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149.420

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A

True Widow.

A

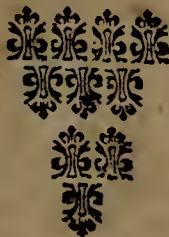
COMEDY,

Acted by the *D U K E*'s Servants.

Written by

T H O. S H A D W E L L.

Odi profanum Vulgus & arceo.



L O N D O N,

Printed for Benjamin Tooke, at the Ship in St. Paul's Church-
yard. 1679.

True Widow.

COMEDY.

Ased by the D O K E's servants.

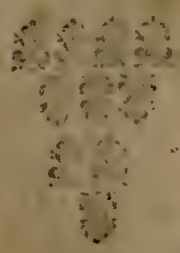
149.420



Written May, 1873

THEO. SHARPLE

Oh's profanus V:lgus & arceo.



LONDON

Printed for Benjamin Tooke, at the Ship in St. Paul's Church-

yard. 1873.

To
Sir Charles Sedley.

Sir,

THIS Play, which I here recommend to your Protection, either through the Calamity of the Time, which made People not care for Diversions, or through the Anger of a great many, who thought themselves concerned in the Satyr, or through the want of taste in others, met not with that Success from the generality of the Audience, which I hop'd for, and you thought, and still think, it deserved; and I have the Judgment of Men of the best Sense, besides the best of the Poets, on my side in this Point.

But no Success what-ever, could have made me alter my Opinion of this Comedy, which had the benefit of your Correction and Alteration, and the honour of your Approbation: And I heartily wish, you had given your self the trouble, to have review'd all my Plays, as they came incorrectly and in hast from my hands; 'twould have been more to my advantage, than the assistance of Scipio and Lælius was to Terence; and I should have thought it at least as much to my Honour, since by the effects, I find I cannot but esteem you to be as much above both of them in Wit, as either of them was above you in Place in the State.

I shall not, according to the Custom of Dedications, make a Declamation upon your Wit, the common Theam of all that have any, at least of such as know you, who will acknowledge, they have heard more of it drop carelessly from your Mouth, than they have ever seen from the labouring Pen of any other. And my greatest satisfaction is, that I have the Honour of his Friendship, and my Comedies have had his Approbation, whom I have heard speak more Wit at a Supper, than all my Adversaries, with their Heads joyn'd together, can write in a year. Nor are your Writings unequal to any Man's of this Age, (not to speak of abundance of excellent Copies of Verses) you have in the Mulberry-Garden shown the true Wit, Humour, and Satyr of a Comedy; and in Antony and Cleopatra, the true Spirit of a Tragedy, the only one (except two of Johnson's, and one of Shakespear's) wherere

The Epistle

Romans are made to speak and do like Romans : there are to be found the true Characters of Antony and Cleopatra, as they were ; whereas a French Author would have made the Ægyptian and the Roman both become French under his Pen. And even our English Authors are too much given to make true History (in their Plays) Romantick and impossible ; but in this Play, the Romans are true Romans, and their Style is such : and I dare affirm, that there is not in any Play of this Age so much of the Spirit of the Classick Authors, as in your Antony and Cleopatra. This Opinion I have, unbiass'd by my Friendship, and the Obligations which I owe to you, often declared, and shall always persist in.

After all this, since my Comedies are approved and commended by you, and Men of your sort, the rest of the Audience must forgive me, if I am much more exalted by the praise of such as you, than I can ever be humbled by their censure.

Satyr will be always unpleasant to those that deserve it. It was not my design in this Play to please a Bawd of Quality, a vain Selfish, a senseless, noisie Prig, a methodical Blockhead, having only a form of Wisdom, or a Coxcomb that's run stark mad after Wit, which uses him very unkindly, and will never be won by him ; nor did I think to please the Widows in the Name. The three first of these Characters are wholly new, not so much as touch'd upon before, and the following ones are new in the greatest part. And till I see more variety of new Humour, than I have produced in my Comedies, and more naturally drawn, I shall not despair of bearing up near my Contemporaries of the first rate, who write Comedy, and of always surmounting the little Poetasters of the fourth rate, who condemn me ; such as hold, that Wit signifies nothing in a Comedy ; but the putting out of Candles, kicking down of Tables, falling over Joynt-stools, impossible accidents, and unnatural mistakes, (which they most absurdly call Plot) are the poor things they rely upon : But 'tis the Opinion of the best Poets, that the Story of a Play ought to be carried on, by working up of Scenes naturally : by design, not accidents. I have endeavour'd to do so in this Play, and I doubt not, but the Scene in the second Act, wherein La. Busy would perswade Isabella to be kept, will live, when the Stuff of such Scriblers (more fit for Drolls than Plays) shall be consumed in Grocery-ware, Tobacco, Band-boxes, and Hat-cases, and be ras'd out of the memory of Men.

