret.

Jer.

Jer. Ah, Iſaac, ſee when my daughter will ſerve me ſuch a trick.—I am wiſer than them all.—I have locked her up, to make ſure of her.

Iſa. And ſee when my miſtreſs will ſerve me ſo.—My aunt always called me wiſe little Solomon; let Iſaac alone; he's a cunning little dog; a little roguiſh, now and then, in money matters; but keen, deviliſh keen!—I will ſend Antonio to her; in which caſe he will be no longer my rival with Louiſa!——Ay! ay! I am deviliſh keen——But, what hopes of ſucceſs have I with your fair daughter?

Jer. Why, indeed, ſhe is like all her ſex,——a little perverſe; but I have lock'd her up, and have ſworn never to ſee her more, 'till ſhe is obedient to my commands;——and, to-morrow, Iſaac, I intend you ſhall marry her.—O! ſhe is a beautiful creature.

Iſa. I do not doubt it.—Pleaſe, Sir, to give me a deſcription of her.

Jer. With all my heart.—Let me ſee now,—her eyes are like diamonds of the firſt water.——

Iſa. Diamonds of the firſt water; that's very good; But I had much rather they were real diamonds. [*Aſide.*

Jer. Her ſkin is like the pureſt dimity;——her teeth are even, and whiter, and better enamelled than elephants—and her voice is like a Virginian nightingale;—and as for dimples—hold,—hold,—dimples did I ſay?—No, ſhe has but one dimple; but I defy you to tell which is the prettieſt, the cheek that has the dimple, or the cheek that has not the dimple:—then her chin;—ſhe has a lovely down on her chin, like the down of a peach.

Iſa. Lord! Lord! I am afraid I ſhall be overpowered with her beauty; and I ſhould not care to be in love with any thing but her money:—but, for my part, I don't much mind whether handſome or otherwiſe.

AIR.

Iſa. Give Iſaac the nymph who no beauty can boaſt,
But health and good humour to make her his toaſt;

If

If ſtraight, I don't mind whether ſlender or fat,
At ſix feet, or four—we'll ne'er quarrel for that.

Whate'er her complexion, I vow I don't care;
If brown, it is laſting—more pleaſing if fair.
And, tho' in her cheeks I no dimples ſhould ſee,
Let her ſmile—and each dell is a dimple to me.

Let her locks be the reddeſt that ever were ſeen,
And her eyes—be e'en any colour but green;
For in eyes, though ſo various in luſtre and hue,
I ſwear I've no choice—only let her have two.

'Tis true I'd diſpenſe with a throne on her back,
And white teeth I own—are genteeler than black.
A little round chin too's a beauty I've heard,
But I only deſire—that ſhe mayn't have a beard.

Jer. There! there! go your ways to her; that way leads to her chamber;—the maid will conduct you to the apartment.

Iſa. I muſt confeſs, I feel a little baſhful.——How ſhould I addreſs her?——Do you think ſhe will be ſtruck with my figure?

Jer. You a lover!—and aſk that queſtion—let me inſtruct you——

AIR.

Jer. When the maid whom we love
No intreaties can move,
Who'd lead a life of pining?
If her charms will excuſe
The fond raſhneſs you uſe,
—Away with idle whinning!

Ne'er ſtand like a fool,
With looks ſheepiſh and cool;
—Such baſhful love is teazing:
But with ſpirit addreſs,
And you're ſure of ſucceſs;
For honeſt warmth is pleaſing.

Nay, though wedlock's your view,
Like a rake if you'll woo,
Girls ſooner quit their coldneſs;
They know beauty inſpires
Leſs reſpect than deſires——
Hence love is prov'd by boldneſs.——
So ne'er ſtand like a fool, &c.

[*Exit* Don Jerome.

SCENE II. *Chamber.*

Iſa. Hark! I thought I heard her!—No it was only my fears!—Lord! ſhe muſt be a moſt beautiful and enchanting creature!——I think I hear the rattling of ſilks; it muſt be ſhe.—O here ſhe comes.——

Enter DUENNA *dreſſed like* LOUISA.

Duen. Sir, your ſervant——

Iſa. Your ſervant, madam——

Duen. My papa has informed me, Sir, that you are the gentleman who has kindly profeſſed a partiality for me.—Will you pleaſe to ſit down, Sir?

Iſa. Madam, I hope—I hope, madam—(*Advances ſlowly towards the chair,*)—O la!—(*Duenna advancing towards the chair.*)—I don't know what to ſay.—(*Sees her.*)—Zounds, what a witch!

Duen. What's the matter, Sir?—you appear frightened.

Iſa. No, madam, I'm oblig'd to you—Zounds! is this the bit of dimity he told me of?—But as long as ſhe has money enough, I'll try to reconcile her looks. [*Aſide.*

Duen. I hope you are not ill, Sir?——

Iſa. Only a little ſurpriz'd, madam; your beauty has overcome me.—Yes, ſhe has the down upon her chin, ſure enough. [*Aſide.*

Duen. Do, pray ſit down, Sir:—you'll wonder at my condeſcenſion, Sir;—but I was inform'd you was the pooreſt, little diminutive wretch;—that you was ill-made, yellow-faced, ſnub-nos'd;—inſtead of which I find you ſo genteel, ſo well-bred, that I proteſt I am quite charm'd with you.

Iſa. There is ſomething very pretty in the tone of her voice.

Duen.

Duen. You are really ſo captivating, that I am quite delighted with you,—ſo much, that maiden modeſty gives way to the ſtriking proportion of your perſon.

Iſa. Faith, now I look at her again, ſhe is not quite ſo ugly.—(*drawing nearer*)—Will you pardon me, madam, if I ſalute you?—(*kiſſes her.*)—Faugh!—A man might as well kiſs a hedge-hog. [*Aſide.*

Duen. But, Sir, you muſt pardon me,—you ſhould get rid of that filthy beard;——I proteſt it is like an artichoke.——

Iſa. Why as you ſay, miſs, the razor would not be amiſs—for either of us.—*Aſide.*—But, I am told you have a ſweet voice, miſs,—will you pleaſe to favour me with a ſong—by way of paſſing the time?

Duen. My papa, Sir, is afraid to truſt me even with my muſic-maſter; and I have not practiſed for ſome time;—but I'll try.—(*Endeavours to ſing, but ſcreams.*)

Iſa. Very like a Virginian nightingale! [*Aſide.*

Duen. I'm very hoarſe, Sir.

Iſa. Oh, pray, miſs, don't trouble yourſelf to ſing any more; I hear you are very hoarſe:—but, perhaps, if you took it lower, it would not oblige you to make ſuch very wry faces.

Duen. I have a very great cold, Sir;—but to pleaſe ſo accompliſhed a gentleman, I'll endeavour to recollect my laſt new words.

AIR.

Duen. When a tender maid
Is firſt eſſay'd
By ſome admiring ſwain,
How her bluſhes riſe,
If ſhe meets his eyes,
While he unfolds his pain!

If he takes her hand, ſhe trembles quite!
Touch her lips—and ſhe ſwoons outright.
While a pit-a pat, &c.
Her heart avows her fright.

But in time appear
Fewer ſigns of fear:
The youth ſhe boldly views:
If her hand he graſp,
Or her boſom claſp,
No mantling bluſh enſues!

Then to church well pleaſed the lovers move,
While her ſmiles her contentment prove;
And a pit a-pat, &c.
Her heart avows her love.

Iſa. Well, Miſs Louiſa, may I hope for the happineſs of calling you mine to-morrow?——It is your father's deſire, and what I moſt ardently wiſh for.——

Duen. One thing promiſed, and I ſhall freely conſent.—As my father treated me with ſuch ſeverity, I made a vow never to receive a huſband from his hands: But if you will obtain the key of the garden gate, under pretence of our walking, I will elope from thence with you.

Iſa. (*Pauſing*) In that caſe, I will not be obliged to make any ſettlement on her.—(*Aſide.*) Yes, Miſs, I will endeavour to prevail upon your father, as I am very much in his good graces.

Enter CARLOS.

Car. Well ſaid, brother Iſaac, that is to be.——I ſee you are a briſk, and I hope a thriving wooer.

Iſa. As to that, thriving enough;—but as to your ſiſter, pray, was you ever told there was a family likeneſs?

Duen. What does my brother ſay, Mr Iſaac?

Iſa. I am ſo puzzled, I don't know what to ſay—for heaven's ſake, ſay or ſing ſomething to pleaſe her.

Car. I'll ſtrive to pleaſe you both.——She is very tenacious of her beauty.——

Iſa. I don't doubt it;—ſhe has a damn'd deal of it; and ſhe ought to hold it faſt.

AIR.

Car. Ah, ſure a pair was never ſeen
So juſtly form'd to meet by nature;

The

The youth excelling ſo in mein,
The maid in ev'ry grace of feature!
O, how happy are ſuch lovers,
When kindred beauties each diſcovers!
For ſurely ſhe
Was made for thee,
And thou to bleſs this lovely creature!

So mild your looks, your children thence
Will early learn the taſk of duty,
The boys with all their father's ſenſe,
The girls with all their mother's beauty;
O, how happy to inherit
At once ſuch graces and ſuch ſpirit!
Thus, while you live,
May fortune give—
Each bleſſing—equal to your merit!

Iſa. Carlos, I thank thee. Now, Miſs, I'll wait upon your father and obtain the key.

Duen. Be ſure you don't tell my papa how complying I have been.

Iſa. O, you may depend Miſs upon my prudence.—Such a damn'd piece of conceit and uglineſs I never ſaw in my life.—(*Aſide.*) [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE III. *Chamber.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* ISAAC.

Jer. Well, Iſaac, what reception did you meet with?—Is ſhe not a fine girl?—She has her grandfather's lip to a hair.

Iſa. Aye, and her grandfather's chin to a hair? (*Aſide.*

Jer. Well, Iſaac, what reception did you meet with? How did my daughter behave?

Iſa. Why, better than I thought:—But, pray, how old may your daughter be?

Jer. Let me ſee:—twelve and eight, ay, is juſt twenty.

Iſa. Then I'll venture to ſay, ſhe is the oldeſt looking girl of her age in the kingdom.—Why, zounds! ſhe might paſs for my grandmother:—and as to her

ſkin, that you told me was like the pureſt dimity, by this light it is downright nankeen:—And then her teeth being white—why, they're as black as a coal; where one is ivory, its neighbour is pure ebony, alternately black and white, like the keys of an harpſichord. —Her voice too, you told me, was like a Virginian nightingale: why, it's like a crack'd warming-pan: —And, as for dimples!—To be ſure ſhe has the devil's own dimples! Yes! and you told me ſhe had a lovely down upon her chin, like the down of a peach; but, damme, if ever I ſaw ſuch down upon any human creature in my life, except once upon an old goat.

Jer. What, Sir! do you mean to inſult me, and abuſe my daughter, that is allowed to be the handſomeſt girl in all Spain!—But I ſuppoſe you want to be off from the match.

Iſa. What the devil ſhall I ſay now?—Why then, ſeriouſly, Don Jerome, do you think your daughter handſome?

Jer. The fineſt girl in all Spain!—

Iſa. Lord! Lord! how partial ſome parents are to their children!—Then ſince you provoke me to ſpeak, ſhe's a downright witch——

Enter FERDINAND.

Fer. Hey day!—you ſeem to be upon odd terms, for a father and ſon-in-law.

Jer. What's that to you, you jack-a-napes!

Iſa. He looks plaguy angry with me. I believe I had better draw in my horns, or I ſhan't have his bit of dimity. (*Aſide.*)

AIR.

Iſa. Believe me, good ſir, I ne'er meant to offend,
My miſtreſs I love, and I value my friend:
To win her and wed her is ſtill my requeſt,
For better for worſe—and I ſwear I don't jeſt.

Jer. Zounds! you'd beſt not provoke me, my rage is ſo high.

Iſa. Hold him faſt, I beſeech you, his rage is ſo high,
Good ſir, you're too hot, and this place I muſt fly.

Jer.

Jer. You're a knave and a fop, and this place had beſt fly.

Iſa. You are in ſuch a paſſion now :—(*going to him.*) Did you think I was in earneſt?—I was but jeſting all the while.—You're ſo haſty, Don Jerome ;—I had only a mind to joke a little ; that was all upon my honour!

Jer. Then you was not in earneſt!—Zoun's! I thought you were in earneſt.—But I can forgive a joke as well as any one :—but take care how you carry your jokes ſo far ; for I was near being in a bit of a paſſion. Come, get ſome wine here ; and that will drown all animoſities.

AIR, TRIO.

Don Jerome, Iſaac, and *Ferdinand.*

A bumper of good liquor,
Will end a conteſt quicker,
Than Juſtice, Judge, or Vicar :
So fill a cheerful glaſs,
And let good humour paſs.

But if more deep the quarrel,
Why ſooner drain the barrel,
Than be the hateful fellow,
That's crabbed when he's mellow.

A bumper, &c. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Street.*

ISAAC *and* ANTONIO, *meeting.*

Iſa. Good day, *Antonio :*——I am glad to have met you: I have been in purſuit of you.

Ant. I am happy you have found me. What is your buſineſs with me Iſaac?

Iſa. Only a little love affair :—that's all—Clara is run away from her father, Don Guzman ; and has laid her commands upon me, to bring you to her.—You have no objection, I hope, Sir :—a very fine girl!——

Ant.

Ant. Two things forbid it:—friendſhip and honour.—Clara, Don Guzman's daughter.—It cannot be me ſhe ſent for.

Iſa. Oh, damn your friendſhip and honour.—Go to her,—I ſay it was you ſhe ſent for, and go you muſt. She is all impatience, and waiting at Don Carlos's lodgings.—Come, come, and I'll conduct you to her.

Ant. Well, I'll go to her.—Poſſibly I may be able to ſerve her, with regard to my friend Ferdinand. (*Aſide*)—Lead on, Iſaac, and I'll follow.

Iſa. Methinks you are deviliſh loth to viſit a pretty wench.—If ſhe had ſent for me, I ſhould have taken pity on her inſtantly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Chamber.*

Enter LOUISA.

AIR.

Lou. What bard, O Time, diſcover,
With wings firſt made thee move!
Ah! ſure he was ſome lover
Who ne'er had left his love!

For who that once did prove
The pangs which abſence brings,
Tho' but one day
He were away,
Could picture thee with wings.
What bard, *&c.*

Enter CARLOS.

Lou. What has detained you ſo long?—Where is Antonio?

Car. I have been in ſearch of him, but without ſucceſs: Iſaac is now in purſuit of him.

Lou. Cruel, cruel, man!—You was never in love; elſe you would never ſport with the anxiety of a tender heart! (Carlos *ſighs.*) But, was you, Carlos, was you ever in love?

Car.

Car. I was, Louiſa.
Lou. And was your miſtreſs true?
Car. Oh! had ſhe been always ſo I had been happy.

AIR.

Car. Oh, had my love ne'er ſmil'd on me,
I ne'er had known ſuch anguiſh,
But, think how falſe, how cruel ſhe,
To bid me ceaſe to languiſh;

To bid me hope her hand to gain,
Breath on a flame had periſh'd,
And then, with cold and fix'd diſdain,
To kill the hope ſhe cheriſh'd!

Not worſe his fate—who, on a wreck
That drove as winds did blow it———
Silent had left the ſhatter'd deck,
To find a grave below it:

Then land was cried——no more reſign'd,
He glow'd with joy to hear it,
——Not worſe his fate——his woe to find
The wreck muſt ſink e'er near it.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Two gentlemen below, Sir.
Lou. Antonio and Iſaac, no doubt. We'll retire a moment, to ſee Antonio's ſurpriſe. Let us ſtep into this room. [*Goes to the door of the ſcene.*

Enter ANTONIO, ISAAC, *and* SERVANT.

Iſa. Where is Clara? I have found Antonio, and have brought him to you at laſt: for it was with great difficulty I perſuaded him to come with me. [Servant *points to the door where* Louiſa *is.*——Antonio *goes in reluctantly.*
Iſa. I think I'll juſt take a peep to ſee the meeting.—So, ſo, I think he has pretty well reconciled his friendſhip and honour to the interview.—He does not ſeem to feel any qualms of conſcience now; I'll leave them to ſettle the reſt, and purſue my own buſineſs. [*Exit.*

Enter

Enter LOUISA, ANTONIO, *and* CARLOS.

