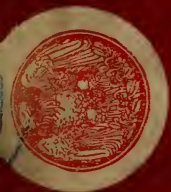


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N^o. XXXVI.

OXBERRY'S

NEW

English Drama.

THE

COUNTRY GIRL,

A COMEDY ;

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLEY.

BY

David Garrick.

BOSTON :

PUBLISHED BY WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET :

A. T. GOODRICH & CO NEW-YORK.

E. LITTELL, PHILADELPHIA.

1822.

Plays

CONTAINED IN THIS EDITION, AS FAR AS YET PUBLISHED IN ENGLAND.

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Oxberry's Edition.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

A COMEDY ;

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLEY.

By David Garrick.

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WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY
MARKED WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS,
AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, *Comedian.*

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Remarks.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

THE language and characters of the Country Girl are sprightly and entertaining ; there is not perhaps much wit or humour in the dialogue, but it is entertaining from its archness, and the characters are natural and well discriminated. Take it altogether the comedy does not belong to the higher class of the drama ; it however holds a distinguished place in the second rank of excellence, no little praise, if we consider the many and admirable pieces of which it thus takes precedence.

This style of writing is often more effective in the representation than that which in reality is its superior ; it is more easily, and therefore better, acted, with the additional advantage of presenting nothing but what is familiar to the minds and habits of the least informed spectators. A Moody and a Peggy are by no means of so rare occurrence that we need be at a loss to understand their characters or their language. They speak the dialogue of general life, and though their oddities might raise a smile at the follies of fashion, they would not be considered more whimsical than the many monsters which are daily exhibited uncaged and unfettered in the streets of the metropolis. Perhaps the great beauty of this comedy is, that nothing in it is overcharged ; there is much whim but no caricature.

The plot is interesting and sufficiently probable for dramatic purposes :—The incidents are not numerous, but to make amends are compacted into a whole, from which nothing can be taken without detriment to the remainder ; in fact the two parts of the plot are so well linked together and so intimately connected, that it is not very easy at first sight to distinguish the double fictions ; they have all the appearance of unity. Of course we speak of it as now printed and acted ; Garrick has deviated considerably from the original, whether to the advantage of the piece in the closet we will not pretend to say, but as a production for the stage it certainly has been infinitely improved by his judicious alterations. It is a melancholy truth, that while many of our most brilliant dramas are utterly ineffective when acted, their inferior rivals are played with unbounded approbation ; nor is there in this a just cause for wonder ; it can scarcely be otherwise ; the one is so sublime in its beauty that it is neither to be acted or understood but by minds familiar with poetry, and capable of its excellence ; neither the actor nor the very limited powers of scenic deception can realize its fictions ; whereas the good-humoured every-day-efforts of the minor drama have all the advantages which arise out of humbleness ; every one comprehends, and every one is familiar with them ; nothing is attempted but what is realized, and if the reader is never much pleased, the spectator will never be much disappointed.

Prologue.

—
SPOKEN BY MR. HART.
—

POETS, like cudgell'd bullies, never do
At first or second blow submit to you ;
But will provoke you still, and ne'er have done,
Till you are weary first with laying on.
The late so baffled scribbler of this day,
Though he stands trembling, bids me boldly say,
What we before most plays are us'd to do,
(For poets, out of fear, first draw on you) ;
In a fierce prologue, the still pit defy,
And ere you speak, like Kastril, give the lie ;
But though our Bayes's battles oft I've fought,
And with bruis'd knuckles their dear conquests bought ;
Nay, never yet fear'd odds upon the stage,
In prologue dare not hector with the age ;
But would take quarter from your saving hands,
Though Bayes within all yielding countermands ;
Says you confed'rate wits no quarter give,
Therefore his play shan't ask your leave to live.—
Well, let the vain, rash fop, by huffing so,
Think to obtain the better terms of you ;
But we, the actors, humbly will submit,
Now, and at any time, to a full pit ;

Nay, often we anticipate your rage,
 And murder poets for you on our stage :
 We set no guards upon our tyring-room ;
 But when with flying colours there you come,
 We patiently, you see, give up to you
 Our poets, virgins, nay, our matrons too.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is one hour and thirty-four minutes. The first act occupies the space of fifteen minutes—the second, twenty-one—the third, fifteen—the fourth, twenty-five—and the fifth, eighteen. The half-price commences, generally, at a quarter before nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H. - - - - - is meant - - - - - Right Hand.
 L.H. - - - - - Left Hand.
 S.E. - - - - - Second Entrance.
 U.E. - - - - - Upper Entrance.
 M.D. - - - - - Middle Door.
 D.F. - - - - - Door in Flat.
 R.H.D. - - - - - Right Hand Door.
 L.H.D. - - - - - Left Hand Door.

Costume.

MOODY.

Drab coat, gilt buttons, scarlet kerseymere waistcoat bound with gold brocade ; a pair of drab breeches, shoes, buckles, and drab stockings.

HARCOURT.

Blue coat, white waistcoat, black dress breeches, and opera hat.

SPARKISH.

A black velvet coat, full dress, lined with buff silk, gold buttons ; buff silk, waistcoat and breeches, and opera dress hat.

BELVILLE.

A green coat, white waistcoat, dress breeches, and opera hat.

FOOTMAN.

A suit of livery.

COUNTRYMAN.

Drab cloth livery suit.

WILLIAM.

A brown cloth suit.

SERVANT.

A suit of livery.

PEGGY.

First Dress—White frock.—Second Dress—Jetticoat and veil like Alithea's.—Third Dress—Blue coat, trowsers, and white waistcoat.

ALITHEA.

Blue satin dress, trimmed with white lace.

LUCY.

Coloured gown, and white apron.

Persons Represented.

	<i>As Originally acted.</i>	<i>Drury Lane, 1790.</i>
<i>Moody</i> - - - - -	Mr. Hart.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Harcourt</i> - - - - -	Mr. Kynaston.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Sparkish</i> - - - - -	Mr. Haynes.	Mr. Dodd.
<i>Belville</i> - - - - -	Mr. Lydal.	Mr. Bannister.
<i>William</i> - - - - -		Mr. Spencer.
<i>Countryman,</i>		Mr. Jones.
<i>John</i> - - - - -		Mr. Alfred.
<i>Miss Peggy</i> - - - - -	Mrs. Bowtel.	Mrs. Jordan.
<i>Alithea</i> - - - - -	Mrs. James.	Mrs. Ward.
<i>Lucy</i> - - - - -	Mrs. Cory.	Mrs. Wilson.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	<i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>Moody</i> - - - - -	Mr. Gattie.	Mr Fawcett.
<i>Harcourt</i> - - - - -	Mr Walack.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Sparkish</i> - - - - -	Mr Penley.	Mr. Farley.
<i>Belville</i> - - - - -	Mr Barnard.	Mr. Hamerton.
<i>William</i> - - - - -	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Menage.
<i>Countryman</i> - - - - -	Mr. Minton.	Mr Howell.
<i>John</i> - - - - -	Mr. Coveuey.	Mr. W. Chapman.
<i>Miss Peggy</i> - - - - -	Mrs. Mardyn.	Mrs Alsop.
<i>Alithea</i> - - - - -	Mrs. Oger.	Miss Matthews.
<i>Lucy</i> - - - - -	Miss Tidswell.	Mrs. Gibbs.

SCENE—London.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Harcourt's Lodgings.*

HARCOURT, L.H. and BELVILLE, R.H. *discovered sitting.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha! and so you are in love, nephew; not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but sighingly, miserably so; not content to be ankle-deep, you have sous'd over head and ears—ha, Dick?

Bel. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. (*Sighs.*)

Har. Nay, never blush at it: when I was of your age I was asham'd too; but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Bel. Could I have released myself from that, I had perhaps been at this instant happy in the possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain—Heigho!

Har. Ha, ha, ha! very foolish indeed.

Bel. Don't laugh at me, uncle; I am foolish, I know; but, like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Har. Pr'ythee don't talk of pity; how can I help you? For this country girl of yours is certainly married.

Bel. No, no—I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she shan't be, if I can help it.

Har. Well said, modesty; with such a spirit you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Bel. But you must encourage and advise me too, or I shall never make any thing of it.

Har. Provided the girl is not married; for I never encourage young men to covet their neighbours' wives.

Bel. My heart assures me, that she is not married.

Har. O, to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon; but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship, you must know——

Bel. What, uncle? You alarm me!

Har. That I am in love too.

Bel. Indeed!

Har. Miserably in love.

Bel. That's charming.

Har. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Bel. Better and better.

Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please

you ; but now prepare for the wonderful wonder-of-wonders !

Bel. Well.

Har. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Bel. What, are you in love with Peggy too ?