I should not say so much in my own behalf, if I had not met with palpable injustice from some, whose design is to set up Quacks, and put down true Professors ; nor can I find any Reason, why a Man that is to live by his Wit, should not vindicate that when 'tis traduced as well as he, who is to live by his Reputation, may assert his Honesty, when 'tis aspersed especially since neither of 'em are qualities of a Man's own making. But I must ask your pardon,
for

Dedictory.

for troubling you so long with my Resentments, when I should be boasting of the many Favours you have done me, and giving you my thanks for 'em; yet I know you look for no returns where you oblige; however I am too proud of your Kindness to conceal it, and therefore shall take all opportunities I can publickly to declare myself,

Sir,

London;
Feb. 16.
167⁸.

Your most obliged humble Servant,

Tho. Shadwell.

P R O.

PROLOGUE,

By Mr. DRYDEN.

HEar'n save ye Gallants, and this hopeful Age,
Ye are welcome to the downfal of the Stage:
The Fools have labour'd long in their Vocation;
And Vice, (the Manufacture of the Nation)
O're-stocks the Town so much, and thrives so well,
That Fopps and Knaves grow Druggs and will not sell.
In vain our Wares on Theaters are shown,
When each has a Plantation of his own.
His Cruse ne'r fails; for whatsoe're he spends,
There's still God's plenty for himself and friends.
Shou'd Men be rated by Poetick Rules,
Lord what a Poll would there be rais'd from Fools!
Meantime poor Wit prohibited must lye,
As if 'twere made some French Commodity.
Fools you will have, and rais'd at vast expence,
And yet as soon as seen they give offence.
Time was, when none would cry that Oaf was mee,
But now you strive about your Pedigree:
Bawble and Cap no sooner are thrown down,
But there's a Muss of more than half the Town.
Each one will challenge a Child's part at least,
A sign the Family is well increas'd
Of Forreign Cattle! there's no longer need,
When w' are supply'd so fast with English Breed.
Well! Flourish, Countrymen: drink swear and roar,
Let every free-born Subject keep his Whore;
And wandring in the Wildernes about,
At end of 40 years not wear her out.
But when you see these Pictures, let none dare
To own beyond a Limb, or single share:
For where the Punk is common! he's a Sot,
Who needs will Father what the Parish got.

DRAM-

Drammatis Personæ.

- Bellamour*, { A Gentleman of the Town, who had retired some time into the Countrey.
- Carlos*, { A Gentleman return'd from Travel, with Wit enough left to love his own Countrey.
- Stanmore*, { A Gentleman of the Town.
- Selfish*, { A Coxcomb conceited of his Beauty, Wit and Breeding, thinking all Women in Love with him, always admiring and talking of himself.
- Old Maggot*. { An old credulous Fellow, a great Enemy to Wit, and a great Lover of Business, for Business-sake.
- Yo. Maggot*. { His Nephew: An Inns of Court-Man, who neglects his Law, and runs mad after Wit, pretending much to Love, and both in spight of Nature, since his Face makes him unfit for one, and his Brains for the other.
- Prig*, { A Coxcomb that never talks or thinks of any thing but Dogs, Horses, Hunting, Hawking, Bowls, Tennis, and Gaming; a Rook, a most noisie Jockey.
- Lump*, { A methodical Blockhead, as regular as a Clock, and goes as true as a *Pendulum*, one that knows what he shall do every Day of his Life by his Almanack, where he sets down all his Actions before-hand, a mortal Enemy to Wit.
- La. Cheat*. { The true Widdow, that comes to Town, and makes a show of a Fortune, to put off her self, and her two Daughters.
- Isabella*, { Her Eldest, a Woman of Wit and Vertue.
- Gartrude*, { Her Youngest, very foolish and whorish.
- La. Busy*, { A Woman of Intrigue, very busie in Love-Matters of all kinds, too old for Love of her own, always charitably helping forward that of others, very fond of young Women, very wise and discreet, half Bawd, half Match-maker.
- Steward*, { To Lady *Cheatly*.
- Players, Door-keepers, and many other Persons, the Audience to the Play in the Play.

Scene, *LONDON*.