Ant. And are you ſure the Jew does not ſuſpect the plot contrived againſt him?

Lou. Not in the leaſt—he is too vain of his own perſon; and money is his aim: therefore he thinks every charm is centered in the Duenna.

Ant. How ſhall I thank you, my dear Louiſa, for the confidence you repoſe in me?—Alas! I feared my all was loſt; conſidering my want of fortune, and that your father's cruelty would oblige us to renounce our love.

Car. Permit me, my dear friend, to wiſh you joy on this happy meeting.——May every hour of your life prove as happy as the preſent!

Ant. I thank you, my dear Carlos.——And now, Louiſa, that happineſs is within our reach, why ſhould we delay one moment?———I'll go and bring a prieſt, that ſhall put it out of the power of man to part us. [*Going.*

Lou. [*Stopping him*] Stay, Antonio!—Though I have been imprudent ſo as to leave my father's houſe, and fly to you for protection, it was to avoid the hated marriage with the Jew:——But you'll ſhew your love by leaving the management of this to my direction.

Car. Come, come, Antonio, as my ſiſter has hitherto confided in you, 'tis but juſt you ſhould let her now command.

Ant. I muſt obey.—But why do we triſle with the hours, ſo precious to us both?——Your father muſt be reconciled, when we are made one.

Lou. No more, I beſeech you.——I will go to my friend Clara's apartment, and write my letter; I hope you will not fail to meet me there.

Ant. I ſubmit with pleaſure, and ſhall be impatient for the moment.

AIR. TRIO.

ANTONIO, CARLOS, *and* LOUISA.

Soft pity never leaves the gentle breaſt,
Where love has been receiv'd a welcome gueſt;

As

As wand'ring ſaints, poor huts have ſacred made,
He hallows ev'ry heart he once has ſway'd;
And (when his preſence we no longer ſhare)
Still leaves compaſſion as a relict there.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Hall in DON JEROME'S *Houſe.*

Enter DON JEROME, *and* SERVANT.

Jer. WELL, to be ſure, thoſe women are ſtrange beings: they never know their own minds a minute.——Why now, it was but this morning that ſhe could never marry Iſaac, becauſe he was a Jew: and behold this afternoon ſhe has eloped with him.——Are you ſure it was them?——

Serv. O yes, Sir, it was indeed. I ſaw them in a poſt-chaiſe, driving from the garden gate. You know, Sir, it was by your commands the gardiner gave him the key to walk with my young lady on the parterre.

Jer. I rejoice to hear it——the news makes my old heart glad;——and my daughter will be happy.

Enter SERVANT *with a Letter.*

Ser. My maſter, Iſaac, ſends this letter with all due reſpect to your honour.

Jer. Here, give it me, you dog——This is to inform me, I ſuppoſe he is married, and crave my leave to return———I am tranſported!—(*Reads*)——"Sir, 'your approbation of what I have already done would 'give me the greateſt pleaſure: I am anxious to re-'ceive your bleſſing; and will immediately return, if 'I have your permiſſion. Louiſa's duty to her deareſt 'father. By the time this reaches your hand, I ſhall 'be honoured with the title of your ſon-in-law. *Iſaac* '*Mendoza.*"———As I could wiſh!——Here, Lopez! Francis! Vaſquez! put on your beſt ſuits of liveries; throw open all the doors; call the cook; bid him prepare a ſupper with all the delicacies Spain affords:——bid all my neighbours welcome, and requeſt them

them to partake of my happineſs; tell them I expect my ſon and daughter home.——Get the keys of the cellar, and make all happy.

Enter ſecond SERVANT *with a Letter.*

Serv. This from my young miſtreſs.

Jer. Why, aye, this is from Louiſa.——Since Iſaac wrote to me, what need the little baggage trouble herſelf?——One would think they were not together when theſe were wrote——Let me ſee——[*Reads*] ——"Deareſt papa, tho' I have been ſo imprudent 'as to leave your houſe, I hope you ſhill pardon the 'indiſcretion: It is with a man who is paſſionately 'fond of me, and whoſe merit equally claims my re-'gard. Your conſent, before the ceremony is per-'formed, will make bleſſed your dutiful daughter, '*Louiſa*."——————Go, get pen, ink, and paper, in my room, that I may ſend my conſent with all haſte.—— My heart is ſo light, methinks I have renewed my age.

AIR.

Jer. O the days when I was young!
When I laugh'd in fortune's ſpite,
Talk'd of love the whole day long,
And with nectar crown'd the night.
Then it was, old father Care,
Little reck'd I of thy frown;
Half the malice youth could bear,
And the reſt a bumper drown.
O the days, *&c.*

Truth, they ſay, lies in a well;
Why I vow I ne'er could ſee——
Let the water drinkers tell,
——There it always lay for me:
For, when ſparkling wine went round,
Never ſaw I falſehood's maſk:
But ſtill honeſt truth I found
In the bottom of each flaſk.
O the days, *&c.*

True,

True, at length my vigour's flown,
I have years to bring decay;
Few the locks that now I own,
And the few I have are grey.
Yet, old Jerome, thou may'ſt boaſt,
While thy ſpirits do not tire,
Still beneath thy age's froſt,
Glows a ſpark of youthful fire.
O the days, &c.

SCENE II. *Street.*

Enter FERDINAND, *walking about uneaſy.*

Ferd. To what a dreadful dilemma have I brought myſelf by my own officious folly!——to loſe the only object upon earth I could be happy with!——Yet, why ſhould I condemn myſelf!——it is too plain her affections are eſtranged; and Antonio is the happy man.

AIR.

Ferd. Ah! cruel maid, how haſt thou chang'd
The temper of my mind!
My heart, by thee, from mirth eſtrang'd,
Becomes, like thee, unkind!

By fortune favour'd, clear in fame,
I once ambitious was:
And friends I had that fann'd the flame,
And gave my youth applauſe——

But now my weakneſs all abuſe,
Yet vain their taunts on me;
Friends, fortune, fame itſelf I'd loſe,
To gain one ſmile from thee.

Yet only thou ſhould'ſt not deſpiſe
My folly or my woe;
If I am mad in others eyes,
'Tis thou haſt made me ſo.

But days like theſe with doubting curſt,
I will not long endure;
Am I deſpiſed—— I know the worſt,
And alſo know my cure.

If falſe, her vows ſhe dare renounce,
She inſtant ends my pain;
For Oh! that heart muſt break at once,
Which cannot heal again.

Enter ISAAC *haſtily.*

Ferd. Whither in ſuch haſte, Iſaac?——What's the matter?

Iſa. O, Ferdinand, is that you?——What think you of the gentle Clara, Don Guzman's daughter?—She is run away from her father, for the ſake of her lover; and ſhe ſays he knows nothing of the matter.

Ferd. Dear girl! no more I did.—Where is ſhe?

Iſa. Be but patient and I'll tell you all.—She ſent for him——

Ferd. Well, carry me to her this moment! (*dragging* Iſaac) carry me to her!

Iſa. Well, well, mercy on us, how violent you are!—Why I did carry the perſon ſhe ſent for; it was Don Antonio.

Ferd. Antonio, that ſhe ſent for!

Iſa. Yes it was.—But he was deviliſh loth to go, till I perſuaded him.—He talked much about friendſhip and honour:—But I ſaid damn your honour.

Ferd. The devil you did.— O wretch that I am! miſery and diſtraction come upon me!

Iſa. Why, ſure, you was not the fool that was in love with her.—Ha! ha! ha!

Ferd. You unfeeling Iſraelite!—you dog! don't you pity me? (*Collaring him.*)

Iſa. O yes, Sir, I do pity you moſt heartily.—Dear brother-in-law!——

Ferd. You do pity me, do you, villain?——(*Going to beat him.*)

Iſa. O, no Sir, upon my ſoul I do not pity you; my dear brother-in-law!

Ferd.

Ferd. There, then :—take that, villain! and that! and that. [*Following him round the ſtage, beating him.*]

Iſa. Oh! my dear brother-in-law,—that is to be—Oh! ſpare me, my dear brother!

Ferd. Then, ſirrah, begone! and remember, 'tis only your inſignificance that protects you.

Iſa. Then egad, my inſignificance is the beſt friend I ever had in all my life.—Oh! what a curſed, bully-headed, bloody-minded, ſwaggering dog it is! [*Exit ſtealing off.*]

AIR.

Ferd. Sharp is the woe that wounds the jealous mind,
When treach'ry two fond hearts wou'd rend,
But O! how keener far the pang, to find
That traitor in our boſom friend.

SCENE III. *Wood.*

Enter CLARA, LOUISA, *and* ANTONIO.

AIR.

Cla. By him we love offended,
How ſoon our anger flies!
One day apart 'tis ended,
Behold him, and it dies!

Laſt night your roving brother
Enrag'd I bade depart,
And ſure his rude preſumption
Deſerv'd to loſe my heart.

Yet, were he now before me,
In ſpite of injur'd pride,
I fear my eyes wou'd pardon——
Before my tongue could chide.
By him we love, &c.

With truth the bold deceiver
To me thus oft has ſaid——
" In vain would Clara ſlight me,
' In vain ſhe would upbraid!

'No ſcorn thoſe lips diſcover———
'Where dimples laugh the while;
'No frowns appear reſentful,
'Where heav'n has plac'd a ſmile!"
By him we love, &c.

Cla. My dear Louiſa, you will ſoon be happy——For my part, I am doom'd to paſs the long ſolitary hours in this dreary manſion—Heigho! [*Sighing.*

Lou. Indeed, my dear, you are miſtaken; for, if my father does not give his conſent, how are we to live?

Ant. Do not grieve, my deareſt love!———

AIR.

Ant. How oft, Louiſa, haſt thou ſaid
(Nor wilt thou the fond boaſt diſown,)
Thou wouldſt not loſe Antonio's love
To reign the partner of a throne!

And by thoſe lips that ſpoke ſo kind!
And by this hand I preſs to mine!
—To gain a ſubject nation's love,
I ſwear I would not part with thine.

Then, how, my ſoul, can we be poor,
Who own what kingdoms could not buy!
Of this true heart thou ſhalt be queen,
And ſerving thee—a monarch I.

Thus uncontroul'd in mutual bliſs
And rich in love's exhauſtleſs mine—
Do thou ſnatch treaſures from my lips,
And I'll take kingdoms back from thine!

Enter a NUN, *veiled, with a letter.*

Lou. Now, indeed, we are nearer happineſs.—Here's a wonderful change;—my father's free conſent.

Ant. Is it poſſible!—This is joy beyond expreſſion!—Let us no longer delay our bliſs?—I will fly and bring the prieſt.

Lou. Stay, Antonio.

Ant. My life!———. *Lou.*

Lou. Had not you better take me with you?—perhaps you will not find me here on your return.

Ant. Thus let me thank thee for thy fond advice. [*Kiſſes her.* [*Exeunt* Antonio *and* Louiſa.

Cla. There they go, as happy as heart can wiſh:—May every bleſſing attend them!

Enter FERDINAND *looking after* ANTONIO *and* LOUISA.

Cla. So! this ſhould be Ferdinand.—How got he in, I wonder!—By the help of a bribe, no doubt.

Ferd. [*Looking after them.*] There is Antonio with her; and, for ought I know, going to be married. I ſhall run diſtracted! [*Going.*

Cla. Sir! Sir!——[*ſtopping him.*]

Ferd. Pſha! let me alone——

Cla. What do you want, Sir?—you appear unhappy.

Ferd. Not you, child, not you. But, pray, good nun, is not that Antonio?

Cla. Aſſuredly it is.

Ferd. And, is not that Clara with him?

Cla. Clara is not yet gone out of the garden.

Ferd. One queſtion more; and I'll trouble you no further;—Are they going to be married?

Cla. They are, Sir.

Ferd. Oh! unfortunate that I am—But I will follow them,——upbraid them with their falſehood,——and—have done for ever. [*Exit* Ferdinand.

Cla. Well, I'll follow. Louiſa may not be the only bride to-day.

AIR.

Cla. Adieu, thou dreary pile, where never dies
The ſullen echo of repugnant ſighs!
Ye ſiſter mourners of each lonely cell,
Inur'd by hymns and ſorrows, fare ye well!
For happier ſcenes, I fly this darkſome grove,
To ſaints a priſon, but a tomb of love!

SCENE IV. *Monaſtery.*

Enter FATHER PAUL, FATHER FRANCIS, *and other* FRIARS, *drinking.*

GLEE AND CHORUS.

This bottle's the ſun of our table,
His beams are roſy wine,
We————planets who are not able,
Without his help, to ſhine.

Let mirth and glee abound,
You'll ſoon grow bright,
With borrow'd light,
And ſhine as he goes round!

F. Paul. Come fill. Here's to the blue ey'd nun of St Catharine's. [*drinks.*

All. Agreed—The blue-ey'd nun of St Catharine's. [*drink.*

F. Paul. Here's to the mother-abbeſs. [*drinks.*

All. To our mother-abbeſs. [*drink.*

F. Paul. Have there been any legacies or donations ſince our laſt meeting?

F. Fran. Fifty pounds from an uſurer, on his death-bed, to pray his ſoul through purgatory.

F. Paul. Well, that will pay for candles, brother Francis————Any thing more?

F. Fran. A thouſand dollars, from a lady, to be applied to charitable uſes.

F. Paul. The beſt of uſes,—to diſcharge our wine bill.

F. Fran. A large ſilver lamp, by Don Emanuel de Caſtro, to be kept continually burning in the tomb of St Anthony.

F. Paul. Which we will melt down, to bring in more luſcious proviſion than any we have yet mentioned: for St Anthony is not afraid to be left in the dark—tho' he was————

F. Fran. Forty piſtoles I have received for confeſſions.

F. Paul.

F. Paul. Very good——that will help to pay our butcher's bill.

[*A loud knocking at the door,—they all retire, but* Paul *and* Francis.

Enter a PORTER *meagre and pale.*

F. Paul. *(With a glaſs in his hand)* What do'ſt thou want?

Por. I thought you had done your morning rites.

F. Paul. Done!—No!—Have we, brother Francis?

F. Fran. No, not by a bottle, man.

F. Paul. I ſuppoſe thy ſinful diſpoſition has brought thee to ſee what was to be had, to gratify thy worldly voracious appetite. Thy pamper'd looks are a ſcandal to our order. If you are hungry, are there not the roots of the earth! *(eats cake.)* And, if you are dry, is there not the clear ſtream? *(Drinks wine.)*

Por. Some company would ſpeak with your holineſs, if your morning devotions are ended.

[*Father* Paul *drinks, and gives the glaſs to the* Porter, *who puts it to his mouth.*]

F. Paul. So, you ſinful wretch, if there had been any thing in it, you would have drank it.——Admit them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Enter ANTONIO *and* ISAAC.

Ant. We come, father, to ſolicit your aid to join us in nuptial bands, and hope not too late.

F. Paul. Yes, Sir, but you are, by half an hour—you muſt be patient, and wait another day.

Ant. But, good father, love is impatient, and we cannot wait;—pray diſpatch us [*Giving gold.*] And let this plead for me.

F. Paul. Nay, now you offend me groſly; I muſt not take gold; it hurts my conſcience; but here's a place in my habit, you may lodge it in: Upon your own head be the ſin. And on this ſide is another.

Iſa.

Iſa. O, I underſtand you. There, father. I ſhall need your help preſently; but diſpatch your preſent office.

F. Paul. The ſins of this town almoſt diſtract me—they make me linger in fleſh, to ſee them daily committed before my eyes.

Ant. One would imagine, indeed, they were under your noſe; for it bluſhes more than the reſt of your face.

Iſa. Here comes Ferdinand: I'll not ſtay, for he's a deſperate fellow—— Antonio, you had better go.

Ant. Why ſhould I fear him?——Bleſſed with my love, I'll ſtand my ground.