(Rising from his Chair.)

Har. Well said, jealousy. No, no, set your heart at rest ; your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me. I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and choose for herself.

Bel. You don't mean Alithea, who is to be married to Mr. Sparkish ?

Har. Can't I be in love with a lady that is going to be married to another, as well as you, sir ?

Bel. But Sparkish is your friend ?

Har. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend ; he can be nobody's friend, not even his own.—He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, though I have told him again and again that I was in love with her ; which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome, and me really in love. He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Bel. 'Tis a conceited puppy !—And what success with the lady ?

Har. No great hopes ; and yet if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not des-

pair; her honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival: she can't like Sparkish; and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be ashamed of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice to save me.

Bel. Nothing can save me.

Har. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting every thing that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours in the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already.

Bel. How cruel you are—you raise me up with one hand, and then knock me down with the other.

Har. Well, well, she shan't be married. (*Knocking at the Door, L.H.*) 'This is Sparkish, I suppose: dont drop the least hint of your passion to him; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Bel. I'll be careful.

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country, I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see you, sir; but as I did not know him, I said you were not at home, but would return directly; "And so will I too," said he, very shortly and surlily! and away he went mumbling to himself.

Har. Very well, Will; I'll see him when he

comes. [*Exit, Servant, L.H.D.*] Moody call to see me!—He has something more in his head than making me a visit; 'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Bel. How can he know me?

Har. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him; tell me all you know of this ward of his, this Peggy—Peggy what's her name?

Bel. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Har. Ay, ay, sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire; and left very young, under the guardianship of my old companion and acquaintance, Jack Moody.

Bel. Your companion!—he's old enough to be your father.

Har. Thank you, nephew—he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university, into this ocean of London, he was the greatest rake in it; I knew him well for near two years, but all of a sudden he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Bel. There he gain'd such an ascendancy over the odd disposition of his neighbour, sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter; who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent—there's the devil, uncle.

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love that you would take her with half her value? Ha, nephew?

Bel. I'll take her with any thing—with nothing.

Har. What! such an unaccomplish'd, awkward, silly creature? He has scarce taught her to write; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country people about 'em; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky, turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Bel. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity; had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moonlight——

Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest, ha, ha, ha! “Arise fair sun, and kill the envious——” ha, ha, ha! How often have you seen this fair Capulet?

Bel. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice; I have leap'd an orchard wall, like Romeo, to come at her; played the balcony scene, from an old summer-house in the garden; and if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb scene too.

Har. Well said, Dick!—this spirit must produce something; but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her?

Bel. Never in the country; he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fastened up the window-shutters.

Spark. (*Without, L.H.*) Very well, Will, I'll go up to 'em.

Har. I hear Sparkish coming up; take care of what I told you; not a word of Peggy; hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Bel. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH, L.H.D.

Spark. O. my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing ; I have such news for thee—ha, ha, ha!—What, your nephew too, and a little dumpish, or so ; you have been giving him a lecture upon economy, I suppose—you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it. I never mind my own affairs, not I,—“The gods take care of Cato.”—(*Crosses to centre.*)—I hear, Mr. Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the Park, and a back door that goes out into it. Very convenient, and well-imagined—no young handsome fellow should be without one—you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon stray'd women of quality.

Har. As you used to do—you vain fellow you ; pr'ythee don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks ; he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.

Spark. May be so, but his modesty has done some mischief at our house—my surly, jealous brother in law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern window.

Bel. You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish ; I don't know what young lady you mean.

Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish, you must mistake ; Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and enquired of the waiter who dined in the back room, No. 4; and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Har. He kiss'd his hand, indeed, to your lady, Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are, and very near as much as I am; so look about you, such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both—win her and wear her if you can—Dolus an virtus in love as well as in war—though you must be expeditious, faith; for I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after.—Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend me, to do the business?

Har. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. (*Aside.*) Why, faith, I have, Sparkish; my brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands.—I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love!

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother come so near us—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—but Ned shall be the man; poor Alithea grows impatient; I can't put off the evil day any longer. I fancy the brute, her brother, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Bel. How, country idiot, sir?

Har. Hold your tongue. (*Apart to Belville.*)
I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Bel. No, no, he is not married.

Har. Hold your tongue— (*Elbowing Belville.*)

Spark. Not he—I have the finest story to tell you—(*Crosses to centre.*)—by-the-by, he intends calling upon you, for he asked me where you lived, to complain of modesty there. He picked up an old raking acquaintance of his as we came along together, Will Frankly, who saw him with his girl, skulking and muffled up, at the play last night ; he plagu'd him much about matrimony, and his being ashamed to show himself: swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. “Do you?” cried Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes thus—“You must have more wit than you used to have ; besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week.”—Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve, so I left 'em ; rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Bel. I thought you said, just now, that he was not married : is not that a contradiction, sir ?

(*Harcourt still makes signs to Belville.*)

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one ; but considering your modesty, and the ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks ; ha, Harcourt ! ha, ha, ha !

Har. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy, tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune let me tell you), as he coops up and fattens his chickens for his own eating; he is plaguy jealous of her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman? He persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a sixpence, or some nonsense or another, that they are to all intents married in heaven; but that the laws require the signing of articles, and the church service to complete their union: so he has made her call him husband, and bud, which she constantly does; and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Bel. Thank you, sir. What heavenly news, uncle! (*Aside.*)

Har. What an idiot you are, nephew! (*Apart.*) And so then you make but one trouble of it, and are both to be tack'd together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he can't be married this week; he damns the lawyers for keeping him in town;—besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me for not being jealous. (*Knocking at the Door.*) There he is—I must not be seen with you, for he'll suspect

something ; I'll go with your nephew to his house, and we'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife that is to be, and perhaps we shall show young modesty here a sight of Peggy too.

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shown him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody ! Well said, Will ; an odd sort of a strange gentleman indeed ; we'll step into the next room till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself—much good may he do you. (*Going, R.H.*) Remember that he is married, or he'll suspect me of betraying him.

[*Exeunt Sparkish and Belville, R.H.D.*

Har. Show him up, Will. [*Exit Servant, L.H.D.* Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange, though a very natural metamorphosis ; a once high-spirited, handsome, well-dress'd, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, economical, country sloven.

Enter MOODY, L.H.D.

Moody. Mr. Harcourt, your humble servant : have you forgot me ?

Har. What, my old friend, Jack Moody ! by thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy—you are certainly married.

Moody. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit at law that brings me up to town, and puts me out of humour; besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds to-morrow to take my sister off my hands.

Har. Your sister is very much obliged to you: being so much older than her, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moody. I have, and to oblige her: nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now-a-days; and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Har. She has sense and taste, and can't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moody. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to the consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Har. And what is to secure your worship from consequences?—I did not expect marriage from such a rake—one that knew the town so well; fie, fie, Jack.

Moody. I'll tell you my security—I have married no London wife.

Har. That's all-one; that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pamper'd, Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moody. I wish the devil had both him and his simile. (*Aside.*)

Har. Well, never grumble about it, what's done can't be undone. Is your wife handsome and young?

Moody. She has little beauty but her youth, nothing to brag of but her health, and no attraction but her modesty—wholesome, homely, and housewifely—that's all.

Har. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack.—Why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught something?

Moody. Which something I might repent as long as I live.

Har. But pr'ythee, why wouldst thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly? She must be rich then?

Moody. As rich as if she had the wealth of the mogul. She'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of: then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty, and one of forty.

Har. Fifty to my knowledge. (*Moody turns off, and grumbles.*)—But see how you and I differ, Jack—wit to me is more necessary than beauty; I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moody. 'Tis my maxim—He's a fool that marries; but he's a greater that does not marry a fool.—I know the town, Mr. Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you or your nephew.

Har. My nephew!—poor sheepish lad, he runs away from every woman he sees: he saw your

sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her ; he always toasts her, and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house, and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moody. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trouble.—You have heard of a wolf in sheep's clothing ; and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Har. At your sister, I suppose ; not at her unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious ? Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moody. Sparkish is a fool, and may be what I'll take care not to be.—I confess my visit to you, Mr. Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel ; so pray tell your nephew. (*Going, L.H.*)

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour. Well, I'll tell him ; ha, ha, ha ! Poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls won't laugh at him any longer. Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew to chide him for his gallantry ? Ha, ha, ha ! we shall have fine sport.

Moody. I am not to be laugh'd out of my senses, Mr. Harcourt.—I was once a modest young gentlemen myself ; and I never have been half so mischievous before or since, as I was in that state of innocence.—And so, old

friend, make no ceremony with me ; I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and therefore, as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit, or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty—and so your servant.