Reader,

Reader,

Many Faults in the Printing have escaped, by reason of my absence, while the third and fourth Acts were in the Press: I shall only give you an account of some notorious Errours; as Page 44. for 5 s. read 50 l. p. 47. for *in favour* r. *infamous*. p. 48. instead of *take it* r. *take me*: But the greatest Mistake was, in not printing the Play in the Play in another Character, that that might be known in the Reading, which a great many did not find in the Acting of it; but take notice, *2 Lovers*, *Wife and Husband*, are all that speak in that. In the Action, many doubted which belong'd to the Farce in the Play, and which to the Play it self, by reason of promiscuous speaking; and I found by venturing upon that new Thing, I ran a great Risque: For some, I believe, wish'd all the Play like that part of a Farce in it; others knew not my intention in it, which was to expose the Style and Plot of Farce-Writers, to the utter confusion of damnable Farce, and all its wicked and foolish Adherents. But I had rather suffer, by venturing to bring new things upon the Stage, than go on like a Mill-Horse in the same Round.

A

True Widow.

A C T I.

Enter Bellamour and Stanmore.

Stan. **C**ome *Bellamour*, what not drest yet? methinks after so long a fast from Wit and fine Women as you have had in the Countrey, you should be sharper set after both, than to fool away a morning thus in your Chamber.

Bell. There is a respect due from a Countrey Gentleman, to a new Suit and Peruque, they must not be hastily put on. And the Women of this Town, if you don't take care of your own outside, will never let you be acquainted with their insides.

Stan. Thou art mistaken, men succeed now according to the Clothes they give, not those they wear.

Bell. Amongst your little Whores, *Stanmore*.

Stan. And amongst your great Whores too *Bellamour*. I knew a Gentleman, who was so ugly, a modish Spark would scarce have given him a Livery: yet by a correspondence he kept with a Taylor, and Shoemaker at *Paris*, and two or three of that sort, got one of the finest Women in *England*.

Bell. How so?

Stan. Why she had always the fashion a month before any of the Court-Ladies, never wore any thing made in *England*, scarce washt there, and had all the affected new Words sent her, before they were in print, which made her pass among Fops for a kind of *French* Wit.

Bell. But were not these *French* Petticoats, though given by one man, taken up by many.

Stan. Faith I think not, she considered her own vanity above any mans address, though one Lord made Coaches at her, another squeezed in his fat sides at her, till he looked like a full sack; a third writ lamentable Sonnets to her; a fourth observed her motions in the Park, which, by the way is the new method of making Love.

Bell. What, do they make Love without speaking to one another?

Stan. A great many very fine Gentlemen, to look at, better then with it, your side glass let down hastily, when the party goes by, is very passionate if she side *glass* you again, for that's the new word, ply her next day with a *billet doux* and you have her sure.

Bell. What if we chance to go the same way, or she won't receive my *billet doux*, as you call it?

Stan. For the first it must never chance; you must instruct your Coachman, and for the second after such an advance as side-glassing of you, if she refuse your *Billet* she is a Jilt, and you must rail at her in all Companies.

Bell. I am pretty good at railing, but not so good as thou art, *Stanmore*.

Stan. I had forgotten half; you must turn as she turns, quit the Park when she goes out, pass by her twice or thrice between that and *St. James's*; talk to her at night in the drawing Room —

Bell. Before forty Coxcombs, and then the business is sufficiently proclaimed, is it not think you?

Stan. 'Tis all one, it must be so, or you will pass for an old fashioned Lover, and never succeed beyond a Chamber-maid.

Bell. This is a folly of our own growth, it came not to us out of *France*.

Stan. That Nation ha's at this time no folly so harmless.

Bell. But if there be any stirring of what kind soever, our empty young fellows will be sure to fill themselves with it, and prefer it to all the sense and good breeding of their own Countrey: But now we talk of *France*, I wonder we see not *Carlos*, he was expected from thence two or three nights since. [Enter *Carlos*.

Stan. See where he comes. Dear *Carlos*, I could not run more hastily upon my Mistress after a long absence; thou art the delight of all thy friends, and even thy Enemies take a malignant pleasure to behold that shape, that feature, and that mien.

Car. Hold *Stanmore*, I think thou takes't me for a Mistress indeed by thy Compliments, which I know not how to return.

Stan. Thou art so improved, a man must love as I do, not to envy thee.

Car. Enough *Stanmore*, your friendship blinds you, I never knew any of these loving Rogues good for any thing. [aside.

Bellamour, I am o'rejoy'd to see thee here, I heard thou had'st forsworn the Town.

Bell. Now

Bell. Now I see *Carlos* here, methinks I am a perfect man of the Town again; I only forswore it for a time; Faith, Money is a thing gotten in ill Company, and spent in good; I have been laying up.