Iſa. The devil take me if I do;——he almoſt broke my bones juſt now; ſo I'll take my leave.—Father, you ſhall ſee me again.

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Antonio, is this your friendſhip? How can you anſwer for ſuch treatment? Thy life ſhall pay for it: Draw, Sir! [*Draws.*

Lou. Why, brother, you appear angry: (*Diſcovering herſelf.*) What's the matter?

Enter CLARA *behind him, veiled.*

F. Paul. Certainly the man has not a mind to marry his own ſiſter!

Ferd. Louiſa!—Is it you I have miſtaken for Clara all this while?—Where has ſhe fled?

Cla. What is it you want, Sir?——Not you child, not you—— [*mocking him.*

Ferd. Antonio, I bluſh for my folly—Louiſa, what ſhall I ſay?——Clara, my angel, can you forgive me? Love is blind.

DUETTO.

Oft does Hymen ſmile to hear,
Worldly vows of feign'd regard;
Well he knows when they're ſincere,
Never ſlow to give reward.

For his glory is to prove
Kind to thoſe who wed for love.

SCENE

SCENE VI. *Parlour.*

Enter DON JEROME.

Jer. Methinks, they are very ſlow:——I wiſh they were come.——Oh, here's Iſaac.

Enter ISAAC.

Iſa. I am returned with joy to crave your bleſſing.

Jer. But where's my daughter?——my dear girl!——Why did not ſhe accompany you?—Every moment is an age 'till I ſee her.

Iſa. She is waiting for your permiſſion to throw herſelf at your feet.

Jer. Run!—bring her to me:—She'll gladden my old heart. (*Exit* Iſaac.) I am all joy.

Enter ISAAC *and* DUENNA.

Jer. O Lord!—Is that my daughter?—Why the man is ſurely mad!

Iſa. Why do you look at her ſo, Sir?——Go, my dear, and throw your ſnowy arms round your papa. He will forgive you. Don't be uneaſy—go to him—

Duen. My dear papa! (*Running to him and embracing him.*) You will not ſure be ſo cruel as to diſown me!

Jer. Papa! dear papa!——What the devil do you mean? you have not married Urſula the old Duenna, have you, inſtead of my beautiful daughter?

Duen. O, you are a cruel parent!

Jer. O, Lord! Lord! will nobody relieve me from this old hag?

Iſa. Did I not tell you, ſhe was as ugly as the devil; and you would not believe me!——And ſo then I am taken in with this old Jezebel.

Duen. I'll let you know whether I am not a match too good for you.

Enter ANTONIO *and* LOUISA.

Ant. I come, ſir, with my dear Louiſa, to aſk forgiveneſs, and to claim your bleſſing.

Jer. You ſhall have neither, ſir! You have cheated me of my daughter;—— and do you think I can ſo eaſily forgive it?

Ant.

Ant. There, ſir, is your own conſent, in your own hand-writing, ſigned by your own name.

Jer. Sir, it was through a ſtratagem you obtained that conſent——and you ſhall not poſſeſs a rial of her fortune.

Lou. Believe me, ſir, I never meant to deceive you, or marry without your conſent:— I would not receive Antonio for a huſband, untill I obtained it by your letter.

Jer. No matter, madam—— You ſhall not have a maravedie of your fortune.

Ant. I care not, ſir:—in herſelf I have a treaſure.— Give me but your bleſſing, make me happy, and I am content.

Jer. A generous fellow this, [*aſide.*] Do you think, ſir, you are the only man in Spain, that can do a generous act? There, Sir: ſince my daughter is your's, her fortune ſhall be alſo:——There's my bleſſing too:—— and ſince you are ſo generous as to deſpiſe her fortune, no man in Spain deſerves it better. [*They both kneel.*

Lou. Accept our grateful thanks!——

Enter FERDINAND *and* CLARA.

Jer. Hey day! what have we here?——Have you been robbing a nunnery?

Ferd. This is Donna Clara, Sir, Don Guzman's daughter, and my wife, with a good fortune.

Jer. Come here, you little ſlut, and kiſs me. You young dog, you have made a good choice. Bleſs you, my children! And may you ever be as happy as at preſent.

Iſa. And muſt I ſtand to my bargain with this old witch?

Duen. Upon my word, you have no need to complain; who are you? [*Following him round the ſtage.* I will let you know, Sir, I have a brother an Alguzile, that wears a ſword,——you ill-looking diminutive wretch!

Iſa. The devil's dam is broke looſe, and her whole fury is levelled at me.

Lou. Well, little Iſaac, you were always keen—— deviliſh keen—— *Ferd.*

Ferd. Your mother always called you wiſe little Solomon.

Jer. No body could ever put a trick upon you—— Hey! Iſaac! ——

Ferd. Cunning little Iſaac!

Iſa. Is there no way to avoid theſe everlaſting tongues? This door will befriend me:—I'll fly to Jeruſalem, to get rid of that bit of demity. [*Exit* Iſaac.

Duen. Fly where you will—I'll follow you.

[*Exit* Duenna.

FINALE AND CHORUS.

Jer. Come now for jeſt and ſmiling,
Both old and young beguiling,
Let us laugh and play, ſo blyth and gay,
'Till we baniſh care away.

Lou. Thus crown'd with dance and ſong,
The hours ſhall glide along,
With a heart at eaſe—merry, merry glees,
Can never fail to pleaſe.

Ferd. Each bride with bluſhes glowing,
Our wine as roſy flowing,
Let us laugh and play, *&c.*

Ant. Then a health to every friend,
The night's repaſt ſhall end,
With a heart at eaſe, *&c.*

Cla. Nor while we are ſo joyous,
Shall anxious care annoy us,
Let us laugh and play, *&c.*
For gen'rous gueſts like theſe,

Jer. Accept the with to pleaſe.
So we'll laugh and play, all blyth and gay,
Your ſmiles drive care away.

A grand Maſquerade Scene, with Dances, &c. &c.

FINIS.

THE

CRITIC:

OR,

A TRAGEDY REHEARSED.

PROLOGUE.

By the Honourable RICHARD FITZPATRICK.

THE Sifter Muſes, whom theſe realms obey,
Who o'er the Drama hold divided ſway,
Sometimes, by evil counſellors, 'tis ſaid
Like earth born potentates have been miſled:
In thoſe gay days of wickedneſs and wit,
When Villiers criticiz'd what Dryden writ,
The Tragick Queen, to pleaſe a taſteleſs crowd,
Had learn'd to bellow, rant, and roar ſo loud,
That frighten'd Nature, her beſt friend before,
The bluſt'ring beldam's company forſwore.
Her comic Siſter, who had wit 'tis true,
With all her merits, had her failings too;
And would ſometimes in mirthful moments uſe
A ſtile too flippant for a well-bred Muſe.
Then female modeſty abaſh'd began
To ſeek the friendly refuge of the fan,
Awhile behind that ſlight entrenchment ſtood,
'Till driven from thence, ſhe left the ſtage for good.
In our more pious, and far chaſter times!
Theſe ſure no longer are the Muſe's crimes!
But ſome complain that, former faults to ſhun,
The reformation to extremes has run.
The frantick hero's wild delirium paſt,
Now inſipidity ſucceeds bombaſt;
So ſlow Melpomene's cold numbers creep,
Here dullneſs ſeems her drowſy court to keep,
And we are ſcarce awake, whilſt you are faſt aſleep.
Thalia, once ſo ill behav'd and rude,
Reform'd; is now become an arrant prude,
Retailing nightly to the yawning pit,
The pureſt morals, undefil'd by wit!
Our Author offers in theſe motley ſcenes,
A ſlight remonſtrance to the Drama's queens,
Nor let the goddeſſes be over nice;
Free ſpoken ſubjects give the beſt advice.
Although not quite a novice in his trade,
His cauſe to night requires no common aid.
To this, a friendly, juſt, and pow'rful court,
I come Ambaſſador to beg ſupport.
Can he undaunted, brave the critick's rage?
In civil broils, with brother bards engage?
Hold forth their errors to the public eye,
Nay more, e'en News-papers themſelves defy?
Say, muſt his ſingle arm encounter all?
By numbers vanquiſh'd, e'en the brave may fall
And though no leader ſhould ſucceſs diſtruſt,
Whoſe troops are willing, and whoſe cauſe is juſt;
To bid ſuch hoſts of angry foes defiance,
His chief dependance muſt be, YOUR ALLIANCE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Dangle - -	Mr Dodd.
Sneer - -	Mr Palmer.
Sir Fretful Plagiary -	Mr Parsons.
Signor Paſticcio Ritornello	Mr Delpini.
Interpreter - -	Mr Baddeley.
Under Prompter -	Mr Phillimore.
Puff - -	Mr King.
Mrs Dangle - -	Mrs Hopkins.
Italian Girls -	Miſs Field, and the Miſs Abrams.

Characters of the TRAGEDY.

Lord Burleigh -	Mr Moody.
Governor of Tilbury Fort	Mr Wrighten.
Earl of Leiceſter -	Mr Farren.
Sir Walter Raleigh -	Mr Burton.
Sir Chriſtopher Hatton -	Mr Waldron.
Maſter of the Horſe -	Mr Kenny.
Beef-eater - -	Mr Wright.
Juſtice - -	Mr Packer.
Son - -	Mr Lamash.
Conſtable - -	Mr Fawcett.
Thames - -	Mr Gawdry.
Don Ferolo Whiſkerandos	Mr Bannister, jun.
1ſt Niece - -	Miſs Collet.
2d Niece - -	Miſs Kirby.
Juſtice's Lady -	Mrs Johnston.
Confidant - -	Mrs Bradshaw.
Tilburina - -	Miſs Pope.

Guards, Conſtables, Servants, Chorus, Rivers, Attendants, &c. &c.

THE

CRITIC.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Mr and Mrs DANGLE *at Breakfaſt, and reading Newſpapers.*

Dangle. (*reading.*)

"BRUTUS to Lord North."—"Letter the ſecond "on the State of the Army."—Pſhaw! "To "the firſt L— daſh D of the A— daſh Y."—Genuine "Extract of a letter from St Kitt's.—"Coxheath In- "telligence."—"It is now confidently aſſerted that Sir "Charles Hardy."—Pſhaw!—Nothing but about the fleet, and the nation!—and I hate all politics but theatrical politics.—Where's the Morning Chronicle?

Mrs Dangle. Yes, that's your Gazette.

Dangle. So, here we have it.——

"*Theatrical intelligence extraordinary.*"——We hear "there is a new tragedy in rehearſal at Drury-Lane "Theatre, call'd the Spaniſh Armada, ſaid to be writ- "ten by Mr Puff, a gentleman well known in the thea-

" trical world ; if we may allow ourſelves to give credit " to the report of the performers, who, truth to ſay, are " in general but indifferent judges, this piece abounds " with the moſt ſtriking and received beauties of mo- " dern compoſition"—So! I am very glad my friend Puff's tragedy is in ſuch forwardneſs.—Mrs Dangle, my dear, you will be very glad to hear that Puff's tragedy——

Mrs Dangle. Lord, Mr Dangle, why will you plague me about ſuch nonſenſe?—Now the plays are begun I ſhall have no peace.—Isn't it ſufficient to make yourſelf ridiculous by your paſſion for the theatre, without continually teazing me to join you? Why can't you ride your hobby-horſe without deſiring to place me on a pillion behind you, Mr Dangle?

Dangle. Nay, my dear, I was only going to read——

Mrs Dangle. No, no; you will never read any thing that's worth liſtening to:—you hate to hear about your country; there are letters every day with Roman ſignatures, demonſtrating the certainty of an invaſion, and proving that the nation is utterly undone.—But you never will read any thing to entertain one.

Dangle. What has a woman to do with politics, Mrs Dangle?

Mrs Dangle. And what have you to do with the theatre, Mr Dangle? Why ſhould you affect the character of a Critic? I have no patience with you—haven't you made yourſelf the jeſt of all your acquaintance by your interference in matters where you have no buſineſs? Are not you call'd a theatrical Quidnunc, and a mock Mæcenas to ſecond-hand authors?

Dangle. True; my power with the Managers is pretty notorious; but is it no credit to have applications from all quarters for my intereſt?—From lords to recommend fidlers, from ladies to get boxes, from authors to get anſwers, and from actors to get engagements.

Mrs Dangle. Yes, truly; you have contrived to get a ſhare in all the plague and trouble of theatrical property, without the profit, or even the credit of the abuſe that attends it.

Dangle.

Dangle. I am ſure, Mrs Dangle, you are no loſer by it, however; you have all the advantages of it:—mightn't you, laſt winter, have had the reading of the new Pantomime a fortnight previous to its performance? And does not Mr Foſbrook let you take places for a play before it is advertis'd, and ſet you down for a Box for every new piece through the ſeaſon? And didn't my friend, Mr Smatter, dedicate his laſt Farce to you at my particular requeſt, Mrs Dangle?

Mrs Dangle. Yes; but wasn't the Farce damn'd, Mr Dangle? And to be ſure it is extremely pleaſant to have one's houſe made the motley rendezvous of all the lackeys of literature:—The very high change of trading authors and jobbing critics!—Yes, my drawing-room is an abſolute regiſter-office for candidate actors, and poets without character; then to be continually alarmed with Miſſes and Ma'ams piping hiſteric changes on Juliets and Dorindas, Pollys and Ophelias; and the very furniture trembling at the probationary ſtarts and unprovok'd rants of would-be Richards and Hamlets!—And, what is worſe than all, now that the Manager has monopoliz'd the Opera-Houſe, haven't we the Signors and Signoras calling here, ſliding their ſmooth ſemibreves, and gargling glib diviſions in their outlandiſh throats—with foreign emiſſaries and French ſpies, for ought I know, diſguiſed like fidlers and figure dancers!

Dangle. Mercy! Mrs Dangle!

Mrs Dangle. And to employ yourſelf ſo idly at ſuch an alarming criſis as this too—when, if you had the leaſt ſpirit, you would have been at the head of one of the Weſtminſter aſſociations—or trailing a volunteer pike in the Artillery Ground?—But you—o'my conſcience, I believe if the French were landed to-morrow, your firſt enquiry would be, whether they had brought a theatrical troop with them?

Dangle. Mrs Dangle, it does not ſignify—I ſay the ſtage is "the Mirror of Nature," and the actors are "the Abſtract, and brief Chronicles of the Time:"—and pray what can a man of ſenſe ſtudy better?—Beſides, you will not eaſily perſuade me that there is no credit or

im-

importance in being at the head of a band of critics, who take upon them to decide for the whole town, whoſe opinion and patronage all writers ſolicit, and whoſe recommendation no manager dares refuſe!

Mrs Dangle. Ridiculous!—Both managers and authors of the leaſt merit, laugh at your pretenſions.—The Public is their Critic—without whoſe fair approbation they know no play can reſt on the ſtage, and with whoſe applauſe they welcome ſuch attacks as yours, and laugh at the malice of them, where they can't at the wit.

Dangle. Very well, Madam—very well.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr Sneer, Sir, to wait on you.

Dangle. O, ſhew Mr Sneer up. [*Exit* Servant. Plague on't, now we muſt appear loving and affectionate, or Sneer will hitch us into a ſtory.

Mrs Dangle. With all my heart; you can't be more ridiculous than you are.

Dangle. You are enough to provoke——

Enter MR SNEER.

—Ha! my dear Sneer, I am vaſtly glad to ſee you. My dear, here's Mr Sneer.

Mrs Dangle. Good morning to you, Sir.

Dangle. Mrs Dangle and I have been diverting ourſelves with the papers.—Pray, Sneer, won't you go to Drury-lane theatre the firſt night of Puff's tragedy?

Sneer. Yes; but I ſuppoſe one ſhan't be able to get in, for on the firſt night of a new piece they always fill the houſe with orders to ſupport it. But here, Dangle, I have brought you two pieces, one of which you muſt exert yourſelf to make the managers accept, I can tell you that, for 'tis written by a perſon of conſequence.

Dangle. So! now my plagues are beginning.

Sneer. Aye, I am glad of it, for now you'll be happy. Why, my dear Dangle, it is a pleaſure to ſee how you enjoy your volunteer fatigue, and your ſolicited ſolicitations.