[*Exit, L.H.D.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha ! poor Jack ! what a life of suspicion does he lead ! I pity the poor fellow, though he ought and will suffer for his folly—Folly !—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege ! When persons of a certain age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expense of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Moody's House,*

Enter PEGGY and ALITHEA, R.H.

Peggy. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in in London ?

Ali. A pretty question ! Why, sister, Vauxhall, Kensington Gardens, and St. James's Park, are the most frequented.

Peggy. Pray, sister, tell me why my bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and won't let me go a walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday.

Ali. O, he's jealous, sister!

Peggy. Jealous! what's that?

Ali. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peggy. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Ali. Did he not carry you yesterday to the play?

Peggy. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: he would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there; but I would have ventured for all that.

Ali. But how did you like the play?

Peggy. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugely the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Ali. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peggy. Ay, how should I help it, sister? Pray, sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a walking?

Ali. A walking! ha, ha, ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a foot-post; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. (*Aside.*) But here comes my brother; I'll ask him, though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Peggy. O my dear, dear bud, welcome home ; who dost thou look so fropish ? Who has nager'd thee ?

Moody. You're a fool.

(Peggy goes aside and cries.)

Ali. Faith, and so she is for crying for no fault ; poor tender creature !

Moody. What, would you have her as impudent as yourself ; as arrant a girlfirt, a gadder, a magpie ; and to say all, a mere notorious town woman !

Ali. Brother, you are my only censurer ; and the honour of our family will soon suffer in your wife that is to be, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town !

Moody. Hark you, mistress ! do not talk so before my wife : the innocent liberty of the town !

Ali. Pray, what ill people frequent my lodgings ? I keep no company with any woman of scandalous reputation.

Moody. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Ali. Would you not have me civil ? Answer them at public places ? Walk with them when they join me in the Park, Kensington Gardens, or Vauxhall ?

Moody. Hold, hold ; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found ; I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance as I do.

Peggy. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud, she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moody. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find.

Peggy. Not I indeed, dear ; I hate London : our place-house in the country is worth a thousand of't ; would I were there again !

Moody. So you shall I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in ? You are her encourager in such discourses.

(*To Alithea.*)

Peggy. No, indeed dear ; she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Moody. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there's no harm in't. (*Aside.*) Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me ?

Peggy. Yes, indeed, but I do : the player men are finer folks.

Moody. But you love none better than me ?

Peggy. You are my own dear bud, and I know you : I hate strangers.

Moody. Ay, my dear, you must love me only ; and not be like the naughty town women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else ; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town life.

Peggy. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town life, London is not so bad a place dear.

Moody. How ! if you love me you must hate London.

Peggy. But, bud, do the town women love the player men too ?

Moody. Ay I warrant you.

Peggy. Ay, I warrant you.

Moody. Why, you do not I hope ?

Peggy. No, no, bud ; but why have we no player-men in the country ?

Moody. Ha ! Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peggy. Nay, why, love ? I did not care for going ; but when you forbid me, you make me as it were desire it. Pray let me go to a play, dear ?

Moody. Hold your peace ; I won't.

Peggy. Why, love ?

Moody. Why, I'll tell you.

Peggy. Pray, why, dear ?

Moody. First, you like the actors : and the gallants may like you.

Peggy. What, a homely country girl ? No, bud, nobody will like me.

Moody. I tell you yes, they may.

Peggy. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you ; I will go.

Moody. I tell you then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peggy. Indeed : who, who, pray, who was't ?

Moody. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware. How overjoy'd she is ! *(Aside.)*

Peggy. Was it any Hampshire gallant ? any of our neighbours ?—'Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moody. I promise you, you lie ; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peggy. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me ? Answer me to that. Methinks he should not ; I would do him no harm.

Ali. Ha, ha, ha !

Moody. 'Tis very well ; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company ; get you in, get you in.

Peggy. But pray, husband is he a pretty gentleman that loves me ?

Moody. In baggage, in. (*Thrusts her in, R.H.D. and shuts the Door.*) What, all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging by this easy coxcomb ! 'Sdeath, I'll not suffer it.

Enter SPARKISH, HARCOURT, and BELVILLE, L.H.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice ? Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits.

(*To Alithea.*)

Moody. Ay, they shall know her as well as you yourself will, I warrant you. (*Aside.*)

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow ; and one you must make welcome ; for he's modest. (*Belville crosses and salutes Alithea ;—Har. does the same*) Harcourt makes himself welcome, and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Har. You are too obliging, Sparkish.

(*Alithea and Sparkish retire up the stage.*)

Moody. And so he is indeed. The fop's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows as mushrooms upon dunghills. *(Aside.)*

Har. This, Mr. Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me. I would bring him with me; for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora to restore you to your rest. *(Joins Alithea and Sparkish.)*

Bel. I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness: it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moody. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal for that.—My wife, sir, must not be smirk'd and nodded at from tavern windows. I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Bel. Was it your wife, sir?

Moody. What's that to you, sir? Suppose it were my grandmother?

Bel. I would not dare to offend her.—Permit me to say a word in private to you.

[Exeunt Moody and Bel. L.H.]

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever.—*(Crosses to centre.)* My dear, don't look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Ali. *(R.H.)* For shame, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like her? Thou hast stared upon her enough to resolve me.

Har. *(L.H.)* So infinitely well, that I could

wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Ali. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railers; and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him. I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, truest-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging that—

Spark. Nay, 'egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see it in your eyes.—He does admire you, madam; he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times; have you not, Harcourt? You do admire her, by the world, you do—don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex; and till now I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry; but you have the best excuse to marry I ever knew.

Ali. Nay, now, sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Har. Truly, madam, I was never an enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Ali. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? Because it robs you of your friend here? For you look upon a friend married as one gone into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis indeed because you marry him: I see, madam, you can guess my meaning.—I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by heavens I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Ali. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no, 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank! No, 'egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Ali. Great kindness to you indeed!—Insensible! Let a man make love to his mistress to his face. (*Aside.*)

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shall enjoy my company sometimes. dear rogue.—By my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest. I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt. Pr'ythee, Frank dost think my wife that shall be, there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? How?

Har. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too as well as beauty. Go, go, with her in-

to a corner, and try if she has wit; (*He puts Har. over to Ali.*) talk to her any thing, she's bashful before me—take her into a corner.

(*Har. courts Alithea aside, R.H.*)

Re-enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. How, sir! If you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister.—Be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust them into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! Is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly, wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee by the world. What have you done with Belville?

(*Struggles with Moody to keep him from Harcourt and Alithea.*)

Moody. Shown him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, but pr'ythee let me reason with thee.

(*Talks apart with Moody, L.H.*)

Ali. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made: 'tis too late sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Ali. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Ali. I have no obligations to you.

Har. My love.

Ali. I had his before.

Har. You never had it: he wants you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Ali. Love proceeds from esteem: he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Ali. No, now you have put a scruple in my head.—But in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him; my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No: if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation must suffer in the world.

Ali. Nay, now you are rude, sir.—Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold. *(Aside to Alithea.)*

Moody. D'ye hear that senseless puppy?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Moody. No, rather be dishonour'd like a credulous driveller. *(They retire up the stage, L.H.)*

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him?

Ali. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him! no man can do it; he's beneath an injury: a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot; a wretch, so contemptible to all the world but you, that—

Ali. Hold, do not rail at him ; for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him : nay I think I am obliged to tell him you are not his friend.— Mr. Sparkish ! Mr. Sparkish !
(*Crosses to him.*)

Spark. What, what ?—Now, dear rogue, has she not wit ?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had.
(*Surlily.*)

Ali. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you ?

Har. Madam !

Spark. How ? No ; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant : what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Ali. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moody. And he was in the right on't.

Ali. Besides, he has been making love to me.

Moody. And I told the fool so.

Har. True, damn'd, tell tale woman. (*Aside.*)

Spark. Pshaw ! to show his parts ; we wits rail and make love often, but to show our parts : as we have no affections, so we have no malice ? We—

Moody. Did you ever hear such an ass ?

Ali. He said you were a wretch below an injury

Spark. Pshaw !

Ali. A common bubble.

Spark. Pshaw !

Ali. A coward.

Spark. Pshaw ! pshaw !

Ali. A senseless, drivelling idiot.

Moody. True, true, true; all true.

Spark. How! did he disparage my parts? Nay then, my honour's concerned I can't put up that. Brother help me to kill him.

(Offers to draw.)

Ali. Hold! hold!

Moody. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and run away with my sister, I should be rid of three plagues at once. *(Aside, L.H.)*

Ali. Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How! say I am a fool, that is no wit, out of friendship to me?

Ali. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue, for your sake.