Car. Men of War after a warm Engagement, mult into the Docks to be new built for Fight.

Bell. Right, but how go matters in *France*? What new Foppery is turn'd up Trump there?

Car. What with Governors, Ladies eldest Sons, Embassadors and Envoyes, you have 'em here almost as soon as the *French* themselves.

Stan. No alteration since we were there?

Car. Wit and Women are quite out of Fashion, so are Flutes, Doux and Fidlers, Drums and Trumpets are their only Musick.

Bell. 'Tis but ill Musick for their Neighbours.

Car. At home they are alwayes roaring out *Te Deums* for *Stealing* of some Town or other: War and Equipage is their discourse, which by the way is so Pompous, that should they conquer *Europe* they should scarce be savers.

Stan. How came Wit and Women out of fashion?

Car. Why in Camps they learn to live without Women; and for Wit, great men that love to play the fool in quiet, find it troublesome.

Bell. Faith the latter of these is a great grievance here; our great men hate Wit, but love damn'd Flattery, though never so fulsom.

Car. Pray what Fools does this Town afford?

Stan. Very choice ones, we'll bring you where you shall enjoy 'em: there is a Widow lately come to Town who sets up for a great fortune, has taken a good House, and lives very splendidly, I suppose with intention to put off her self and two Daughters, who are very pretty, one of which *Bellamour* is in love with.

Bell. I make love to her, I confess, but 'tis a harmless Lambent flame, and aims but at fornication; but *Stanmore* is in love with the other, and Heaven knows what that may end in.

Stan. I have no designs upon her fortune, I aim only at her person, I yet run at the whole herd.

Car. Come, you know your own tempers, no more in love then in play, where those who are very stingy at first, will bleed deeply at last.

Bell. This Widow, by name the Lady *Cheatly*, has made her House the Rendevouz of Fools, Knaves, Whore-masters, Ladies of

all forts, and young Heirs: Amongst the rest of Fops, there is *Young Maggot*, one whom his Uncle, whose Heir he is, bred at the Inns of Court, and intended for the Law; but he has left that, and is run Wit-mad; thinks of nothing, endeavours at nothing, but to be a Wit and a Lover, and both in spight of Nature.

Stan. And though he has made Love and Wit his whole business, he is gotten no farther yet than to be thought a Wit by the Fools, and an Ass by the Witty men.

Car. This is a choice Spirit: Indeed 'tis a general Folly; for Wit is a common Idol that every Coxcomb worships in his heart, though some Blockheads of business dissemble it.

Bell. But there is another Coxcomb of that extream vanity, that Nature amongst all her variety of Fops, has not produced the like: He draws all lines of Discourse to the center of his own Person, and never was known to speak, but I did, or I said, was at the beginning or end of it.

Stan. He is lean as a Skeleton, and yet sets up for shape; he changed his Taylor twice, because his Shoulder-Bone sticks out.

Bell. He thinks all Women in love with him, and all Men his intimate Friends; he will make *doux yeux* to a Judge upon the Bench, and not despair of getting a Widow at her Husband's Funeral; thinks himself very well bred, and welcome at all times to all People, though sober among Drunkards, and without a Penny in his Pocket to Men deep at Play.

Car. Oh! I remember this Coxcomb, he has no fortune, and yet is always talking of Equipage and Dressing: 'Tis *Selfish*; but do any Women favour that Fop?

Stan. Oh yes! There is no more account to be given of their Love before they know Man, than their longings after; but both are most commonly for nauseous nasty things.

Car. They do most things by chance; but when they chuse, 'tis ever for the worst.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Mr. *Selfish* is combing his Peruque below stairs, and will be here instantly.

Bell. Retire while I show him.

[*They retire.*]

Enter Selfish; sets his Peruque, and bows to the Glass.

Sel. How dost thou do, *Bellamour*? You fat Fellows have always Glasses that make one look so thin.

Bell.

Bell. You look in it much as you do out on't.

Sel. Sure I am not so lean; I was told I look'd pretty plump to day: hah! my damn'd Rogue has put me into the most bustling Stuff; *Bellamour*, I like thy Breeches well.

Bell. Why you don't see 'em.

Sel. Yes, I see 'em in the Glass; your Taylor shall make mine! a Pox on my *Valet de Chambre*, how he has tyed my Cravat up to day; a man cannot get a good *Valet de Chambre*, French or English.

Bell. A French one is fittest for him, because he can fast best.

Sel. I begin to Belly I think very much; I must go into *France* and flux, 'twill do my Complexion good as well as my Shape.