Dangle. It's a great trouble—yet, egad, its pleaſant

too.—Why, ſometimes of a morning, I have a dozen people call on me at breakfaſt time, whoſe faces I never ſaw before, nor ever deſire to ſee again.

Sneer. That muſt be very pleaſant indeed!

Dangle. And not a week but I receive fifty letters, and not a line in them about any buſineſs of my own.

Sneer. An amuſing correſpondence!

Dangle (reading.) "Burſts into tears and exit." What, is this a tragedy?

Sneer. No, that's a genteel comedy, not a tranſlation —only *taken from the French*; it is written in a ſtile which they have lately tried to run down; the true ſentimental, and nothing ridiculous in it from the beginning to the end.

Mrs Dangle. Well, if they had kept to that, I ſhould not have been ſuch an enemy to the ſtage, there was ſome edification to be got from thoſe pieces, Mr Sneer!

Sneer. I am quite of your opinion, Mrs Dangle; the theatre, in proper hands, might certainly be made the ſchool of morality; but now, I am ſorry to ſay it, people ſeem to go there principally for their entertainment!

Mrs Dangle. It would have been more to the credit of the Managers to have kept it in the other line.

Sneer. Undoubtedly, Madam, and hereafter perhaps to have had it recorded, that in the midſt of a luxurious and diſſipated age, they preſerv'd *two* houſes in the capital, where the converſation was always moral at leaſt, if not entertaining!

Dangle. Now, egad, I think the worſt alteration is in the nicety of the audience.—No double entendre, no ſmart inuendo admitted; even Vanburgh and Congreve obliged to undergo a bungling reformation!

Sneer. Yes, and our prudery in this reſpect is juſt on a par with the artificial baſhfulneſs of a courtezan, who encreaſes the bluſh upon her cheek in an exact proportion to the diminution of her modeſty.

Dangle. Sneer can't even give the public a good word!—But what have we here?—This ſeems a very odd—

Sneer. O, that's a comedy, on a very new plan; re-

plete

plete with wit and mirth, yet of a moſt ſerious moral! You ſee it is call'd "THE REFORMED HOUSEBREAKER;" where by the mere force of humour, HOUSEBREAKING is put into ſo ridiculous a light, that if the piece has its proper run, I have no doubt but that bolts and bars will be entirely uſeleſs by the end of the ſeaſon.

Dangle. Egad, this is new indeed!

Sneer. Yes; it is written by a particular friend of mine, who has diſcovered that the follies and foibles of ſociety, are ſubjects unworthy the notice of the Comic Muſe, who ſhould be taught to ſtoop only at the greater vices and blacker crimes of humanity—gibbeting capital offences in five acts and pillorying petty larcenies in two.—In ſhort, his idea is to dramatize the penal laws, and make the ſtage a court of eaſe to the Old Bailey.

Dangle. It is truly moral.

Enter SERVANT.

Sir Fretful Plagiary, Sir.

Dangle. Beg him to walk up.—[*Exit* Servant.] Now, Mrs Dangle, Sir Fretful Plagiary is an author to your own taſte.

Mrs Dangle. I confeſs he is a favourite of mine, becauſe every body elſe abuſes him.

Sneer. —Very much to the credit of your charity, Madam, if not of your judgment.

Dangle. But, egad, he allows no merit to any author but himſelf, that's the truth on't—tho' he's my friend.

Sneer. Never.—He is as envious as an old maid verging on the deſperation of ſix-and-thirty: and then the inſiduous humility with which he ſeduces you to give a free opinion on any of his works, can be exceeded only by the petulant arrogance with which he is ſure to reject your obſervations.

Dangle. Very true, egad—tho' he's my friend.

Sneer. Then his affected contempt of all newſpaper ſtrictures; tho' at the ſame time, he is the foreſt man alive, and ſhrinks like ſcorch'd parchment from the fiery ordeal of true criticiſm: yet is he ſo covetous of popularity,

larity, that he had rather be abuſed than not mentioned at all.

Dangle. There's no denying it—tho' he is my friend.

Sneer. You have read the tragedy he has juſt finiſhed haven't you?

Dangle. O yes; he ſent it to me yeſterday.

Sneer. Well, and you think it execrable, don't you?

Dangle. Why between ourſelves, egad I muſt own—tho' he's my friend—that it is one of the moſt——He's here [*Aſide*]—finiſhed and moſt admirable perform——

[Sir Fretful *without*] Mr Sneer with him did you ſay?

Enter SIR FRETFUL.

Ah, my dear friend!—Egad, we were juſt ſpeaking of your Tragedy.—Admirable, Sir Fretful, admirable!

Sneer. You never did any thing beyond it, Sir Fretful—never in your life.

Sir Fretful. You make me extremely happy; for without a compliment, my dear Sneer, there is'nt a man in the world whoſe judgment I value as I do yours—And Mr Dangle's.

Mrs Dangle. They are only laughing at you, Sir Fretful; for it was but juſt now that——

Dangle. Mrs Dangle!—Ah, Sir Fretful, you know Mrs Dangle.—My friend Sneer was rallying juſt now—He knows how ſhe admires you, and——

Sir Fretful. O Lord, I am ſure Mr Sneer has more taſte and ſincerity than to——A damn'd double-faced fellow! [*Aſide.*]

Dangle. Yes, yes,—Sneer will jeſt—but a better humoured——

Sir Fretful. O, I know——

Dangle. He has a ready turn for ridicule—his wit coſts him nothing.——

Sir Fretful. No, egad,—or I ſhould wonder how he came by it. [*Aſide.*]

Mrs Dangle. Becauſe his jeſt is always at the expence of his friend.

Dangle. But, Sir Fretful, have you ſent your play to the

the managers yet?—or can I can be of any ſervice to you?

Sir Fretful. No, no, I thank you; I believe the piece had ſufficient recommendation with it.—I thank you tho'—I ſent it to the manager of COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE this morning.

Sneer. I ſhould have thought now, that it might have been caſt (as the actors call it) better at DRURY-LANE.

Sir Fretful. O lud! no—never ſend a play there while I live—harkee! [*Whiſpers* Sneer.]

Sneer. Writes himſelf!—I know he does—

Sir Fretful. I ſay nothing—I take away from no man's merit—am hurt at no man's good fortune—I ſay nothing—But this I will ſay—through all my knowledge of life, I have obſerved— that there is not a paſſion ſo ſtrongly rooted in the human heart as envy!

Sneer. I believe you have reaſon for what you ſay, indeed.

Sir Fretful. Beſides—I can tell you it is not always ſo ſafe to leave a play in the hands of thoſe who write themſelves.

Sneer. What, they may ſteal from them, hey, my dear Plagiary?

Sir Fretful. Steal! to be ſure they may; and, egad, ſerve your beſt thoughts as gypſies do ſtolen children, diſfigure them to make 'em paſs for their own.

Sneer. But your preſent work is a ſacrifice to Melpomene, and HE you know never——

Sir Fretful. That's no ſecurity.—A dext'rous plagiariſt may do any thing.—Why, Sir, for ought I know, he might take out ſome of the beſt things in my tragedy, and put them into his own comedy.

Sneer. That might be done, I dare be ſworn.

Sir Fretful. And then, if ſuch a perſon gives you the leaſt hint or aſſiſtance, he is deviliſh apt to take the merit of the whole.—

Dangle. If it ſucceeds.

Sir Fretful. Aye,—but with regard to this piece, I think I can hit that gentleman, for I can ſafely ſwear he never read it.

Sneer.

Sneer. I'll tell you how you may hurt him more—

Sir Fretful. How?—

Sneer. Swear he wrote it.

Sir Fretful. Plague on't now Sneer, I ſhall take it ill.—I believe you want to take away my character as an author!

Sneer. Then I am ſure you ought to be very much obliged to me.

Sir Fretful. Hey! Sir!—

Dangle. O you know, he never means what he ſays.

Sir Fretful. Sincerely then—you do like the piece?

Sneer. Wonderfully!

Sir Fretful. But come now, there muſt be ſomething that you think might be might be mended, hey?—Mr Dangle, has nothing ſtruck you?

Dangle. Why faith, it is but an ungracious thing for the moſt part to——

Sir Fretful. —With moſt authors it is juſt ſo indeed they are in general ſtrangely tenacious!—But, for my part, I am never ſo well pleaſed as when a judicious critic points out any defect to me; for what is the purpoſe of ſhewing a work to a friend, if you don't mean to profit by his opinion?

Sneer. Very true.—Why then tho' I ſeriouſly admire the piece upon the whole, yet there is one ſmall objection; which, if you'll give me leave, I'll mention.

Sir Fretful. Sir, you can't oblige me more.

Sneer. I think it wants incident.

Sir Fretful. Good God!—you ſurpriſe me!—wants incident!—

Sneer. Yes; I own I think the incidents are too few.

Sir Fretful. Good God! Believe me, Mr Sneer, there is no perſon for whoſe judgment I have a more implicit deference.—But I proteſt to you, Mr Sneer, I am only apprehenſive that the incidents are too crowded. —My dear Dangle, how does it ſtrike you?

Dangle. Really I can't agree with my friend Sneer.—I think the plot quite ſufficient; and the four firſt acts by many degrees the beſt I ever read or ſaw in my life. If

I might venture to ſuggeſt any thing, it is that the intereſt rather falls off in the fifth.—

Sir Fretful. —Riſes; I believe you mean, Sir.

Dangle. No: I don't upon my word.

Sir Fretful. Yes, yes, you do upon my ſoul—it certainly don't fall off, I aſſure you—No, no, it don't fall off.

Dangle. Now, Mrs Dangle, didn't you ſay it ſtruck you in the ſame light?

Mrs Dangle. No, indeed, I did not—I did not ſee a fault in any part of the play from the beginning to the end.

Sir Fretful. Upon my ſoul the women are the beſt judges after all!

Mrs Dangle. Or if I made any objection, I am ſure it was to nothing in the piece; but that I was afraid it was, on the whole, a little too long.

Sir Fretful. Pray, Madam, do you ſpeak as to duration of time; or do you mean that the ſtory is tediouſly ſpun out?

Mrs Dangle. O Lud! no.—I ſpeak only with reference to the uſual length of acting plays.

Sir Fretful. Then I am very happy—very happy indeed—becauſe the play is a ſhort play, a remarkably ſhort play: I ſhould not venture to differ with a lady on a point of taſte; but, on theſe occaſions, the watch, you know, is the critic.

Mrs Dangle. Then, I ſuppoſe, it muſt have been Mr Dangle's drawling manner of reading it to me.

Sir Fretful. O, if Mr Dangle read it! that's quite another affair!—But I aſſure you, Mrs Dangle, the firſt evening you can ſpare me three hours and a half, I'll undertake to read you the whole from beginning to end, with the Prologue and Epilogue, and allow time for the muſic between the acts.

Mrs Dangle. I hope to ſee it on the ſtage next.—

Dangle. Well, Sir Fretful, I wiſh you may be able to get rid as eaſily of the news-paper criticiſms as you do of ours.—

Sir Fretful. The NEWS-PAPERS!—Sir, they are the moſt villainous—licentious—abominable—infernal—Not

tha

that I ever read them—No—I make it a rule never to look into a news-paper.

Dangle. You are quite right—for it certainly muſt hurt an author of delicate feelings to ſee the liberties they take.

Sir Fretful. No!—quite the contrary; their abuſe is, in fact, the beſt panegyric—I like it of all things.—An author's reputation is only in danger from their ſupport.

Mr Sneer. Why that's true—and that attack now on you the other day——

Sir Fretful. ——What? where?

Dangle. Aye, you mean in a paper of Thurſday; it was completely ill-natur'd to be ſure.

Sir Fretful. O, ſo much the better—Ha! ha! ha!—I wou'dn't have it otherwiſe.

Dangle. Certainly it is only to be laugh'd at; for—

Sir Fretful. —You don't happen to recollect what the fellow ſaid, do you?

Sneer. Pray, Dangle—Sir Fretful ſeems a little anxious—

Sir Fretful. —O lud, no!—anxious,—not I, not the leaſt—I—But one may as well hear you know.

Dangle. Sneer do *you* recollect? make out ſomething. [*Aſide.*

Sneer. I will, [*to Dangle.*]—Yes, yes, I remember perfectly.

Sir Fretful. Well, and pray now—Not that it ſignifies—what might the gentleman ſay?

Sneer. Why, he roundly aſſerts that you have not the ſlighteſt invention, or original genius whatever; tho' you are the greateſt traducer of all other authors living.

Sir Fretful. Ha! ha! ha!—very good!

Sneer. That as to comedy, you have not one idea of your own, he believes, even in your common place book—where ſtray jokes, and pilfered witticiſms are kept with as much method as the ledger of the loſt-and-ſtolen-office.

Sir Fretful. Ha! ha! ha!—very pleaſant!

Sneer. Nay, that you are ſo unlucky as not to have the ſkill even to *ſteal* with taſte:—But that you glean

from the refuſe of obſcure volumes, where more judicious plagiariſts have been before you; ſo that the body of your work is a compoſition of dregs and ſediments—like a bad tavern's worſt wine.

Sir Fretful. Ha! ha!

Sneer. In your more ſerious efforts, he ſays, your bombaſt would be leſs intolerable, if the thoughts were ever ſuited to the expreſſion; but the homelineſs of the ſentiment ſtares thro' the fantaſtic encumbrance of it's fine language, like a clown in one of the new uniforms!

Sir Fretful. Ha! ha!

Sneer. That your occaſional tropes and flowers ſuit the general coarſeneſs of your ſtile, as tambour ſprigs would a ground of linſey-wolſey; while your imitations of Shakeſpeare reſemble the mimicry of Falſtaff's Page, and are about as near the ſtandard of the original.

Sir Fretful. Ha!——

Sneer. —In ſhort, that even the fineſt paſſages you ſteal are of no ſervice to you; for the poverty of your own language prevents their aſſimulating; ſo that they lie on the ſurface like lumps of marl on a barren moor, encumbering what it is not in their power to fertilize.—

Sir Fretful. (*after great agitation.*) ——Now another perſon would be vex'd at this.

Sneer. Oh! but I wou'd'nt have told you, only to divert you.

Sir Fretful. I know it—I *am* diverted,—Ha! ha! ha!—not the leaſt invention!—Ha! ha! ha! very good! —very good!

Sneer. Yes—no genius! Ha! ha! ha!

Dangle. A ſevere rogue! Ha! ha! ha! But you are quite right, Sir Fretful, never to read ſuch nonſenſe.

Sir Fretful. To be ſure—for if there is any thing to one's praiſe, it is a fooliſh vanity to be gratified at it, and if it is abuſe,—why one is always ſure to hear of it from one damn'd good natured friend or another!

Enter SERVANT.

Sir, there is an Italian gentleman with a French interpreter, and three young ladies, and a dozen muſicians, who

who ſay they are ſent by Lady Rondeau and Mrs Fuge.

Dangle. Gadſo! they come by appointment. Dear Mrs Dangle do let them know I'll ſee them directly.

Mrs Dangle. You know, Mr Dangle, I ſhan't underſtand a word they ſay.

Dangle. But you hear there's an interpreter.

Mrs Dangle. Well, I'll try to endure their complaiſance till you come. [*Exit.*

Serv. And Mr Puff, Sir, has ſent word that the laſt rehearſal is to be this morning, and that he'll call on you preſently.

Dangle. That's true—I ſhall certainly be at home. [*Exit* Servant.] Now, Sir Fretful, if you have a mind to have juſtice done you in the way of anſwer—Egad, Mr. Puff's your man.

Sir Fretful. Pſhaw! Sir, why ſhould I wiſh to have it anſwered, when I tell you I am pleaſed at it?

Dangle. True, I had forgot that.—But I hope you are not fretted at what Mr Sneer ——

Sir Fretful. —Zounds! no, Mr Dangle, don't I tell you theſe things never fret me in the leaſt.

Dangle. Nay, I only thought——

Sir Fretful. —And let me tell you, Mr Dangle, 'tis damn'd affronting in you to ſuppoſe that I am hurt, when I tell you I am not.

Sneer. But why ſo warm, Sir Fretful?