Har. Kind, however! *(Aside.)*

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon; but why would not you tell me so, 'faith?

Har. Because I did not think on't, 'faith.

Spark. Come, Belville is gone away: Harcourt, let's be gone to the new play; come, madam. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Ali. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run all about the house, as you used to do.

Spark. Pshaw! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good. If I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic. I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author.

Come, away, Harcourt, lead her down. B'ye, brother.

[*Exeunt Harcourt, Sparkish, and Alithea, L.H.*
Moody. B'ye, driveller. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops; such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my freehold.

Enter a Countryman, L.H.

Country. Master, your worship's servant. Here is the lawyer, counsellor gentleman, with a green bag full of papers, come again, and would be glad to speak to you.

Moody. Now here's some other damn'd impediment, which the law has thrown in our way. I shall never marry the girl, nor get clear of the smoke and wickedness of this cursed town. (*Aside.*) Where is he?

Country. He's below in a coach, with three other lawyers, counsellor gentlemen.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber.*

Enter PEGGY and LUCY, R.H.

Lucy. What ails you, miss Peggy? You are grown quite melancholy.

Peggy. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress Alithea go every

day fluttering about abroad to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a poor, lonely, sullen bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear miss Peggy, I thought you chose to be confined: I imagined that you had been bred so young to the cage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies, who go a little wild about this town.

Peggy. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what pure lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing meetings, and junketings, and dress'd every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you play at nine-pins every day in the week, so they do.

Lucy. To be sure, miss, you will lead a better life when join'd in holy wedlock with your sweet-temper'd guardian, the cheerful Mr. Moody.

Peggy. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing; but I must make the best of a bad market, for I can't marry nobody else.

Lucy. How so, miss? That's very strange.

Peggy. Why we have a contraction to one another; so we are as good as married, you know.

Lucy. I know it! Heaven forbid, miss.

Peggy. Heigho!

Lucy. Don't sigh, miss Peggy; if that young gentleman, who was here just now, would take pity on me, I'd throw such a contract as yours behind the fire.

Peggy. Lord bless us, how you talk!

Lucy. Young Mr. Belville would make you talk otherwise, if you knew him.

Peggy. Mr. Belville!—Where is he?—When did you see him?—You have undone me, Lucy; where was he? Did he say any thing?

Lucy. Say any thing! very little indeed; he's quite distracted, poor young creature! He was talking with your guardian just now.

Peggy. The deuce he was!—but where was it, and when was it?

Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your guardian turn'd you into your chamber, for fear of your being seen.

Peggy. I knew something was the matter, I was in such a fluster. But what did he say to my bud?

Lucy. What do you call him bud for? Bud means husband, and he is not your husband yet, and I hope never will be; and if he was my husband I'd bud him, a surly, unreasonable beast.

Peggy. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good humour; if he'd let me marry any body else (which I can't do,) I'd call him husband as long as he lived.—But what said Mr. Belville to him?

Lucy. I don't know what he said to him, but I'll tell you what he said to me, with a sigh, and his hand upon his breast, as he went out of the door—“If you ever were in love, young gentlewoman (meaning me), and can pity a most faithful lover, tell the dear object of my affections——”

Peggy. Meaning me, Lucy?

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure. "Tell the dear object of my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not married; and when those hopes leave me, she knows the rest;" then he cast up his eyes, thus—gnash'd his teeth—struck his forehead—would have spoke again, but he could not—fetch'd a deep sigh, and vanish'd.

Peggy. That is really very fine; I am sure it makes my heart sink within me, and brings tears into my eyes! O, he's a charming sweet—But hush, hush, I hear my husband.

Lucy. Don't call him husband. Go into the Park this evening, if you can.

Peggy. Mum, mum.

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. Come, what's here to do; you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a longing.

Lucy. Yes, after nine-pins; you suffer none to give her those longings but yourself.

Moody. Come, Mrs. Flippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty your mistress takes abroad makes her banker after it, and out of humour at home. Poor wretch! she desired not to come to London; I would bring her.

Lucy. O yes, you surfeit her with pleasures.

Moody. She has been this fortnight in town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad.

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday?

Moody. Yes, but she never ask'd me; I was myself the cause of her going.

Lucy. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my mistress.

Moody. Well, next week I shall be rid of you all, rid of this town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy, for thou shalt go into the country very soon, dearest.

Peggy. Pish! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Moody. How's this? What, flout at the country?

Peggy. Let me alone, I am not well.

Moody. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest?

Peggy. Truly I don't know; but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Moody. Ha!

Lucy. That's my mistress too.

Moody. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd because a raking fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Peggy. Of what sickness?

Moody. O, of that which is worse than the plague; jealousy!

Peggy. Pish! you jeer: I'm sure there's no such disease in your receipt-book at home.

Moody. No, you never met with it, poor innocent.

Peggy. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Moody. No, no; no more plays. But why are you so eager to see a play?

Peggy. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the player-men, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me; that's all, dear bud.

Moody. Is that all, dear bud?

Lucy. (*Aside.*) This proceeds from my mistress's example.

Peggy. Let's go abroad, however, dear bud, if we don't go to the play.

Moody. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country next week.

Peggy. Therefore I would first see some sights to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Moody. What, you have put this into her head? (*To Lucy.*)

Lucy. Heaven defend me, what suspicions! somebody has put more things into your head than you ought to have.

Moody. Your tongue runs too glibly, madam; and you have lived too long with a London lady, to be a proper companion for innocence. I am not over-fond of you, mistress.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moody. You admitted those gentlemen into the house, when I said I would not be at home; and there was the young fellow too who behaved so indecent to my wife at the tavern window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodgings.

Peggy. Why, O Lord, did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Moody. No, no. You are not the cause of that damn'd question too? *(To Lucy.)*

Peggy. Come, pray, bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late: for I will go, that's flat and plain—only into the Park.

Moody. So! the obstinacy already of the town wife; and I must, while she's here, humour her like one.—*(Aside.)* How shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Lucy. Muffle her up with a bonnet and cloak, and I'll go with her to avoid suspicion.

Moody. No, no, I am obliged to you for your kindness, but she shan't stir without me.

Lucy. What will you do then?

Peggy. What shall we go? I am sick with staying at home: if I don't walk in the Park, I'll do nothing that I'm bid for a week—I won't be mop'd.

Lucy. O she has a charming spirit! I could stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me. *(To Moody.)*

Moody. I'll give thee a better thing, I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe: when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peggy. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The tailor brought home last night the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peggy. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, madam. When you were with your lawyers last night, miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moody. Thank you, thank you, Lucy, 'tis the luckiest thought! Go this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again—and you shall walk with me into the Park, as my godson. Well thought of, Lucy; I shall love you for ever for this.

Peggy. And so shall I too, Lucy: I'll put 'em on directly. (*Going.*) I suppose, bud, I must keep on my petticoats for fear of showing my legs?

Moody. No, no, you fool, never mind your legs. [*Exeunt Peggy, R.H.D. Moody, L.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter BELVILLE and HARCOURT, R.H.

Bel. And the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments through Lucy to miss Peggy; and here I

am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. And so to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and at the same time to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress (and of which I have made the most), you hinted to him with a grave melancholy face that you were dying for his sister—Gad-amercy, nephew! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms: it will do, Dick.

Bel. What could I do, uncle?—It was my last stake, and I play'd for a great deal.

Har. You mistake me, Dick: I don't say you could do better, I only can't account for your modesty's doing so much: you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him?

Bel. Faith, I can't say; he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and showed me the door.—But what success have you had with Alithea?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose.—This day will produce something: Alithea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does every thing that the fates ought to do for me.

Bel. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs, and if your mistress and mine should, by chance,

be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport : let us avoid him—you can't cheat him before his face.

Har. But I can though, thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Bel. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessaries ; and he is to be bubbled of his mistress, or of his money (the common mistress), by keeping him company.

Enter SPARKISH, R.H.

Spark. Who's that that is to be bubbled? Faith, let me snack ; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. He did not hear all, I hope.

(Apart to Bel.)

Spark. *(Crosses to centre.)* Come you bubbling rogues, you, where do we sup? O Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have made love, fierce love to her last night, all the play long ; ha, ha, ha !—but I——

Har. I make love to her?

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her ; but I am sure I know myself.

Bel. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such.

(Bows.)

Spark. O, your servant, sir : you are at your

raillery, are you! You can't oblige me more; I'm your man: he'll meet with his match. Ha! Harcourt! did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Har. Yes, and was very much disturb'd at it. You put the actors and audience into confusion, and all your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better: I love confusion, and to see folks out of countenance; I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Bel. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir; no, I thank you. 'Gad I go to a play as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either; and the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we hate authors damnablely.