Sir Fretful. Gadſlife! Mr Sneer, you are as abſurd as Dangle; how often muſt I repeat it to you, that nothing can vex me but your ſuppoſing it poſſible for me to mind the damn'd nonſenſe you have been repeating to me!—and let me tell you, if you continue to believe this, you muſt mean to inſult me, gentlemen—and then your diſreſpect will affect me no more than the newſpaper criticiſms—and I ſhall treat it—with exactly the ſame calm indifference and philoſophic contempt—and ſo your ſervant. [*Exit.*

Sneer. Ha! ha! ha! Poor Sir Fretful! Now will he go and vent his philoſophy in anonymous abuſe of all modern critics and authors—But, Dangle, you muſt get your friend Puff to take me to the rehearſal of his tragedy.

Dangle. I'll anſwer for't, he'll thank you for deſiring it. But come and help me to judge of this muſical family; they are recommended by people of conſequence, I aſſure you.

Sneer. I am at your diſpoſal the whole morning—but I thought you had been a decided critic in muſic, as well as in literature.

Dangle. So I am—but I have a bad ear.—Efaith, Sneer, though I am afraid we were a little too ſevere on Sir Fretful—tho' he is my friend.

Sneer. Why, 'tis certain, that unneceſſarily to mortify the vanity of any writer, is a cruelty which mere dulneſs never can deſerve; but where a baſe and perſonal malignity uſurps the place of literary emulation, the aggreſſor deſerves neither quarter nor pity.

Dangle. That's true egad!—tho' he's my friend.

SCENE II.

A Drawing Room, Harpſichord, &c. Italian Family, French Interpreter, Mrs Dangle and Servants diſcovered.

Inter. Je dis madame, ja'i l'honneur to *introduce* & de vous demander votre protection pour le Signor Patticcio Retornello & pour ſa charmante famille.

Sig. Paſt. Ah! Voſignoria noi vi preghiamo di favoritevi colla voſtra protezione.

1ſt Daughter. Voſigniora fatevi queſti grazzie.

2d Daughter. Si Signora.

Inter. Madame—*me interpret.*—C'eſt à dire—in Engliſh—quils vous prient de leur faire l'honneur—

Mrs Dangle. —I ſay again, gentlemen, I don't underſtand a word you ſay.

Sig. Paſt. Queſto Signore ſpiegheró.

Inter. Oui—*me interpret.*—nous avons les lettres de recommendation pour Monſieur Dangle de ——

Mrs Dangle. —Upon my word, Sir, I don't underſtand you.

Sig. Paſt. La Co teſſa Rondeau e noſtra padrona.

3d Daughter. Si, padre, & mi Ladi Fuge.

Inter. O!—*me interpret.*—Madame, ils diſent—*in* Engliſh—Qu'ils ont l'honneur d'etre proteges de ces Demes.—*You underſtand?*

Mrs Dangle. No, Sir,——no underſtand!

Enter DANGLE *and* SNEER.

Inter. Ah voici Monſieur Dangle!

All Italians. A! Signor Dangle!

Mrs Dangle. Mr Dangle, here are two very civil gentlemen trying to make themſelves underſtood, and I don't know which is the interpreter.

Dangle. Ebien.

Inter. Monſieur Dangle—le grand bruit de vos talents pour la critique & de votre intereſt avec Meſſieurs les Directeurs a tous les Theatres.

Sig. Paſt. Voſignoria ſiete ſi famoſo par la voſtra conoſcenſa e voſtra intereſſa colla le Direttore da—

} *Speaking together.*

Dangle. Egad I think the Interpreter is the hardeſt to be underſtood of the two!

Sneer. Why I thought Dangle, you had been an admirable linguiſt!

Dangle. So I am, if they would not talk ſo damn'd faſt.

Sneer. Well I'll explain that—the leſs time we loſe in hearing them the better,—for that I ſuppoſe is what they are brought here for.

Sneer *ſpeaks to* Sig. Paſt.—*They ſing trios. &c.* Dangle *beating out of time.* Servant *enters and whiſpers* Dangle.]

Dangle. Shew him up. [*Exit* Servant.

Bravo! admirable! braviſſimo! admirabliſſimo!—Ah! Sneer, where will you find ſuch as theſe voices in England.

Sneer. Not eaſily.

Dangle. But Puff is coming.—Signor and little Signora's—obligatiſſimo!—Spoſa Signora Danglena—Mrs

Dangle, ſhall I beg you to offer them ſome refreſhments, and take their addreſs in the next room?

[*Exit* Mrs Dangle *with the* Italians *and* Interpreter *ceremonioufly.*]

Re-enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr Puff, Sir!

Dangle. My dear Puff!

Enter PUFF.

Puff. My dear Dangle, how is it with you?

Dangle. Mr Sneer, give me leave to introduce Mr Puff to you.

Puff. Mr Sneer is this? Sir, he is a gentleman whom I have long panted for the honour of knowing—a gentleman whoſe critical talents and tranſcendant judgment——

Sneer. —Dear Sir——

Dangle. Nay, don't be modeſt, Sneer, my friend Puff only talks to you in the ſtile of his profeſſion.

Sneer. His profeſſion!

Puff. Yes, Sir; I make no ſecret of the trade I follow—among friends and brother authors, Dangle knows I love to be frank on the ſubject, and to advertiſe myſelf *vivâ voce.*—I am, Sir, a Practitioner in Panegyric, or, to ſpeak more plainly—a Profeſſor of the Art of Puffing, at your ſervice—or any body elſe's.

Sneer. Sir, you are very obliging!—I believe, Mr Puff, I have often admired your talents in the daily prints.

Puff. Yes, Sir, I flatter myſelf I do as much buſineſs in that way as any ſix of the fraternity in town—Deviliſh hard work all the ſummer—Friend Dangle! never work'd harder!—But harkee,—the Winter Managers were a little ſore I believe.

Dangle. No—I believe they took it all in good part.

Puff. Aye!—Then that muſt have been affectation in them; for egad, there were ſome of the attacks which there was no laughing at!

Sneer. Aye, the humorous ones.—But I ſhould think Mr Puff, that Authors would in general be able to do this ſort of work for themſelves.

Puff.

Puff. Why yes—but in a clumſy way.—Beſides, we look on that as an encroachment, and ſo take the oppoſite ſide.—I dare ſay now you conceive half the very civil paragraphs and advertiſements you ſee, to be written by the parties concerned, or their friends?—No ſuch thing—Nine out of ten, manufactured by me in the way of buſineſs.

Sneer. Indeed!—

Puff. Even the Auctioneers now—the Auctioneers I ſay, tho' the rogues have lately got ſome credit for their language—not an article of the merit their's!—take them out of their pulpits and they are as dull as Catalogues. ——No, Sir;—'twas I firſt enrich'd their ſtyle—'twas I firſt taught them to crowd their advertiſements with panegyrical ſuperlatives, each epithet riſing above the other—like the Bidders in their own Auction-rooms! From ME they learn'd to inlay their phraſeology with variegated chips of exotic metaphor: by ME too their inventive faculties were called forth.—Yes Sir, by ME they were inſtructed to clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruits—to inſinuate obſequious rivulets into viſionary groves—to teach courteous ſhrubs to nod their approbation of the grateful ſoil; or on emergencies to raiſe upſtart oaks, where there never had been an acorn; to create a delightful vicinage without the aſſiſtance of a neighbour; or fix the temple of Hygeia in the fens of Lincolnſhire!

Dangle. I am ſure you have done them infinite ſervice; for now, when a gentleman is ruined, he parts with his houſe with ſome credit.

Sneer. Service! if they had any gratitude, they would erect a ſtatue to him; they would figure him as a preſiding Mercury, the god of traffic and fiction, with a hammer in his hand inſtead of a caduceus.—But pray, Mr Puff, what firſt put you on exerciſing your talents in this way?

Puff. Egad, Sir,—ſheer neceſſity—the proper parent of an art ſo nearly allied to invention: you muſt know, Mr Sneer, that from the firſt time I tried my hand at an advertiſement, my ſucceſs was ſuch, that for ſome time after, I led a moſt extraordinary life indeed!

Sneer.

Sneer. How, pray?

Puff. Sir, I ſupported myſelf two years entirely by my misfortunes.

Sneer. By your misfortunes.

Puff. Yes, Sir, aſſiſted by long ſickneſs, and other occaſional diſorders; and a very comfortable living I had of it.

Sneer. From ſickneſs and misfortunes! You practiſed as a Doctor, and an Attorney at once?

Puff. No egad, both maladies and miſeries were my own.

Sneer. Hey!—what the plague!

Dangle. 'Tis true, efaith.

Puff. Harkee!—By advertiſements—"To the charitable and humane!" and "to thoſe whom Providence hath bleſſed with affluence!"

Sneer. Oh,—I underſtand you.

Puff. And, in truth, I deſerved what I got; for I ſuppoſe never man went through ſuch a ſeries of calamities in the ſame ſpace of time!—Sir, I was five times made a bankrupt, and reduced from a ſtate of affluence, by a train of unavoidable misfortunes! then, Sir, though a very induſtrious tradeſman, I was twice burnt out, and loſt my little all both times!—I lived upon thoſe fires a month.—I ſoon after was confined by a moſt excruciating diſorder, and loſt the uſe of my limbs!—That told very well; for I had the caſe ſtrongly atteſted, and went about to collect the ſubſcriptions myſelf.

Dangle. Egad, I believe that was when you firſt called on me.—

Puff. —In November laſt?—O no!—I was at that time a cloſe priſoner in the Marſhalſea, for a debt benevolently contracted to ſerve a friend!—I was afterwards twice tapped for a dropſy, which declined into a very profitable conſumption!—I was then reduced to—O no—then I became a widow with ſix helpleſs children,—after having had eleven huſbands preſſed, and being left every time eight months gone with child, and without money to get me into an hoſpital!

Sneer.

Sneer. And you bore all with patience, I make no doubt!

Puff. Why, yes,—tho' I made ſome occaſional attempts at *felo de ſe*; but as I did not find thoſe *raſh actions* anſwer, I left off killing myſelf very ſoon.—Well, Sir,—at laſt, what with bankruptcies, fires, gouts, dropſies, impriſonments, and other valuable calamities, having got together a pretty handſome ſum, I determined to quit a buſineſs which had always gone rather againſt my conſcience, and in a more liberal way ſtill to indulge my talents for fiction and embelliſhment, through my favourite channels of diurnal communication—and ſo, Sir, you have my hiſtory.

Sneer. Moſt obligingly communicative indeed; and your confeſſion, if publiſhed, might certainly ſerve the cauſe of true charity, by reſcuing the moſt uſeful channels of appeal to benevolence from the cant of impoſition.—But ſurely, Mr Puff, there is no great *myſtery* in your preſent profeſſion?

Puff. Myſtery! Sir, I will take upon me to ſay, the matter was never ſcientifically treated, nor reduced to rule before.

Sneer. Reduced to rule?

Puff. O lud, Sir! you are very ignorant, I am afraid.—Yes Sir,—Puffing is of various ſorts—the principal are, The Puff direct—the Puff preliminary—the Puff collateral—the Puff colluſive, and the Puff oblique, or Puff by implication.—Theſe all aſſume, as circumſtances require, the various forms of Letter to the Editor—Occaſional Anecdote—Impartial Critique—Obſervation from Correſpondent—or Advertiſement from the Party.

Sneer. The Puff direct, I can conceive—

Puff. O yes, that's ſimple enough,—for inſtance—A new Comedy or Farce is to be produced at one of the Theatres (though, by the bye, they don't bring out half what they ought to do.) The author, ſuppoſe Mr Smatter, or Mr Dapper—or any particular friend of mine—very well; the day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received—I have the plot from the author,—and only add—Characters

ters ſtrongly drawn—highly coloured—hand of a maſter—fund of genuine humour—mine of invention—neat dialogue—attic ſalt! Then for the performance—Mr Dodd was aſtoniſhingly great in the character of Sir Harry! That univerſal and judicious actor, Mr Palmer, perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the Colonel;—but it is not in the power of language to do juſtice to Mr King!—Indeed he more than merited thoſe repeated burſts of applauſe which he drew from a moſt brilliant and judicious audience! As to the ſcenery—The miraculous power of Mr de Loutherbourg's pencil are univerſally acknowledged!—In ſhort, we are at a loſs which to admire moſt,—the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers—the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers!—

Sneer. That's pretty well indeed, Sir.

Puff. O cool—quite cool—to what I ſometimes do.

Sneer. And do you think there are any who are influenced by this?

Puff. O, lud! yes, Sir; the number of thoſe who undergo the fatigue of judging for themſelves is very ſmall indeed!

Sneer. Well, Sir,—the Puff preliminary?

Puff. O that, Sir, does well in the form of a *Caution.*—in a matter of gallantry now—Sir Flimſy Goſſimer, wiſhes to be well with Lady Fanny Fete—He applies to me——I open trenches for him with a paragraph in the Morning Poſt.——It is recommended to the beautiful and accompliſhed Lady F four ſtars F daſh E to be on her guard againſt that dangerous character, Sir F daſh G; who, however pleaſing and inſinuating his manners may be, is certainly not remarkable for the *conſtancy of his attachments!*—in Italics.—Here you ſee, Sir Flimſy Goſſimer is introduced to the particular notice of Lady Fanny—who, perhaps never thought of him before—ſhe finds herſelf publicly cautioned to avoid him, which naturally makes her deſirous of ſeeing him;—the obſervation of their acquaintance cauſes a pretty kind of mutual embarraſſment, this produces a ſort of ſympathy of

intereſt

intereſt—which, if Sir Flimſy is unable to improve effectually, he at leaſt gains the credit of having their names mentioned together, by a particular ſet, and in a particular way,—which, nine times out of ten, is the full accompliſhment of modern gallantry!

Dangle. Egad, Sneer, you will be quite an adept in the buſineſs.

Puff. Now, Sir, the Puff Collateral is much uſed as an appendage to advertiſements, and may take the form of anecdote.—Yeſterday as the celebrated George Bon Mot was ſauntering down St James's ſtreet, he met the lively Lady Mary Myrtle, coming out of the Park,—'Good God, Lady Mary, I'm ſurpriſed to meet you in a white jacket,—for I expected never to have ſeen you but in a full trimmed uniform and a light horſeman's cap!—" Heavens, George, where could you have learned that?"—'Why, replied the wit, I juſt ſaw a print of you in a new publication called the Camp Magazine, which by the bye, is a deviliſh clever thing,—and is ſold at No. 3, on the right hand of the way, two doors from the printing-office, the corner of Ivy-lane, Paternoſter-row, price only one ſhilling!'

Sneer. Very ingenious indeed.

Puff. But the Puff Colluſive is the neweſt of any; for it acts in the diſguiſe of determined hoſtility.—It is much uſed by bold bookſellers and enterpriſing poets.—An indignant correſpondent obſerves—that the new poem called Beelzebub's Cotillion, or Proſerpine's Fete Champetre, is one of the moſt unjuſtifiable performances he ever read! The ſeverity with which certain characters are handled is quite ſhocking! And as there are many deſcriptions in it too warmly coloured for female delicacy, the ſhameful avidity with which this piece is bought by all people of faſhion, is a reproach on the taſte of the times, and a diſgrace to the delicacy of the age!—Here you ſee the two ſtrongeſt inducements are held forth;—Firſt, that nobody ought to read it;—and ſecondly, that every body buys it; on the ſtrength of which, the publiſher boldly prints the tenth edition, before he has ſold ten of the firſt; and then eſtabliſhes it by threatening

himſelf with the pillory, or abſolutely indicting himſelf for Scan. Mag.!

Dangle. Ha! ha! ha!—'egad I know it is ſo.

Puff. As to the Puff oblique, or Puff by implication, it is too various and extenſive to be illuſtrated by an inſtance;—it attracts in titles and preſumes in patents; it lurks in the *limitation* of a ſubſcription, and invites in the aſſurance of croud and incomodation at public places; it delights to draw forth concealed merit, with a moſt diſintereſted aſſiduity; and ſometimes wears a countenance of ſmiling cenſure and tender reproach.—It has a wonderful memory for Parliamentary Debates, and will often give the whole ſpeech of a favoured member with the moſt flattering accuracy. But, above all, it is a great dealer in reports and ſuppoſitions. It has the earlieſt intelligence of intended preferments that will reflect *honour* on the *patrons*; and embryo promotions of modeſt gentlemen—who know nothing of the matter themſelves. It can hint a ribband for implied ſervices, in the air of a common report; and with the careleſſneſs of a caſual paragraph, ſuggeſt officers into commands—to which they have no pretenſion but their wiſhes. This Sir, is the laſt principal claſs of the Art of Puffing—An art which I hope you will now agree with me, is of the higheſt dignity—yielding a tablature of benevolence and public ſpirit; befriending equally trade, gallantry, criticiſm, and politics:—the applauſe of genius! the regiſter of charity! the triumph of heroiſm! the ſelf-defence of contractors! the fame of orators!—and the gazette of miniſters!

Sneer. Sir, I am completely a convert both to the importance and ingenuity of your profeſſion; and now, Sir, there is but one thing which can poſſibly encreaſe my reſpect for you, and that is, your permitting me to be preſent this morning at the rehearſal of your new trage——

Puff. —Huſh, for heaven's ſake.—*My* tragedy!—Egad, Dangle, I take this very ill—you know how apprehenſive I am of being known to be the author.

Dangle. 'Efaith I would not have told—but it's in the papers, and your name at length—in the Morning Chronicle.

Puff

Puff. Ah! thoſe damn'd editors never can keep a ſecret!—Well, Mr Sneer—no doubt you will do me great honour—I ſhall be infinitely happy—highly flattered.

Dangle. I believe it muſt be near the time—ſhall we go together?

Puff. No; It will not be yet this hour, for they are always late at that theatre; beſides, I muſt meet you there, for I have ſome little matters here to ſend to the papers, and a few paragraphs to ſcribble before I go.

[*Looking at memorandums.*

—Here is 'a conſcientious Baker, on the Subject of the Army Bread;' and 'a Deteſter of viſible brick-work, in favour of the new invented ſtucco; both in the ſtyle of Junius, and promiſed for to-morrow.—The Thames navigation too is at a ſtand.—Miſomud or Anti-ſhoal muſt go to work again directly.—Here too are ſome political memorandums I ſee; aye—To take Paul Jones, and get the Indiamen out of the Shannon—reinforce Byron—compel the Dutch to— ſo!—I muſt do that in the evening papers, or reſerve it for the Morning Herald, for I know that I have undertaken to-morrow; beſides, to eſtabliſh the unanimity of the fleet in the Public Advertiſer, and to ſhoot Charles Fox in the Morning Poſt.—So, egad I ha'n't a moment to loſe!

Dangle. Well! we'll meet in the Green Room.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Theatre.

Enter DANGLE, PUFF, *and* SNEER, *as before the Curtain.*

Puff. NO, no, Sir; what Shakeſpeare ſays of Actors may be better applied to the purpoſe of Plays; *they* ought to be 'the abſtract and brief Chronicles of the times.' Therefore when hiſtory, and particularly the hiſtory of our own country, furniſhes any thing like a caſe in point, to the time in which an author writes, if he knows his own intereſt, he will take advantage of it; ſo Sir, I call my tragedy The Spaniſh Armada; and have laid the ſcene before Tilbury Fort.

Sneer. A moſt happy thought certainly!

Dangle. Egad it was—I told you ſo.—But pray now I don't underſtand how you have contrived to introduce any love into it.

Puff. Love!—Oh nothing ſo eaſy; for it is a received point among poets, that where hiſtory gives you a good heroic outline for a play, you may fill up with a little love at your own diſcretion: in doing which, nine times out of ten, you only make up a deficiency in the private hiſtory of the times. Now I rather think I have done this with ſome ſucceſs.

Sneer. No ſcandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope?

Puff. O Lud! no, no,—I only ſuppoſe the Governor of Tilbury Fort's daughter to be in love with the ſon of the Spaniſh Admiral.

Sneer. Oh, is that all?

Dangle.

Dangle. Excellent, Efaith!—I ſee it at once.—But won't this appear rather improbable?

Puff. To be ſure it will—but what the plague! a play is not to ſhow occurrences that happen every day, but things juſt ſo ſtrange, that tho' they never *did*, they might happen.

Sneer. Certainly nothing is unnatural, that is not phyſically impoſſible.

Puff. Very true—and for that matter Don Ferolo Wiſkerandos—for that's the lover's name, might have been over here in the train of the Spaniſh Ambaſſador; or Tilburina, for that is the lady's name, might have been in love with him, from having heard his character, or ſeen his picture; or from knowing that he was the laſt man in the world ſhe ought to be in love with—or for any other good female reaſon.—However, Sir, the fact is, that tho' ſhe is but a Knight's daughter, egad! ſhe is in love like any Princeſs!

Dangle. Poor young lady! I feel for her already! for I can conceive how great the conflict muſt be between her paſſion and her duty; her love for her country, and her love for Don Ferolo Wiſkerandos!

Puff. O amazing!—her poor ſuſceptible heart is ſwayed to and fro, by contending paſſions like—

Enter UNDER PROMPTER.

Under Promp. Sir, the ſcene is ſet, and every thing is ready to begin if you pleaſe.—

Puff. 'Egad; then we'll loſe no time.

Under Promp. Tho' I believe, Sir, you will find it very very ſhort; for all the performers have profited by the kind permiſſion you granted them.

Puff. Hey! what!

Under Promp. You know, Sir, you gave them leave to cut out or omit whatever they found heavy or unneceſſary to the plot, and I muſt own they have taken very liberal advantage of your indulgence.

Puff. Well, well.—They are in general very good judges; and I know I am luxuriant.—Now, Mr Hopkins, as ſoon as you pleaſe.

Under Prompter to the muſic. Gentlemen, will you play a few bars of ſomething, juſt to—

Puff. Aye, that's right,—for as we have the ſcenes, and dreſſes, egad, we'll go to't, as if it was the firſt night's performance;—but you need not mind ſtopping between the acts. [*Exit Under Prompter.*

(*Orcheſtra play. Then the Bell rings.*)

Soh! ſtand clear gentlemen.—Now you know there will be a cry of down!—down!—hats off! ſilence!—ſilence!—Then up the curtain,—and let us ſee what our painters have done for us.

SCENE II.

The Curtain riſes and diſcovers Tilbury Fort. Two Centinels aſleep.

Dangle. Tilbury Fort!—very fine indeed!

Puff. Now, what do you think I open with?

Sneer. Faith, I can't gueſs—

Puff. A clock—Hark!—(*clock ſtrikes.*) I open with a clock ſtriking, to beget an awful attention in the audience—it alſo marks the time, which is four o'clock in the morning, and ſaves a deſcription of the riſing ſun, and a great deal about gilding the eaſtern hemiſphere.

Dangle. But pray, are the centinels to be aſleep?

Puff. Faſt as watchmen.

Sneer. Is'nt that odd, tho' at ſuch an alarming criſis?

Puff. To be ſure it is,—but ſmaller things muſt give way to a ſtriking ſcene at the opening; that's a rule.—And the caſe is, that two great men are coming to this very ſpot to begin the piece; now, it is not to be ſuppoſed they would open their lips, if theſe fellows were watching them; ſo, egad, I muſt either have ſent them off their poſts, or ſet them aſleep.

Sneer. O that accounts for it!—But tell us, who are they coming?—

Puff. They are they—Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Chriſtopher Hatton.—You'll know Sir Chriſtopher, by his

his turning out his toes—famous, you know, for his dancing. I like to preſerve all the little traits of character. —Now attend.

Enter SIR WALTER RALEIGH *and* SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.

" *Sir Chris.* True, gallant Raleigh!—

Dangle. What, they had been talking before?

Puff. O yes; all the way as they came along.—I beg pardon gentlemen, [*to the Actors*] but theſe are particular friends of mine, whoſe remarks may be of great ſervice to us.—Don't mind interrupting them whenever anything ſtrikes you. [*To Sneer and Dangle.*]

" *Sir Chris.* True, gallant Raleigh!

" But O, thou champion of thy country's fame,

" There *is* a queſtion which I yet muſt aſk;

" A queſtion which I never aſk'd before—

" What mean theſe mighty armaments?

" This general muſter? and this throng of chiefs?

Sneer. Pray, Mr Puff, how came Sir Chriſtopher Hatton never to aſk that queſtion before?

Puff. What, before the play began? how the plague could he?

Dangle. That's true efaith!

Puff. But you will hear what he thinks of the matter.

" *Sir Chris.* Alas, my noble friend, when I behold

" Yon tented plains in martial ſymmetry

" Array'd—When I count o'er yon glittering lines

" Of creſted warriors, where the proud ſteeds neigh,

" And valor-breathing trumpet's ſhrill appeal,

" Reſponſive vibrate on my liſt'ning ear;

" When virgin majeſty herſelf I view,

" Like her protecting Pallas veil'd in ſteel,

" With graceful confidence exhort to arms!

" When briefly all I hear or ſee bears ſtamp

" Of martial vigilance, and ſtern defence,

" I cannot but ſurmiſe.—Forgive, my friend,

" If the conjecture's raſh.——I cannot but

" Surmiſe.——The ſtate ſome danger apprehends!

Sneer. A very cautious conjecture that.

Puff,

Puff. Yes, that's his character; not to give an opinion, but on ſecure grounds—now then.

" *Sir Walter.* O, moſt accompliſhed Chriſtopher.——

Puff. He calls him by his chriſtian name, to ſhow that they are on the moſt familiar terms.

" *Sir Walter.* O moſt accompliſhed Chriſtopher, I find
" Thy ſtaunch ſagacity ſtill tracks the future,
" In the freſh print of the o'ertaken paſt.

Puff. Figurative!

" *Sir Walter.* Thy fears are juſt.
" *Sir Chris.* But where? whence? when? and what
" The danger is——Methinks I fain would learn.
" *Sir Walter.* You know, my friend, ſcarce two re-
" volving ſuns,
" And three revolving moons, have cloſed their courſe
" Since haughty Philip, in deſpight of peace,
" With hoſtile hand hath ſtruck at England's trade.
" *Sir Chris.* I know it well.
" *Sir Walter.* Philip you know is proud, Iberia's king!
" *Sir Chris.* He is.
" *Sir Walter.* —— His ſubjects in baſe bigotry
" And Catholic oppreſſion held,——while we
" You know, the proteſtant perſuaſion hold.
" *Sir Chris.* We do.
" *Sir Walter.* You know beſides,——his boaſted ar-
" mament,
" The fam'd armada,——by the Pope baptized,
" With purpoſe to invade theſe realms——
" *Sir Chris.* ——Is failed,
" Our laſt advices ſo report.
" *Sir Walter.* While the Iberian Admiral's chief hope,
" His darling ſon——
" *Sir Chris.* ——Ferolo Wiſkerandos hight——
" *Sir Walter.* The ſame—by chance a pris'ner hath
" been ta'en,
" And in this fort of Tilbury——
" *Sir Chris.* ——Is now
" Confin'd,—'tis true, and oft from yon tall turrets top
" I've mark'd the youthful Spaniard's haughty mien
" Unconquer'd, tho' in chains;

" *Sir*

" *Sir Walter.* You alſo know——

Dangle. —Mr Puff, as he *knows* all this, why does Sir Walter go on telling him?

Puff. But the audience are not ſuppoſed to know any thing of the matter, are they?

Sneer. True; but I think you manage ill; for there certainly appears no reaſon why Sir Walter ſhould be ſo communicative.

Puff. For, egad now, that is one of the moſt ungrateful obſervations I ever heard—for the leſs inducement he has to tell all this, the more I think you ought to be obliged to him; for I am ſure you'd know nothing of the matter without it.

Dangle. That's very true, upon my word.

Puff. But you will find he was *not* going on.

" *Sir Chris.* Enough, enough,—'tis plain—and I no
" more
" Am in amazement loſt!——

Puff. Here, now you ſee, Sir Chriſtopher did not in fact aſk any one queſtion for his own information.

Sneer. No indeed:—his has been a moſt diſintereſted curioſity!

Dangle. Really, I find, we are very much obliged to them both.

Puff. To be ſure you are. Now then for the Commander in Chief, the Earl of Leiceſter! who, you know, was no favourite but of the Queen's.—We left off—'in amazement loſt!'—

" *Sir Chris.* Am in amazement loſt.——
" But, ſee where noble Leiceſter comes! ſupreme
" In honours and command.
" *Sir Walter.* And yet methinks,
" At ſuch a time, ſo perilous, ſo fear'd
" That ſtaff might well become an abler graſp.
" *Sir Chris.* And ſo, by heav'n, think I! but ſoft,
" he's here!

Puff. Aye, they envy him.

Sneer. But who are theſe with him?

Puff. O! very valiant knights; one is the governor of the fort, the other the maſter of the horſe.—And now,

I think you ſhall hear ſome better language: I was obliged to be plain and intelligible in the firſt ſcene, becauſe there was ſo much matter of fact in it; but now, efaith, you have trope, figure, and metaphor, as plenty as noun-ſubſtantives.

Enter EARL OF LEICESTER, *the Governor, and others.*

" *Leiceſter.* How's this my friends? is't thus your
" new fledg'd zeal
" And plumed valor moulds in rooſted ſloth?
" Why dimly glimmers that heroic flame,
" Whoſe red'ning blaze by patriot ſpirit fed,
" Should be the beacon of a kindling realm?
" Can the quick current of a patriot heart,
" Thus ſtagnate in a cold and weedy converſe,
" Or freeze in tideleſs inactivity?
" No! rather let the fountain of your valor
" Spring thro' each ſtream of enterprize,
" Each petty channel of conducive daring,
" Till the full torrent of your foaming wrath
" O'erwhelm the flats of ſunk hoſtility!

Puff. There it is,—follow'd up!

" *Sir Walter.* No more! the freſh'ning breath of
" thy rebuke
" Hath fill'd the ſwelling canvaſs of our ſouls!
" And thus, tho' fate ſhould cut the cable of
[*All take hands.*]
" Our topmoſt hopes, in friendſhip's cloſing line
" We'll grapple with deſpair, and if we fall,
" We'll fall in Glory's wake!

" *Leiceſter.* There ſpoke Old England's genius!
" Then, are we all reſolv'd!

" *All.* We are—all reſolv'd.

" *Leiceſter.* To conquer——or be free!

" *All.* To conquer, or be free.

" *Leiceſter.* All!

" *All* All.

Dangle. Nem. con. egad!

Puff. O yes, where they *do* agree on the ſtage, their unanimity is wonderful!

" *Lei-*

" *Leiceſter.* Then, let us embrace——and now—

Sneer. What the plague, is he going to pray?

Puff. Yes, huſh!—in great emergencies, there is nothing like a prayer!

" *Leiceſter.* O mighty Mars!

Dangle. But why ſhould he pray to *Mars?*

Puff. Huſh!

" *Leiceſter.* If in thy homage bred,
" Each point of diſcipline I've ſtill obſerv'd;
" Nor but by due promotion, and the right
" Of ſervice, to the rank of Major-General.
" Have ris'n; aſſiſt thy votary now!

" *Governor.* Yet do not riſe,——hear me!

" *Maſter of Horſe.* And me!

" *Knight.* And me!

" *Sir Walter.* And me!

" *Sir Chriſtopher.* And me!

Puff. Now, pray all together.

" *All.* Behold thy votaries ſubmiſſive beg,
" That thou wilt deign to grant them all they aſk;
" Aſſiſt them to accompliſh all their ends,
" And ſanctify whatever means they uſe
" To gain them!

Sneer. A very orthodox quintetto!

Puff. Vaſtly well, gentlemen.—Is that well managed, or not? Have you ſuch a prayer as that on the ſtage?

Sneer. Not exactly.

Leiceſter to Puff. But, Sir, you haven't ſettled how we are to get off here.

Puff. You could not go off kneeling, could you?

Sir Walter to Puff. O no, Sir! impoſſible!