Bel. But why should you hate the poor rogues? You have too much wit, and despise writing, I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing; but women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it; 'tis e'en as common with lovers, as playing with fans: and you can no more help rhyming to your Phillis, than drinking to your Phillis.

Har. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. Damn the poets: they turn'd them into burlesque as they call it: that burlesque is a

hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hiccus-doccus, topsy-turvy, they make a clever witty thing absolute nonsense ! Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song ? “ ‘Twang, twang,” the best I ever wrote.

Har. That may be, and be very easily ridiculed for all that.

Bel Favour me with it, sir ; I never heard it.

Spark. What, and have all the Park about us ?

Har. Which you'll not dislike ; and so, pr'ythee, begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice, and so have at you.

SONG.

*Tell me not of the roses and lilies
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Philis ;
Tell me not of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies.*

Let all whining lovers go hang ;

My heart would you hit,

Tip your arrow with wit,

And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,

And it comes to my heart with a twang.

(At the end of the Song Harcourt and Belville steal away L.H.U.E. from Sparkish, and leave him singing ; he sinks his Voice by degrees at the surprise of their being gone.

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE, L.H.U.E.

What the deuce did you go away for ?

Har. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is! O hide, hide me from her. (*Hides behind Harcourt.*)

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and at this instant. (*Looking at his Watch.*)

Har. Pray first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time; faith, it is the lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Bel. You have need of 'em I believe.

Spark. Pshaw, pr'ythee hide me.

Enter MOODY, PEGGY, in Boy's Clothes, and ALITHEA, L.H.

Har. Your servant, Mr. Moody.

Moody. Come along. (*To Peggy.*)

Peggy. Lau! what a sweet delightful place this is!

Moody. Come along, I say, don't stare about you so; you'll betray yourself.

[*Exit Moody, pulling Peggy, Alithea following, R.H.*]

Har. He does not know us.

Bel. Or he won't know us. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Spark. So much the better.

[*Exit Belville after them, R.H.*]

Har. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of Peggy's, I suppose: for he is something like her in face and gawkiness.

Re-enter BELVILLE, R.H.

Bel. By all my hopes, uncle, Peggy in boy's clothes. I am all over agitation.

(*Apart to Harcourt.*)

Har. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return.—Alithea has seen you, Sparkish, and will be angry if you don't go to her: besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend: I would not go near her now for her's or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend: I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they shan't though. Come along.
(*They retire, L.H.*)

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, and ALITHEA, R.H.

Moody. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you. (*To Alithea.*) The fool, her gallant, and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here! I begin to be uneasy. (*Aside.*) Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

Peggy. Don't you believe that; I han't half my belly-full of sights yet.

Moody. Then walk this way.

Peggy Lord, what a power of fine folks are here.—And Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married. (*Aside*)

Moody. Come along; what are you muttering at?

Peggy. There's the young gentleman there, you were so angry about, that's in love with me.

Moody. No, no; he's a dangler after your sister, or pretends to be; but they are all bad alike. Come along, I say.

[*Moody pulls Peggy away. Exeunt Peggy and Moody, L.H. Belville following. Sparkish, Harcourt, and Alithea come forward.*]

Spark. Come dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one! I hate a man for loving you? If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?

Har. (*Crosses to Centre.*) But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself? Let his honour alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Spark How's that?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself?

Spark. O ho—that's right again.

Ali. You astonish me, sir, with want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour. 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Har. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: 'would you would do so!—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so; come back again.

(*Alithea walks carelessly to and fro.*)

Har. I love you, madam, so—

Spark. How's that? Nay, now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much, I confess I say I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here.

(Claps his Hand on his Breast, and points to Sparkish.)

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend here—I injure him.

(Embraces Sparkish.)

Ali. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me in giving himself such names.

Ali. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you.

Re-enter MOODY and PEGGY, L.H. BELVILLE at a distance.

Moody. What, invite your wife to kiss men? Monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me: I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir—

Moody. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet won't go.

(To Alithea.)

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moody. Because you like it.—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do.

(*To Sparkish.*)

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't as I have to show fine clothes at a play-house the first day, and count money before poor rogues

Moody. He that shows his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone; and so good night, for I must to Whitehall.—Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your brother.

[*Exit, I.H.*

Har. You may depend upon me.—Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr Sparkish.

Moody. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Har. Must, sir?

Moody. Yes, sir, she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, sir; for I must be her servant, sir.—Madam—

Moody. Come away, sister; we had been gone

if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rakehells, who seem to haunt us.

Har. I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moody. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure; therefore you and I must go different ways.

Har. Well, you may go on; but this pretty young gentleman (*Takes hold of Peggy.*) shall stay with us; for I suppose his business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Moody. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so sillily; yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. (*Aside.*) Come, come.

Har. Had you not rather stay with us? (*To Peggy.*) Pr'ythee who is this pretty young fellow? (*To Moody.*)

Moody. One to whom I am guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. (*Aside.*)

Har. Who is he? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moody. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much; he's a poor, bashful youth; you'll put him out of countenance. (*Offers to take her away.*)

Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance. You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another. Salute him, Dick, à la Francoise. (*Belville kisses her.*)

Moody. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another. (*Endeavours to take hold of her.*)

Peggy. I am out of my wits. (*Aside.*) What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.

Har. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peggy. Nay, now you jeer one; and pray don't jeer me.

Har. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moody. No, no, no;—come away, come away.
(*To Peggy.*)

Har. Why, what haste you are in! Why won't you let me talk with him?

Moody. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent.—How she gazes upon him! The devil! (*Aside.*) Come, pray let him go; I cannot stay fooling any longer: I tell you my wife stays supper for us.

Har. Does she? Come then, we'll all go sup with her.

Moody. No, no; now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—I wish she and I were well out of your hands.
(*Aside.*)

Har. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peggy. Thank you heartily, sir.

Moody. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me.
(*Aside.*)

Bel. And mine too, sir.

Peggy. That I will indeed. (*Bows.*)

Har. Pray give her this kiss for me.

(*Kisses Peggy.*)

Moody. O heavens! What do I suffer? (*Aside.*)

Bel. And this for me. (*Kisses Peggy.*)

Peggy. Thank you, sir.

[*Courtesies.* *Belville* and *Harcourt* laugh, and
Exeunt, L.H.]

Moody. O the idiot!—Now 'tis out. Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips! (*Aside.*) Come, come, driveller. (*Moody, Peggy, and Alithea go out and return, L.H.*) So they are gone at last.—Sister, stay with Peggy, till I find my servant. Don't let her stir an inch: I'll be back directly. (*Exit, L.H.*)

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE, L.H.

Har. What, not gone yet?—Nephew, show the young gentleman Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

[*Exeunt Belville and Peggy, L.H. Alithea and Harcourt struggle.*]

Ali. My Brother will go distracted.

Re-enter MOODY, R.H.

Moody. Where? how?—What's become of—gone!—whither?

Ali. In the next walk only, brother.

Moody. Only—only—where—where?

[*Exit hastily, L.H.S.E.*]

Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned?—But, dearest madam—

Re-enter MOODY, L.H. S.E.

Moody. Gone, gone—not to be found—quite gone—ten thousand plagues go with 'em!—Which way went they?

Ali. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moody. T'other walk! t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Ali. You are too abusive, brother.

Moody. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of—

Ali. Good brother—

Moody. Damn'd, damn'd sister! [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Park.*

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY, R.H.

Bel. No disguise could conceal you from my heart: I pretended not to know you, that I might deceive the dragon that continually watches over you; but now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peggy. Indeed, Mr. Belville, as well as I like you, I can't think of going away with you so; and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Bel. But, dear miss Peggy, think of your situation; if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peggy. Ay but, Mr. Belville, I am as good as married already; my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but the church ceremony to make us one: I call him husband, and he calls me wife already: he made me do

so: and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finished.

Bel. That's his deceit, my sweet creature.— He pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else — You have a right to choose for yourself; and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you before marriage to a man you cannot like.

Peggy. 'fack, no more I believe it does: sister Alithea's maid has told me as much. She's a very sensible girl.

Bel. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it; the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after. Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peggy. These are fine sayings. to be sure, Mr. Belville; but how shall we get my fortune out of bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for. We can at any time run away without it.

Bel. I see by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peggy. Ay, but it shan't though; I thank him for that.

Bel. If you marry without his consent, he can but seize upon half your fortune.—The other half, and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are your own.—Take it, my

sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever.

(Kneels, and presses her hand.)

Peggy. I'fackins, but we won't.—Your fine talk has bewitched me.

Bel. (Rising.) 'Tis you have bewitch'd me, thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity!—Let us fly with the wings of love to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peggy. And so we will then.—There, squeeze my hand again.—Now run away with me; and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say.