Puff. It would have a good effect efaith, if you could! exeunt praying!—Yes, and would vary the eſtabliſhed mode of ſpringing off with a glance at the pit.

Sneer. O never mind, ſo as you get them off, I'll anſwer for it the audience won't care how.

Puff. Well then, repeat the laſt line ſtanding, and go off the old way.

" *All.* And ſanctify whatever means we uſe to gain
" them. [*Exeunt.*

Dangle.

Dangle. Bravo! a fine exit.
Sneer. Well, really Mr Puff.——
Puff. Stay a moment.——

The CENTINELS *get up.*

" *1ſt Centinel.* All this ſhall to Lord Burleigh's ear.
" *2d Centinel.* 'Tis meet it ſhould. [*Exeunt Centinels.*

Dangle. Hey! why, I thought thoſe fellows had been aſleep?

Puff. Only a pretence, there's the art of it; they were ſpies of Lord Burleigh's.

Sneer. —But isn't it odd, they were never taken notice of, not even by the commander in-chief.

Puff. O lud, Sir, if people who want to liſten, or overhear, were not always conniv'd at in a Tragedy, there would be no carrying on any plot in the world.

Dangle. That's certain!

Puff. But take care, my dear Dangle, the morning gun is going to fire. [*Cannon fires.*]

Dangle. Well, that will have a fine effect.

Puff. I think ſo, and helps to realize the ſcene.—
[*Cannon twice.*]
What the plague!—*three* morning guns!—there never is but one!—aye, this is always the way at the Theatre—give theſe fellows a good thing, and they never know when to have done with it. You have no more cannon to fire?

Prompter from within. No Sir.

Puff. Now then, for ſoft muſic.

Sneer. Pray what's that for?

Puff. It ſhows that Tilburina is coming; nothing introduces you a heroine like ſoft muſic.—Here ſhe comes.

Dangle. And her confidant, I ſuppoſe?

Puff. To be ſure: here they are—inconſolable to th minuet in Ariadne! *Soft muſic.*

Enter TILBURINA *and* CONFIDANT.

" *Tilburina.* Now has the whiſpering breath of
" gentle morn,
" Bad Nature's voice, and Nature's beauty riſe;

" While

" While orient Phœbus with unborrow'd hues,
" Cloaths the wak'd lovelineſs which all night ſlept
" In heav'nly drapery! Darkneſs is fled.
" Now flowers unfold their beauties to the ſun,
" And bluſhing, kiſs the beam he ſends to wake them,
" The ſtrip'd carnation, and the guarded roſe,
" The vulgar wall-flow'r, and ſmart gilly-flower,
" The polyanthus mean---the dapper daizy,
" Sweet william, and ſweet marjorum,---and all
" The tribe of ſingle and of double pinks!
" Now too, the feather'd warblers tune their notes
" Around, and charm the liſt'ning grove.---The lark!
" The linnet! chafinch! bulfinch! goldfinch! green-
" finch
" ——But O to me, no joy can they afford!
" Nor roſe, nor wall-flow'r, nor ſmart gilly-flower,
" Nor polyanthus mean, nor dapper daizy,
" Nor William ſweet, nor marjorum---nor lark,
" Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove!

Puff. Your white handkerchief madam——

Tilburina. I thought, Sir, I was'nt to uſe that 'till ' heart rending woe.'

Puff. O yes madam---at " the finches of the grove," if you pleaſe.

" *Tilburina.* " Nor lark,
" Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove! [*Weeps.*

Puff. Vaſtly well madam!

Dangle. Vaſtly well indeed!

" *Tilburina.* For O too ſure, heart rending woe is
" now
" The lot of wretched Tilburina!

Dangle. O!—'tis too much.

Sneer. Oh!——it is indeed.

" *Confidant.* Be comforted ſweet lady——for who
" knows,
" But Heav'n has yet ſome milk-white day in ſtore.
" *Tilburina.* Alas, my gentle Nora,
" Thy tender youth, as yet, hath never mourn'd
" Love's fatal dart.---Elſe wouldſt thou know, that
" when

" The ſoul is ſunk in comfortleſs deſpair,
" It cannot taſte of merryment.

Dangle. That's certain.

" *Confidant* But ſee where your ſtern father comes ;
" It is not meet that he ſhould find you thus.

Puff. Hey, what the plague!—what a cut is here?—why, what is become of the deſcription of her firſt meeting with Don Wiſkerandos? His gallant behaviour in the ſea fight, and the ſimile of the canary bird?

Tilburina. Indeed Sir, you'll find they will not be miſs'd.

Puff. Very well.—Very well!

Tilburina. The cue ma'am if you pleaſe.

" *Confidant.* It is not meet that he ſhould find you
" thus.
" *Tilburina.* Thou counſel'ſt right, but 'tis no eaſy
" taſk
" For barefaced grief to wear a maſk of joy.

Enter GOVERNOR.

" *Governor.* How's this—in tears?——O Tilburina, ſhame!
" Is this a time for maudling tenderneſs,
" And Cupid's baby woes?——haſt thou not heard
" That haughty Spain's Pope-conſecrated fleet
" Advances to our ſhores, while England's fate,
" Like a clipp'd guinea, trembles in the ſcale!
" *Tilburina.* Then is the criſis of *my* fate at hand!
" I ſee the fleet's approach——I ſee——

Puff. Now, pray gentlemen mind.—This is one of the moſt uſeful figures we tragedy writers have, by which a hero or heroine, in conſideration of their being often obliged to overlook things that *are* on the ſtage, is allow'd to hear and ſee a number of things that are not.

Sneer. Yes—a kind of poetical ſecond-ſight!

Puff. Yes—now then madam.

" *Tilburina.* I ſee their decks
" Are clear'd!——I ſee the ſignal made!
" The line is form'd!—a cable's length aſunder!
" I ſee the frigates ſtation'd in the rear;

" And

" And now, I hear the thunder of the guns!.
" I hear the victor's ſhouts—I alſo hear
" The vanquiſh'd groan!—and now 'tis ſmoke—and
" now
" I ſee the looſe ſails ſhiver in the wind!
" I ſee—I ſee—what ſoon you'll ſee—
" *Governor.* Hold daughter! peace! this love hath
" turn'd thy brain:
" The Spaniſh fleet thou *canſt* not ſee—becauſe
" —It is not yet in ſight!

Dangle. Egad, tho', the governor ſeems to make no allowance for this poetical figure you talk of.

Puff. No, a plain matter of-fact man—that's his character.

" *Tilburina.* But will you then refuſe his offer?
" *Governor.* I muſt—I will—I can—I ought—I do.
" *Tilburina.* Think what a noble price.
" *Governor.* No more—you urge in vain.
" *Tilburina.* His liberty is all he aſks.

Sneer. All *who* aſks Mr Puff? Who is—

Puff. Egad, Sir, I can't tell—Here has been ſuch cutting and ſlaſhing, I dont know where they have got to myſelf.

" *Tilburina.* Indeed Sir you will find it will connect
" very well.
" —And your reward ſecure.

Puff. O,—if they had'nt been ſo deviliſh free with their cutting here, you would have found that Don Wiſkerandos has been tampering for his liberty, and has perſuaded Tilburina to make this propoſal to her father—and now pray obſerve the conciſeneſs with which the argument is conducted. Egad, the *pro & con* goes as ſmart as hits in a fencing match. It is indeed a ſort of ſmall ſword logic, which we have borrowed from the French.

" *Tilburina.* A retreat in Spain!
" *Governor.* Outlawry here!
" *Tilburina.* Your daughter's prayer!
" *Governor.* Your father's oath!
" *Tilburina.* My lover!

" *Governor.* My country !
" *Tillburina.* Tilburina !
" *Governor.* England !
" *Tilburina.* A title !
" *Governor.* Honour !
" *Tilburina.* A penſion !
" *Governor.* Conſcience !
" *Tilburina.* A thouſand pounds !
" *Governor.* Ha ! thou haſt touch'd me nearly !

Puff. There you ſee——ſhe threw in *Tilburina*, quick, parry cart with *England!*—Hah ! thruſt in teirce a title !—parried by honour.—Hah ! a penſion over the a—— !—put by by conſcience—Then flankonade with a thouſand pounds—and a palpable hit egad !

" *Tilbnriua.* Canſt thou——
" Reject the *ſuppliant*, and the *daughter* too ?
" *Governor* No more ; I would not hear thee plead in vain,
" The *father* ſoftens—but the *governor*
" Is fix'd ! [*Exit.*

Dangle. Aye, that antitheſis of perſons—is a moſt eſtabliſh'd figure.

" *Tilburina.* Tis well,——hence then found hopes, —fond paſſion hence ;
" Duty, behold I am all over thine——
" *Wiſkerondos without.* Where is my love—my—
" *Tilburina.* Ha !
" *Wiſkerandos entering.* My beauteous enemy——

Puff. O dear ma'am, you muſt ſtart a great deal more than that ; conſider you had juſt determined in favour of duty—when in a moment the ſound of his voice revives your paſſion,—overthrows your reſolution, deſtroys your obedience.—If you don't expreſs all that in your ſtart—you do nothing at all.

Tilburina. Well, we'll try again !

Dangle. Speaking from within, has always a fine effect.

Sneer. Very.

" *Wiſkerandos.* My conquering Tilburina ! How ! is't thus
" We meet ? why are thy looks averſe ! what means

" That

" That falling tear——that frown of boding woe?
" Hah! now indeed I am a priſoner!
" Yes, now I feel the galling weight of theſe
" Diſgraceful chains——which cruel Tilburina!
" Thy doating captive gloried in before.——
" But thou art falſe, and Wiſkerandos is undone!
" *Tilburina.* O no; how little doſt thou know thy Tilburina!
" *Wiſkerandos.* Art thou then true? Begone cares,
" doubts, and fears,
" I make you all a preſent to the winds;
" And if the winds reject you—try the waves.

Puff. The wind you know, is the eſtabliſhed receiver of all ſtolen ſighs, and caſt off griefs and apprehenſions.

" *Tilburina.* Yet muſt we part?—ſtern duty ſeals our doom:
" Though here I call yon conſcious clouds to witneſs,
" Could I purſue the bias of my ſoul,
" All friends, all right of parents I'd diſclaim,
" And thou, my Wiſkerandos, ſhould'ſt be father
" And mother, brother, couſin, uncle, aunt,
" And friend to me!
" *Wiſkerandos.* O matchleſs excellence!——and muſt we part?
" Well, if—we muſt—we muſt—and in that caſe
" The leſs is ſaid the better.

Puff. Hey day! here's a cut! What, are all the mutual proteſtations out?

Tilburina. Now, pray Sir, don't interrupt us juſt here, you ruin our feelings.

Puff. *Your* feelings!——but zounds, *my* feelings, ma'am!

Sneer. No; pray don't interrupt them.

" *Wiſkerandos.* One laſt embrace——
" *Tilburina.* Now,——farewell, for ever.
" *Wiſkerandos.* For ever!
" *Tilburina.* Aye, for ever. [*Going.*

Puff. S'death and fury!—Gadſlife! Sir! Madam, if you go out without the parting look, you might as well dance out—Here, here!

Confidant. But pray Sir, how am *I* to get off here?

Puff. *You*, pſhaw! what the devil ſignifies how *you* get off! edge away at the top, or where you will—[*puſhes the confidant off*] Now Ma'am you ſee——

Tilburina. We underſtand you Sir.

"Aye for ever.

Both. Ohh!—— [*Turning back and exeunt.*

[*Scene cloſes.*

Dangle. O charming!

Puff. Hey!—'tis pretty well I believe—you ſee I don't attempt to ſtrike out any thing new—but I take it I improve on the eſtabliſhed modes.

Sneer. You do indeed,—But pray is not Queen Elizabeth to appear?

Puff. No, not once—but ſhe is to be talked of for ever; ſo that egad you will think an hundred times that ſhe is on the point of coming in.

Sneer. Hang it, I think it's a pity to keep her in the green room all the night.

Puff. O no, that always has a fine effect—it keeps up expectation.

Dangle. But are we not to have a battle?

Puff. Yes, yes, you will have a battle at laſt, but, egad, it's not to be by land—but by ſea—and that is the only quite new thing in the piece.

Dangle. What, Drake at the Armada, hey?

Puff. Yes, efaith—fire ſhips and all—then we ſhall end with the proceſſion.—Hey! that will do I think.

Sneer. No doubt on't.

Puff. Come, we muſt not loſe time—ſo now for the UNDER PLOT.

Sneer. What the plague, have you another plot?

Puff. O lord, yes—ever while you live, have two plots to your tragedy.—The grand point in managing them, is only to let your under plot have as little connexion with your main point as poſſible.—I flatter myſelf nothing can be more diſtinct than mine; for, as in my chief plot, the characters are all great people—I have laid my under plot in low life—and as the former is to end in deep diſtreſs, I make the other end as happy as a farce.—Now Mr Hopkins, as ſoon as you pleaſe.

Enter UNDER PROMPTER.

Under Promp. Sir, the carpenter ſays it is impoſſible you can go to the Park ſcene yet.

Puff. The Park ſcene! No—I mean the deſcription ſcene here, in the wood.

Under Promp. Sir, the performers have cut it out.

Puff Cut it out!

Under Promp Yes Sir.

Puff. What! the whole account of Queen Elizabeth?

Under Promp. Yes Sir.

Puff. And the deſcription of her horſe and ſide-ſaddle?

Under Promp. Yes Sir.

Puff. So, ſo, this is very fine indeed! Mr Hopkins, how the plague could you ſuffer this?

Hopkins from within. Sir, indeed the pruning knife—

Puff. The pruning knife—zounds the axe! why, here has been ſuch lopping and topping, I ſhan't have the bare trunk of my play left preſently.—Very well, Sir—the performers muſt do as they pleaſe, but upon my ſoul, I'll print it every word.

Sneer. That I would indeed.

Puff. Very well—Sir—then we muſt go on—zounds! I would not have parted with the deſcription of the horſe!—Well, Sir, go on—Sir, it was one of the fineſt and moſt laboured things—Very well, Sir, let them go on—there you had him and his accoutrements from the bit to the crupper—very well, Sir, we muſt go to the Park ſcene.

Under Promp. Sir, there is the point, the carpenters ſay, that unleſs there is ſome buſineſs put in here before the drop, they ſhan't have time to clear away the fort, or ſink Graveſend and the river.

Puff. So! this is a pretty dilemma truly!—Gentlemen—you muſt excuſe me, theſe fellows will never be ready, unleſs I go and look after them myſelf.

Sneer. O dear Sir—theſe little things will happen—

Puff. To cut out this ſcene!—but I'll print it—egad, I'll print it every word! [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Before the Curtain.

Enter PUFF, SNEER, *and* DANGLE.

Puff. WELL, we are ready—now then for the juſtices.

[*Curtain riſes; Juſtices, Conſtables, &c. diſcovered.*]

Sneer. This, I ſuppoſe, is a ſort of ſenate ſcene.

Puff. To be ſure—there has not been one yet.

Dangle. It is the under plot, isn't it?

Puff. Yes. What, gentlemen, do you mean to go at once to the diſcovery ſcene?

Juſtice. If you pleaſe, Sir.

Puff. O very well—harkee, I don't chuſe to ſay any thing more; but efaith, they have mangled my play in a moſt ſhocking manner!

Dangle. It's a great pity!

Puff. Now then, Mr Juſtice, if you pleaſe.

" *Juſtice.* Are all the volunteers without?
" *Conſtable.* They are.
" Some ten in fetters, and ſome twenty drunk.
" *Juſtice.* Attends the youth, whoſe moſt opprobri-
" ous fame
" And clear convicted crimes have ſtampt him ſoldier?
" *Conſtable.* He waits your pleaſure; eager to repay
" The bleſt reprieve that ſends him to the fields
" Of glory, there to raiſe his branded hand
" In honour's cauſe.

" *Juſtice.*

" *Juſtice.* 'Tis well——'tis Juſtice arms him!
" O! may he now defend his country's laws
" With half the ſpirit he has broke them all!
" If 'tis your worſhip's pleaſure, bid him enter.
" *Conſtable.* I fly, the herald of your will.
[*Exit Conſtable.*

Puff. Quick, Sir!