(Going, L.H.)

Enter MOODY, L.H. hastily, and meets them.

Moody. O! there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing!—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again. *(Aside.)* Where have you been, you puppy?

Peggy. Been bud?—We have been hunting all over the Park to find you.

Bel. From one end to t other, sir. *(Confusedly.)*

Moody. But not where I was to be found, you young devil you!—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peggy. I'm always frighten'd when I see you; and if I did not love you so well, I should run away from you; so I should. *(Pouts.)*

Moody. But I'll take care you don't.

Peggy. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, bud? *(Belville makes signs of Dislike.)*

Moody. I am not in a humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What

have you been doing with this young lady—gentleman, I would say?

Peggy. Fie, bud, you have told all.

Bel. I have been as civil as I could to the young stranger; and if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and show the young spark Rosamond's pond; for he has not seen it yet—Come pretty youth, will you go with me? (*Goes to her.*)

Peggy. As my guardian pleases.

Moody. No, no, it does not please me. Whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself. You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will; and the bottom of it, if you will.—And so, sir, your servant.

[*Exit Moody, with Peggy under his arm,*
L.H. Belville, R.H.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

Enter LUCY and ALITHEA, R.H.

Ali. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason

why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for ever from your sight? How could you be so hard-hearted.

Ali. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and madness, I warrant.

Ali. It was so; I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Ali. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Ali. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Ali. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I can't do, madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever. What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of.

Ali. How, Lucy?

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, madam. 'Tis never too late to repent. Take a man, and give up your coxcomb, I say.

Enter a Servant, L.H.

Serv. Mr. Sparkish, with company, madam, attends you below.

Ali. I will wait upon 'em. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*]

My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it.—Go with me, Lucy. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Lucy. Not I indeed, madam.—If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself. What excellent advice have I thrown away!—So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome.—Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she can't have a better privy-counsellor than myself.—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber in Moody's House.*

Enter MOODY and PEGGY, L.H.

Moody. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me.—This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandon'd hypocrite! (*Aside.*) Tell me, I say—for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say—

Peggy. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times over?

Moody. I would try if, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least circumstance; for if her story is false, she is so too.—(*Aside.*) Come, how was't, baggage?

Peggy. Lord, what pleasure you take to hear it sure!

Moody. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but speak, how was't? No lies: I saw him kiss you; he kiss'd you before my face.

Peggy. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither; for, to say the truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moody. The devil!—You were satisfied with it then, and would do it again?

Peggy. Not unless he should force me.

Moody. Force you, changeling?

Peggy. If I had struggled too much, you know, he would have known I had been a woman; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moody. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knock'd him down!

Peggy. With what, bud?—I could not help myself; besides, he did it so modestly, and blush'd so, that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummery too as well as me; and if so, there was no harm done, you know.

Moody. This is worse and worse. So 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. I must strangle that little monster whilst I can deal with him.—(*Aside.*) Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peggy. Yes, I will, bud.

Moody. Go then.

Peggy. I'm going.

Moody. Why don't you go then?

Peggy. Lord, I'm going. [Exit, R.H.]

Moody. This young fellow loves her, and she loves him; the rest is all hypocrisy.—How the young modest villain endeavoured to deceive me! But I'll crush this mischief in the shell.—Why should women have more invention in love than men? It can only be because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil.

Re-enter PEGGY, with Pen, Ink and Paper, R.H.

Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peggy. Ay, dear, dear bud; but I can't do't very well.

Moody. I wish you could not at all.

Peggy. But what should I write for?

Moody. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peggy. O Lord, to the young gentleman a letter!—

Moody. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peggy. Lord you do but jeer: sure you jest.

Moody. I am not so merry. Come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peggy. What, do you think I am a fool?

Moody. She's afraid I would not dictate my love to him, therefore she's unwilling. (*Aside.*) But you had best begin.

Peggy. Indeed and indeed but I won't, so I won't.

Moody. Why?

Peggy. Because he's in town. You may send for him here, if you will.

Moody. Very well, you would have him brought to you? Is it come to this? I say take the pen and ink, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peggy. Lord, what do you make a fool of me for?—Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country? Now he's in town, and I'm in town too; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Moody. So, I'm glad it's no worse; she is innocent enough yet. (*Aside.*) Yes, you may, when your husband bids, write letters to people, that are in town.

Peggy. O, may I so? Then I am satisfied.

Moody. Come, begin——*Sir*—— (*Dictates.*)

Peggy. Shan't I say dear, sir? You know one says always something more than, bare, sir, up in a corner.

Moody. Write as I bid you, or I will write something with this pen-knife in your face.

Peggy. *Sir*—— (*Writes.*)

Moody. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces*——Write!

Peggy. Nay, why should I say so? you know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moody. Write!

Peggy. Let me put out *loath'd*.

Moody. Write, I say!

Peggy. Well then. (*Writes.*)

Moody. Let me see what you have writ. (*Reads.*) *Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces*——Thou impudent creature, where is *nauseous* and *loath'd*?

Peggy. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Moody. Once more write as I'd have you, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

(*Holds up the Pen-knife.*)

Peggy. O Lord, I will. (*Writes.*)

Moody. So—so—let's see now:—though I suffered last night your nausous loath'd kisses and embraces—go on—yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them—so—

(*Peggy writes.*)

Peggy. I have writ it.

Moody. O then—I then conceal'd myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies—

(*Peggy writes.*)

Peggy. To avoid—

Moody. Your insolencies—

Peggy. Your insolencies. (*Writes.*)

Moody. The same reason, now I am out of your hands—

Peggy. So— (*Writes.*)

Moody. Makes me own to you my unfortunate—though innocent frolic, in being in boys clothes.

Peggy. So— (*Peggy writes.*)

Moody. That you may for evermore—

Peggy. Evermore?

Moody. Evermore cease to pursue her who hates and detests you— (*Peggy writes.*)

Peggy. So— (*Sighs.*)

Moody. What do you sigh for—detests you—as much as she loves her husband and her honour—

Peggy. I vow, husband, he'll ne'er believe I should write such a letter. (*Writes.*)

Moody. What, he'd expect a kinder one from you? Come, now your name only.

Peggy. What, shan't I say—your most faithful humble servant till death?

Moody. No tormenting fiend. (*Peggy writes.*)—Her style, I find, would be very soft. (*Aside.*) Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle, and write on the outside.—*For Mr. Belville.* [*Exit, L.H.*]

Peggy. (*Writes.*) *For Mr. Belville.*—So—I am glad he is gone—Hark, I hear a noise.

Moody. (*Within.*) Well, well, but can't you call again—Well, walk in then.

Peggy. (*Goes to L.H.D.*) I'fack there's folks with him—

Moody. (*Within.*) Very well—if he must see me, I'll come to him.

Peggy. That's pure; now I may think a little—Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter?—Can one have no shift? Ah, a London woman would have had a hundred presently.—Stay—what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon it too?—Ay, but then my guardian would see't—I don't know what to do—But yet y'vads, I'll try, so I will—for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will on't. (*Writes, and repeats what she writes.*)—Dear, dear, dear, sweet Mr. Belville—so—My guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't—so—and would have me say I hate you—but I won't—there—for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together—so—I could not help treading on your toe under the table—so pray

keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can—so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend till death do us part, MARGARET THRIFT—So—now wrap it up just like t'other—so—now write—For Mr. Belville.—But, oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian.
(Puts it in her Bosom.)

Re-enter MOODY, L.H. with a Candle and Sealing-wax.

Moody. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me; but I fear 'twas to my wife. (*Aside.*) What, have you done?

Peggy. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Moody. Let's see't; what d'ye tremble for?—
(He opens and reads the first Letter.)

Peggy. So, I had been finely serv'd if I had giv'n him this. (*Aside.*)

Moody. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Peggy. Lord, what shall I do? (*Aside.*) Pray let me see't. Lord, you think I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will.

(Snatches the Letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.)

Moody. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peggy. So, han't I done it curiously? I think I have—there's my letter going to Mr. Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks.
(*Aside.*)

Moody. 'Tis very well; but I warrant you would not have it go now?

Peggy. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Moody. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back : and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. (*Puts her into the Chamber, R.H.D.*) At least 'tis fit she thinks so ; if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us.—Now I have secur'd all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE. III.—*Belville's Lodgings.*

Enter LUCY and BELVILLE, R.H.

Lucy. I run great risks to be sure, to serve the young lady and you, sir ; but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Bel. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous ; give me leave to present you with this trifle ; (*Gives her a Ring.*) not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Though I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake—and now to business.

Bel. But has the dear creature resolved ?

Lucy. Has she : why she will run away and marry you, in spite of your teeth, the first mo-

ment she can break prison: so you, in your turn must take care not to have your qualms; I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Bel. I assure you, Mrs. Lucy, that I am no bully in love; and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say: but talking does no business. Stay at home till you hear from us.

Bel. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

Moody. (*Without, L.H.*) But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr. Belville, I hear Mr. Moody's voice. Where shall I hide myself?—If he sees me, we are all undone.

Bel. This is our cursed luck again. What the devil can he want here? Get into this closet till he is gone. (*Puts Lucy into the closet.*) Don't you stir, Lucy. I must put the best face upon the matter. Now for it.

(*Takes a book and reads.*)

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. You will excuse me, sir, for breaking through forms and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, sir—your fellow told me below, that you were with company.

Bel. Yes, sir, the best company. (*Shows his book.*) When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moody. And I chose to interrupt your conversation! the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Bel. You shall be always welcome to me; but you seem ruffled, sir. What brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour?

Moody. Your impertinency—I beg pardon—your modesty I mean.

Bel. My impertinency!

Moody. Your impertinency!

Bel. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges; but you must consider youth has its privileges too; and as I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I am not obliged to bear with your ill humours, or your ill manners.

Moody. They who wrong me, young man, must bear with both; and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Bel. I could have wished, sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I have the honour of a visit from you.

Moody. If that is all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed? There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether, I want either kindness or civility. Look you there, sir. *(Gives him a letter.)*

Bel. What is it?

Moody. Only a love-letter, sir; and from my wife.

Bel. How, is it from your wife?—Hum and hum. *(Reads.)*

Moody. Even from my wife, sir; am not I wondrous kind and civil to you now too? But you'll not think her so. (*Aside.*)

Bel. Ha! is this a trick of his or hers? (*Aside.*)

Moody. The gentleman's surpris'd I find! What, you expected a kinder letter!

Bel. No faith not I: how could I?

Moody. Yes, yes. I'm sure you did: a man so young and well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Bel. But what should this mean? It seems he knows not what the letter contains. (*Aside.*)

Moody. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Bel. Faith, I can't help it.

Moody. Now, I think, I have deserv'd your infinite friendship and kindness; and have show'd myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant?

Bel. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world; ha, ha, ha! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't: and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moody. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine; kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome—so, Mr. Modesty, your servant. (*Going, L.H.*)

Enter SPARKISH, L.H. meeting him.

Spark. So brother-in-law that was to have been, I have follow'd you from home to Belville's: I have strange news for you.

Moody. What, are you wiser than you were this morning.

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I shan't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it: there's philosophy for you.

Moody. Insensibility you mean. I hope you don't mean to use my sister ill, sir?

Spark. No, sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums; I have had a narrow escape, sir.

Moody. If thou art endow'd with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Bel. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why you must know—we had settled to be married—it is the same thing to me whether I am married or not—I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister; off or on, 'tis the same thing to me; but the thing was fix'd, you know—You and my aunt brought it about; I had no hand in it. And, to show you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms; and the church would have finish'd me still to harder—but she was taken with her tantrums!

Moody. Damn your tantrums, come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother—abused me like a pick-pocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moody. And so it was, for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister: I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin brother.

Moody. What, Frank told you so?

Spark. Ay, and Ned too; they were both in a story.

Moody. What an incorrigible fellow!—Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out—She walk'd up within pistol-shot of the church, then twirl'd round upon her heel, call'd me every name she could think of; and when she had exhausted her imagination, and tired her tongue (no easy matter let me tell you), she call'd her chair, sent her footman to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what are.

Moody. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; 'tis a most exquisite story: I have not had such a laugh for this half year. Thou art a most ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit, L.H.*

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?

Bel. O yes; how is it possible to hear such a

foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em? Ha, ha, ha!

(*Lucy in the closet laughs, R.H.*)

Spark. Hey-day! what's that? What have you raised a devil in the closet to make up a laughing chorus at me? I must take a peep—

(*Going to the Closet.*)

Bel. Indeed but you must not.

Spark. It was a wom n's voice.

Bel. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee introduce me.

Bel. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine; so, my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you, I must entreat you to withdraw. Pr'ythee excuse me, I must laugh—ha, ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville?

Bel. I can't help that—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. My character's at stake; I shall be thought a damn'd silly fellow; I will call Alithea to an account directly. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Bel. Ha, ha, ha!

Lucy. (*Peeping out.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha! O dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst. What an adventure.

(*Comes out, and laughs.*)

Bel. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter—and by the dragon himself; there's a spirit for you!

Lucy. There's simplicity for you! Show me a town-bred girl with half the genius—Send you

a love-letter and by a jealous guardian too ! ha, ha, ha ! 'Tis too much—too much—Ha, ha, ha ! —Well, Mr. Belville ! the world goes as it should do—my mistress will exchange her fool for a wit ; Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow : I shall dance at two weddings ; be well rewarded by both parties ; get a husband myself : and be as happy as the best of you : and so your humble servant. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Bel. Success attend you, Lucy. *[Exit, R.H.]*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

PEGGY, discovered alone, leaning on her Elbow on a Table, with Pen, Ink, and Paper.

Peggy. Well, 'tis e'en so : I have got the London disease they call love ; i am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville ! I have heard this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks it is like an ague ; for when I think of my guardian, i tremble and am so cold ; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Beiville, my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed. Ah ! poor Mr. Belville ! Well, I will not stay here ; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, be-

cause I have studied it like any thing. Oh ! sick, sick !

Enter MOODY, M.D. who seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her Shoulder.

Moody. What, (Snatches the Paper from her.) writing more letters ?

Peggy. O Lord, bud ! why d'ye fright me so ? (She offers to run out ; he stops her, and reads.)

Moody How's this ! nay, you shall not stir, madam. (Reads.) Dear, dear, Mr. Belville—Very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let's see't—First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done had you not said first you loved me so extremely ; which if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's who I loath, nauseate and detest ; —Now you can write these filthy words. But what follows ?—therefore I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never I assure you of my choice ; but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone ; however, if you love me as I do you, you will try what you can do ; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas ! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our—what is to follow our ?—Speak, what ?—Our journey into the country, I suppose.—Oh, woman ! damn'd woman ! and love damn'd love ! their old tempter ; for this is one of his miracles ; in a moment he can make those blind that could

see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before.—But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together. (*Draws his Sword.*)

Peggy. O Lord! O Lord! you are such a passionate man, bud!

Moody. Come take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve. (*Lays his Hand on his Sword.*)—write what was to follow—let's see—*You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be forever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—what follows our?—*

(*Peggy takes the Pen, and writes.*)

Peggy. Must all out then, bud?—Look you there then.

Moody. Let's see—*for I can defer no longer our wedding—Your slighted ALITHEA.*—What's the meaning of this? My sister's name to't? Speak; unriddle.

Peggy. Yes, indeed, bud.

Moody. But why her name to't? Speak,—speak, I say.

Peggy. Ay, but you'll tell her again; if you would not tell her again—

Moody. I will not; I am stunn'd; my head turns round. Speak.

Peggy. Won't you tell her, indeed, and indeed.

Moody. No; speak, I say.

Peggy. She'll be angry with me : but I would rather she should be angry with me than you, bud And to tell the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moody Ha !—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. (*Aside.*) Could she come to you to teach you, since I lock'd you up alone ?

Peggy. Oh, through the key-hole, bud.

Moody. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself ?

Peggy. Why she said because—

Moody. Because what—because—

Peggy. Why because, bud—

Moody. Because what, I say ?

Peggy. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so young, should be inconstant, and refuse her ; or be vain afterwards, and show the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being hers.

Moody. Belville again !—Am I to be deceiv'd again with that young hypocrite ?

Peggy. You have deceiv'd yourself, bud ; you have indeed. I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could—but you must know it—and shall know it too. (*Cries.*)

Moody. Dry your tears.

Peggy. You always thought he was hankering after me—Good law ! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him ; they have had private meetings ; and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern window, when you

thought it was me. I would have discovered all, but she made me swear to deceive you; and so I have finely; have not I, bud?

Moody. Why did you write that foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peggy. To carry on the joke, bud—to oblige them?

Moody. And will nothing serve her but that great baby?—He's too young for her to marry.

Peggy. Why do you marry me then?—'Tis the same thing, bud.

Moody. No, no, 'tis quite different. How innocent she is! (*Aside.*)—But hark you, madam, your sister went out this morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peggy. Alack-a-day, she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moody. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peggy. O Lord! then she'll discover all. (*Aside.*) Pray hold, bud: what, d'ye mean to discover me? She'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Moody. I must speak with her to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peggy. Pray, dear bud, don't till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else.