Sneer. But, Mr Puff, I think not only the Juſtice, but the clown ſeems to talk in as high a ſtyle as the firſt hero among them.

Puff. Heaven forbid they ſhould not in a free country!—Sir, I am not for making ſlaviſh diſtinctions, and giving all the fine language to the upper ſort of people.

Dangle. That's very noble in you indeed.

Enter JUSTICE'S LADY.

Puff. Now pray mark this ſcene.

" *Lady.* Forgive this interruption, good my love;
" But as I juſt now paſt, a pris'ner youth
" Whom rude hands hither led, ſtrange bodings ſeiz'd
" My fluttering heart, and to myſelf I ſaid,
" An if our TOM had liv'd, he'd ſurely been
" This ſtripling's height!
" *Juſtice.* Ha! ſure ſome powerful ſympathy directs
" Us both——

Enter SON *and* CONSTABLE.

" *Juſtice.* What is thy name?
" *Son.* My name's TOM JENKINS—*alias*, have I
" none—
" Tho' orphan'd, and without a friend!
" *Juſtice.* Thy parents?
" *Son.* My father dwelt in Rocheſter——and was,
" As I have heard——a fiſhmonger——no more.

Puff. What, Sir, do you leave out the account of your birth, parentage, and education?

Son. They have ſettled it ſo, Sir, here.

Puff. Oh! oh!

" *Lady.* How loudly nature whiſpers to my heart!
" Had he no other name?

" *Son.*

" *Son.* I've ſeen a bill
" Of his, ſign'd *Tomkins*, creditor.
" *Juſtice.* This does indeed confirm each circum-
" ſtance
" The gypſey told! ——Prepare!
" *Son.* I do.
" *Juſtice.* No orphan, nor without a friend ar't
" thou ——
" *I* am thy father, *here's* thy mother, *there*
" Thy uncle——this thy firſt couſin, and thoſe
" Are all your near relations!
" *Mother.* O ecſtaſy of bliſs!
" *Son.* O moſt unlook'd for happineſs!
" *Juſtice.* O wonderful event!
[*They faint alternately in each others arms.*

Puff. There, you ſee relationſhip, like murder, will out.

" *Juſtice.* Now let's revive——elſe were this joy
" too much!
" But come——and we'll unfold the reſt within,
" And thou my boy muſt needs want reſt and food.
" Hence may each orphan hope, as chance directs
" To find a father—where he leaſt expects! [*Exeunt.*

Puff. What do you think of that?

Dangle. One of the fineſt diſcovery-ſcenes I ever ſaw.—Why, this under-plot would have made a tragedy itſelf.

Sneer. Aye, or a comedy either.

Puff. And keeps quite clear you ſee of the other.

Enter SCENEMEN, *taking away the Seats.*

Puff. The ſcene remains, does it?

Sceneman. Yes, Sir.

Puff. You are to leave one chair you know—But it is always awkward in a tragedy, to have you fellows coming in in your playhouſe liveries to remove things—I wiſh that could be managed better.—So now for the myſterious yeoman.

Enter a BEEF-EATER.

" *Beef-eater.* Perdition catch my ſoul but *I* do love
" thee.

Sneer.

Sneer. Haven't I heard that line before?

Puff. No, I fancy not—Where pray?

Dangle. Yes, I think there is ſomething like it in Othello.

Puff. Gad! now you put me in mind on't, I believe there is—but that's of no conſequence—all that can be ſaid is, that two people happened to hit on the ſame thought—And Shakeſpeare made uſe of it firſt, that's all.

Sneer. Very true.

Puff. Now, Sir, your ſoliloquy—but ſpeak more to the pit, if you pleaſe—the ſoliloquy always to the pit—that's a rule.

" *Beef eater.* Tho' hopeleſs love finds comfort in
" deſpair,
" It never can endure a rival's bliſs!
" But ſoft——I am obſerv'd. [*Exit Beef-eater.*

Dangle. That's a very ſhort ſoliloquy.

Puff. Yes—but it would have been a great deal longer if he had not been obſerved.

Sneer. A moſt ſentimental Beef-eater that, Mr Puff.

Puff. Hearke—I would not have you be too ſure that he *is* a Beef-eater.

Sneer. What! a hero in diſguiſe?

Puff. No matter—I only give you a hint—But now for my principal character—Here he comes—Lord Burleigh in perſon! Pray, gentlemen, ſtep this way—ſoftly—I only hope the Lord High Treaſurer is perfect—if he is but perfect!

Enter BURLEIGH, *goes ſlowly to a chair and ſits.*

Sneer. Mr Puff!

Puff. Huſh!—vaſtly well, Sir! vaſtly well! a moſt intereſting gravity!

Dangle. What, isn't he to ſpeak at all?

Puff. Egad, I thought you'd aſk me that—yes it is a very likely thing—that a Miniſter in his ſituation, with the whole affairs of the nation on his head, ſhould have time to talk!—but huſh! or you'll put him out.

Sneer. Put him out! how the plague can that be, if he's not going to ſay any thing?

Puff.

Puff. There's a reaſon!—why, his part is to *think*, and how the plague do you imagine he can *think* if you keep talking?

Dangle That's very true upon my word!

[*Burleigh comes forward, ſhakes his head and exit.*

Sneer. He is very perfect indeed—Now, pray what did he mean by that?

Puff. You don't take it?

Sneer. No; I don't upon my ſoul.

Puff. Why, by that ſhake of the head, he gave you to underſtand that even though they had more juſtice in their cauſe and wiſdom in their meaſures—yet, if there was not a greater ſpirit ſhown on the part of the people—the country would at laſt fall a ſacrifice to the hoſtile ambition of the Spaniſh monarchy.

Sneer. The devil!—did he mean all that by ſhaking his head?

Puff. Every word of it—If he ſhook his head as I taught him.

Dangle. Ah! there certainly is a vaſt deal to be done on the ſtage by dumb ſhew, and expreſſion of face, and a judicious author knows how much he may truſt to it.

Sneer. O! here are ſome of our old acquaintance.

Enter HATTON *and* RALEIGH.

" *Sir Chris.* *My* niece, and *your* niece too!
" By heav'n! there's witchcraft in't——He could
" not elſe
" Have gain'd their hearts——But ſee where they
" approach;
" Some horrid purpoſe low'ring on their brows!
" *Sir Walter.* Let us withdraw and mark them.

[*They withdraw.*

Sneer. What is all this?

Puff. Ah! here has been more pruning!—but the fact is, theſe two young ladies are alſo in love with Don Wiſkerandos.—Now, gentlemen, this ſcene goes entirely for what we call SITUATION and STAGE EFFECT, by which the greateſt applauſe may be obtained, without the aſſiſtance of language, ſentiment, or character: pray mark!

Enter

Enter the TWO NIECES.

" *1ſt Niece.* Ellena here!
" She is his ſcorn as much as I—that is
" Some comfort ſtill.

Puff. O dear madam, you are not to ſay that to her face!—*aſide*, ma'am, *aſide*.—The whole ſcene is to be *aſide*.

" *1ſt Niece.* She is his ſcorn as much as I—that is
" Some comfort ſtill! [*Aſide.*
" *2d Niece.* I know he prizes not Pollina's love,
" But Tilburina lords it o'er his heart. [*Aſide.*
" *1ſt Niece.* But ſee the proud deſtroyer of my peace.
" Revenge is all the good I've left. [*Aſide.*
" *2d Niece.* He comes, the falſe diſturber of my
" quiet.
" Now vengeance do thy worſt—— [*Aſide.*

Enter WHISKERANDOS.

" O hateful liberty—if thus in vain
" I ſeek my Tilburina!
" *Both Nieces.* And ever ſhalt!
" *Sir Chriſtopher and Sir Walter come forward.*
" Hold! we will avenge you.
" *Whiſkerandos.* Hold *you*——or ſee your nieces
" bleed!

[*The two nieces draw their two daggers to ſtrike Whiſkerandos, the two uncles at the inſtant with their two ſwords drawn, catch their two nieces arms, and turn the points of their ſwords to Whiſkerandos, who immediately draws two daggers, and holds them to the two nieces' boſoms.*]

Puff. There's ſituation for you!—there's an heroic group!—You ſee the ladies can't ſtab Whiſkerandos—he durſt not ſtrike them for fear of their uncles—the uncles durſt not kill him, becauſe of their nieces—I have them all at a dead lock!—for every one of them is afraid to let go firſt.

Sneer. Why, then they muſt ſtand there for ever.

Puff. So they would, if I hadn't a very fine contrivance for't—Now mind——

Enter BEEF-EATER *with his Halberd.*

" In the Queen's name I charge you all to drop
" Your ſwords and daggers!

[*They drop their ſwords and daggers.*

Sneer. That is a contrivance indeed.

Puff. Aye—in the Queen's name.

" *Sir Chris.* Come niece!
" *Sir Raleigh.* Come niece!

[*Exeunt with the two nieces.*

" *Whiſkerandos.* What's he, who bids us thus re-
" nounce our guard?
" *Beef-eater.* Thou muſt do more, renounce thy love!
" *Whiſkerandos.* Thou lieſt——baſe Beef-eater!
" *Beef-eater.* Ha! Hell! the lie!
" By heav'n thou'ſt rous'd the lion in my heart!
" Off yeoman's habit!—baſe diſguiſe!—off! off!

[*Diſcovers himſelf, by throwing off his upper dreſs, and appearing in a very fine waiſtcoat.*]

" Am I a Beef-eater now?
" Or beams my creſt as terrible as when
" In Biſcay's Bay I took thy captive ſloop.

Puff. There, egad! he comes out to be the very captain of the privateer who had taken Whiſkerandos priſoner—and was himſelf an old lover of Tilburina's.

Dangle. Admirably manag'd indeed.

Puff. Now, ſtand out of their way.

" *Whiſkerandos.* I thank thee fortune! that haſt
" thus beſtow'd
" A weapon to chaſtiſe this inſolent.

[*Takes up one of the ſwords.*

" *Beef-eater.* I take thy challenge, Spaniard, and I
" thank
" Thee, Fortune, too! [*Takes up the other ſword.*

Dangle. That's excellently contrived!—it ſeems as if the two uncles had left their ſwords on purpoſe for them.

Puff. No, egad, they could not help leaving them.

" *Whiſkerandos.* Vengeance and Tilburina!
" *Beef-eater.* Exactly ſo——

[*They fight, and after the uſual number of wounds given, Whiſkerandos falls.*]

" *Whiſ-*

" *Whiſkerandos.* O curſed parry!——that laſt thruſt
" in tierce
" Was fatal——Captain, thou haſt fenced well!
" And Whiſkerandos quits this buſtling ſcene
" For all eter———
" *Beef-eater.* —nity—He would have added, but
" ſtern death
" Cut ſhort his being, and the noun at once!

Puff. O, my dear Sir, you are too ſlow, now mind me.—Sir, ſhall I trouble you to die again?

" *Whiſkerandos.* And Whiſkerandos quits this buſt-
" ling ſcene
" For all eter———
" *Beef-eater.* ——nity—He would have added——

Puff. No, Sir—that's not it—once more if you pleaſe—

Whiſkerandos. I wiſh, Sir—you would practiſe this without me——I can't ſtay dying here all night.

Puff. Very well, we'll go over it by and bye——I muſt humour theſe gentlemen! [*Exit Whiſkerandos.*

" *Beef-eater.* Farewell——brave Spaniard! and
" when next——

Puff. Dear Sir, you needn't ſpeak that ſpeech as the body has walked off.

Beef-eater. That's true, Sir—then I'll join the fleet.

Puff. If you pleaſe. [*Exit Beef-eater.*

Now, who comes on?

Enter GOVERNOR, *with his hair properly diſordered.*

" *Gov.* A hemiſphere of evil planets reign!
" And every planet ſheds contagious phrenſy!
" My Spaniſh priſoner is ſlain! my daughter,
" Meeting the dead corſe borne along——has gone
" Diſtract! [*A loud flouriſh of trumpets.*
" But hark! I am ſummon'd to the fort,
" Perhaps the fleets have met! amazing criſis!
" O Tilburina! from thy aged father's beard
" Thou'ſt pluck'd the few brown hairs which time
" had left! [*Exit Governor.*

Sneer. Poor gentleman!

Puff. Yes—and no one to blame but his daughter!

Dangle. And the planets———

Puff. True.—Now enter Tilburina.—

Sneer. Egad, the buſineſs comes on quick here.

Puff. Yes, Sir—now ſhe comes in ſtark mad in white ſatin.

Sneer. Why in white ſatin?

Puff. O Lord, Sir—when a heroine goes mad, ſhe always goes into white ſatin—don't ſhe, Dangle?

Dangle. Always—it's a rule.

Puff. Yes—here it is—(*looking at the book*) 'Enter Tilburina ſtark mad in white ſatin, and her confidant ſtark mad in white linen.'

Enter TILBURINA *and* CONFIDANT *mad, according to cuſtom.*

Sneer. But what the deuce, is the confidant to be mad too?

Puff. To be ſure ſhe is, the confidant is always to do whatever her miſtreſs does; weep when ſhe weeps, ſmile when ſhe ſmiles, go mad when ſhe goes mad.——Now madam confidant—but—keep your madneſs in the back ground, if you pleaſe.

" *Tilburina.* The wind whiſtles——the moon riſes
" ——ſee
" They have kill'd my ſquirrel in his cage!
" Is this a graſshopper?——Ha! no, it is my
" Whiſkerandos——you ſhall not keep him———
" I know you have him in your pocket———
" An oyſter may be croſs'd in love!—— Who ſays
" A whale's a bird?—Ha! did you call, my love?
" ——He's here! He's there!——He's every where!
" Ah me! He's no where! [*Exit Tilburina.*

Puff. There, do you ever deſire to ſee any body madder than that?

Sneer. Never while I live!

Puff. You obſerved how ſhe mangled the metre?

Dangle. Yes—egad, it was the firſt thing made me ſuſpect ſhe was out of her ſenſes.

Sneer. And pray what becomes of her?

Puff.

Puff. She is gone to throw herſelf into the ſea to be ſure—and that brings us at once to the ſcene of action, and ſo to my cataſtrophe—my ſea-fight, I mean.

Sneer. What, you bring that in at laſt?

Puff. Yes—yes—you know my play is *called* the *Spaniſh Armada*, otherwiſe, egad, I have no occaſion for the battle at all.—Now then for my magnificence!—my battle!—my noiſe!—and my proceſſion!—You are all ready?

Prompter within. Yes, Sir.

Puff. Is the Thames dreſt?

Enter THAMES *with two Attendants.*

Thames. Here I am, Sir.

Puff. Very well indeed—See, gentlemen, there's a river for you!—This is blending a little of the maſque with my tragedy—a new fancy you know—and very uſeful in my caſe; for as there *muſt be* a *proceſſion*, I ſuppoſe Thames and all his tributary rivers to compliment Britannia with a fete in honour of the victory.

Sneer. But pray, who are theſe gentlemen in green with him?

Puff. Thoſe?—thoſe are his banks.

Sneer. His banks?

Puff. Yes, one crown'd with alders, and the other with a villa!—you take the alluſions?—but hey! what the plague! you have got both your banks on one ſide—Here, Sir, come round—Ever while you live, Thames, go between your banks. (*Bell rings.*)—There, ſoh! now for't!—Stand aſide my dear friends!—away Thames!

[*Exit Thames between his banks.*

[*Flouriſh of drums—trumpets—cannon, &c. Scene changes to the ſea——the fleets engage——the muſic plays 'Britons ſtrike home.'—Spaniſh fleet deſtroyed by fire ſhips, &c.—Engliſh fleet advances——muſic plays 'Rule Britannia.'—The proceſſion of all the Engliſh rivers and their tributaries with their emblems, &c. begins with Handel's water muſic—ends with*

with a chorus, to the march in Judas Maccabæus.—During this ſcene, Puff directs and applauds every thing——then]

Puff. Well, pretty well—but not quite perfect—ſo ladies and gentlemen, if you pleaſe, we'll rehearſe this piece again to-morrow.

CURTAIN DROPS.

FINIS.