Moody. Go then, and bid her come to me.

Peggy. Yes, yes, bud.

Moody. Let me see—

Peggy. I have just got time to know of Lucy,

who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wits end.

[*Aside, and Exit, R.H.D.*

Moody. Well, I resolve it, Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure; I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Re-enter PEGGY, R.H.D.

Peggy. O Lord, bud, I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Moody. Won't she come?

Peggy. No, she won't, she's ashamed to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr. Belville, she says. Pray let her have her way, bud—she won't be pacified if you don't—and will never forgive me. For my part, bud, I believe, but don't tell any body, they have broken a piece of silver between 'em—or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moody. Pooh! you fool—she ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish! But Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune—tell her so.

Peggy. I will, bud. (*Going, R.H.*)

Moody. Stay, stay, Peggy, let her have her own way; she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her—that will be best—let her have her whim.

Peggy. You're in the right, bud; for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so: I'll be hang'd if her eyes an't swell'd out of her head, she's in such a piteous taking.

Moody. Belville shan't use her ill, I'll take care of that; if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to it: but she had better go first—I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption; and I will wait in the Park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peggy. Law, bud, how wise you are!--I wish I had half your wisdom; you see every thing at once. Stand a one side then—there, a little further that way.

Moody. And so I will: she shan't see me till I break in upon her at Belville's.

(Sits down in the middle of the Stage.)

Peggy. Now for it.

[Exit. R.H.D.]

Moody. My case is something better; for suppose the worst—should Belville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife: I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes. *(Steps aside, R.H.)*

Re-enter Peggy, R.H.D. dressed like Alithea ; and as she passes over the Stage, seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.

Peggy. Heigho! [Exit, L.H.]

Moody. (*Comes forward.*) There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing, a woeful example of the fatal consequences of a town education ; but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her—but first I'll secure my own property.—(*Opens R.H.D. and calls.*)—Peggy ! Peggy ! my dear !—I will return as soon as possible—do you hear me ? Why don't you answer ? You may read in the book I bought you till I come back.—As the Jew says in the play, “Fast bind, fast find.” (*Locks the Door.*) This is the best, and only security for female affections.
[Exit, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Park, before Belville's House.*

Enter SPARKISH, fuddled, R.H.

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or any body that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em. When a man has wit, and a great deal of it, Champagne gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it—'tis a lighted match to gunpowder.—I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a damn'd ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present. I'll consult Belville—this is his house

—he's my friend too—and no fool—It shall be so. Damn it, I must not be ridiculous. (*Going to the Door, sees Peggy coming.*) Hold! hold! if the Champagne does not hurt my eye-sight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way.—Come on, Madam Alithea; now for a smart fire; and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY, R.H.

Peggy. Dear me, I begin to tremble; there is Mr. Sparkish, and I can't get to Mr. Belville's house without passing by him. He sees me, and will discover me; he seems in liquor too.—Bless me!

Spark. O ho! she stands at bay a little; she don't much relish the engagement. The first blow is half the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. (*Aside—Approaches her.*) I find, madam, you like a solo better than a duet. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday.—What, nothing to say for yourself?—Repentance, I suppose, makes you as awkward and as foolish as the poor country girl your brother has lock'd up in Pall-mall.

Peggy. I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

(*Tries to pass him.*)

Spark. Not a step further shall you go till you give me an account of your behaviour, and make me a reparation for being ridiculous.—What, dumb still! Then if you won't by fair

means, I must squeeze you to a confession. (*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him ; but he catches hold of her before she reaches Belville's Door.*) Not quite so fast, if you please.—Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue, or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY, R.H.

Moody. Hands off, you ruffian! How dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner?

(*Takes Sparkish from her.*)

Spark. She's my property, sir ; transferred to me by you ; and though I would give her up to any body for a dirty sword-knot, yet I won't be bullied out of my right, though it is not worth that.—

(*Snaps his fingers.*)

Moody. There's a fellow to be a husband!—You are justified in despising him and flying from him. I'll defend you with my purse and my sword.—Knock at that door, and let me speak to Belville. (*Peggy knocks at D.F.L.H. ; when the footman opens it she runs in, L.H.*)—Is your master at home, friend?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Moody. Tell him then that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman, and by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection ; if he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute ; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit Footman, D.F.L.H.*] And now, sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better

show it upon this occasion; for you are still damn'd ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like?—Lookye, Mr. Moody, we are in the Park, and to draw a sword is an offence to the court; so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for; she's not worth my sword! But if you'll fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moody. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belville! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tit-bit at home; much good may it do him.

Moody. And you think so, puppy—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff—ha, ha, ha!

Moody. Then thy folly is complete—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocent—ha, ha, ha!

(They laugh at each other.)

Re-enter HARCOURT, R.H.

Spark. What, my boy Harcourt!

Moody. What brings you here, sir?

Har. I followed you to Belville's to present a near relation of yours, and a nearer one of mine, to you. *[Exit, R.H.]*

Spark. What's the matter now?

Re-enter HARCOURT, *with* ALITHEA, R.H.

Har. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs. Harcourt to you!

Spark. Alithea! your wife!—Mr. Moody, are you in the clouds too?

Moody. If I am not in a dream, I am the most miserable walking dog that ever run mad with his misfortunes and astonishment!

Har. Why so, Jack? Can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it? *(Moody walks about in a rage.)*

Spark. This is very fine, very fine indeed!—Where's your story about Belville now, 'squire Moody? Pr'ythee don't chafe, and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet—but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moody. Zounds! I can't bear it.

(Goes hastily to Belville's Door, and knocks hard.)

Ali. Dear brother, what's the matter?

Moody. The devil's the matter! the devil and women together. *(Knocks again.)* I'll break the door down, if they won't answer.

(Knocks again.)

A Footman appears in the Balcony, in flat, L.H.

Foot. What would your honour please to have?

Moody. Your master, rascal.

Foot. He is obeying your commands, sir; and the moment he has finished, he will do himself the pleasure to wait on you.

Moody. You sneering villain you, if your master does not produce that she-devil, who is now with him, and who with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house.

[*Exit Footman from the Balcony.*]

Spark. 'Gad so! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity, rural simplicity! 'Egad! if thou hast trick'd Cerberus, here, I shall be so ravish'd that I will give this couple a wedding dinner. Pray, Mr. Moody, who's damn'd ridiculous now?

Moody. (*Going to Sparkish.*) Look ye, sir—don't grin, for if you dare to show your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes.

Spark. (*Quite calm.*) Very fine, faith—but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

Enter BELVILLE, in the Balcony.

Bel. What does my good friend want with me?

Moody. Are you a villain, or are you not?

Bel. I have obey'd your commands, sir.

Moody. What have you done with the girl, sir?

Bel. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness—

Moody. She's my wife and I demand her.

Enter PEGGY in the Balcony.

Peggy. No, but I an't though, bud.—What's the matter, dear, are you angry with me?

Moody. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peggy. How dare you look me in the face, bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought to have married me yourself? Have you not pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not? And have you not been shilly-shally for a long time? So that if I had not married dear Mr. Belville, I should not have married at all—so I should not.

(Belville and Peggy retire from the Balcony.)

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moody. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment—my fate has o'ercome me—I can struggle no more with it. *(Sighs.)* What is left me?—I cannot bear to look, or be looked upon—I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelvemonths provisions into it—cut down my drawbridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself—then will I curse the world, and every individual in it—and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles, a woeful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and of the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and damnation of the other. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha!

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY, from D.F.L.H.

Lookye, Belville, I wish you joy with all my heart—you have got the prize, and perhaps

have caught a tartar—that's no business of mine—If you want evidence for Mr. Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill will to that pair: I wish you happy; (*To Alithea and Harcourt.*)—though I'm sure they'll be miserable—and so your humble servant. [*Exit, L.H.*

Peggy. I hope you forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick; indeed I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Ali. Then 'tis much better as it is. But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about; how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom.

Peggy. I am sure I'll do any thing to please my bud, but marry him.

But you, good gentry, what say you to this?
 You are to judge me—have I done amiss?
 I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones;
 Except old folks, who hanker after young ones;
 Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty!
 'Twas a sad life—and then, he was near fifty!
 I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,
 So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue!
 Have I, pray ladies, speak, done very wrong?
 As for poor bud, 'twas honest to deceive him!
 More virtuous sure to cheat him than to grieve him.
 Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut;
 "Marry for love," they cry, "the country put;"
 Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool;
 But I'm for always loving like a fool.

With half my fortune I would rather part,
Than be all finery with an aching heart.
For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me ;
And, as I know no better, pray excuse me.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





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