Bell. Why thou art fit to be hung up at *Barber-Surgeons-Hall* for a Skeleton; a Woman had as good lye with a Faggot.

Sel. Thou art envious, the Ladies are of another mind; I am sure you are above Whore-masters weight, and a Woman had as good lye with a pound of Candles.

Bell. Enough of this: There is a Friend of mine, one *Carlos*, lately come from *France*, that understands Dressing, I must bring you together.

Sel. You talk of my Leanness: I had the most lucky Adventure; I was happy in the Conversation of a pretty Person of Quality, young and witty, I went in a Coach with my hand in her neck from the Duke's Play-house to the Pell-mell, kissing her all the way.

Bell. There is a thing happen'd to me, in which I have occasion for your assistance and advice.

Sel. I have lately succeeded in the Affections of so many pretty Creatures, faith, I know not how to turn my hands to 'em, poor Rogues; if you did but see the Advances that all the Ladies that come to the Widow's and her Daughters, make to me, you would stand amazed; and so should I, but that I am used to those things.

Car. This Fool is much improved since I went into *France*.

Stan. Fools always improve in Folly, as witty men in Understanding.

Car. Indeed he has great acquired Parts.

Sel. *Bellamour* fare thee well, I must go home and answer two or three *Billet doux* from Persons of Quality, I have a bushel in a year. Adieu. [Exits.]

Car. A most admirable Coxcomb; he is so full of himself, he ne'r minds another man, and so answers quite from the purpose.

Bell. He never answers any man nor cares to be answered, he desires but to be heard; but come *Carlos* let's take the air and while away a dining time.

Car. I hate a Dinner, 'tis a good meal for a dull plodding Fellow of business that must bait like a Carriers Horse, and then to plodding again; but the Supper is the meal of pleasure and enjoyment.

Stan. Supping indeed is a solemn thing, and should be used but with few, every Blockhead can Dine.

Bell. That is, fill a Belly: but there are few men fit to Sup, there's more then eating requir'd for that mystery, there must be Wit and Sence.

Enter Young Maggot.

Yo. Mag. Your Servant Gentlemen, I see *Bellamour* you are going abroad, I only come to show you my last Verses.

Bell. Your last Verses, I would I could be so happy to see them.

Yo. Mag. You have Company, and I have Business, some other time.

Bell. What Business?

Yo. Mag. Why, Wit and Beauty, I know no other, I am long'd for by the Ladies now to give account of the Play, for the Poets will not write, the Players Act, nor the Ladies censure without my Judgment first.

Bell. The Ladies are indeed your finger Watches, that go just as you set them.

Yo. Mag. Faith, that's very well imagin'd, well said, I think thou hast ne're as much Wit as one of us Writers.

Car. What is your opinion of the Play?

Yo. Mag. I saw it Scene by Scene, and helped him in the writing, it breaks well, the *Protasis* good, the *Catastasis* excellent, there's no *Episode*, but the *Catastrophe* is admirable, I lent him that and the love parts, and the Songs. There are a great many sublimes that are very Poetical.

Stan. Poetical, in his Judgment, is always Fustian and Nonsense in anothers, I warrant 'tis some Roring Ranting Play that's upon the fret all the while.

Bell. Will you carry us to a Rehearsal?

Yo. Mag. 'Tis a familiarity among us Writers to see one another naked, you are men of Wit, and desperate Criticks, and we Poets fear you as singing Birds do a Hawk.

Car. Thank you for your Hawk.

Yo. Mag.

Yo. Mag. Ay was it not well said ?

Car. But methinks Fools should be your only Enemies:

Yo. Mag. They can't hurt us, besides, a Dedication, writing Songs for their Mistresses, or showing them a Play before hand, will take them off.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Sir, Mr. *Prig* is coming up.

Y. Mag. Now shall we be troubled with Fools, a man can never enjoy thee half an hour to himself, thou art so haunted with Fops.

Bell. How insupportable the Rogues are to one another.

Carl. What is this *Prig* ?

Stan. He is an universal Gamester, an admirable Horse and Dog Herald, knows all the Remarkable ones, their Families, and Alliances, is indeed more intimately acquainted with Beasts, than Men; and 'tis fit he should be so.

Bell. He is in short a Led-eater, Intelligencer, and dry-jester to Gameing, and Jocky-Lords; flatters, rooks, and passes for a Jolly Companion amongst 'em; and makes those things which are but the Recreations of men of Sence, his whole Business.

Enter Prig.

Prig. Gentlemen good Morrow, tho I think 'tis almost Noon, where were you last Night? if you had been at my Lord *Squanders*, you had seen the best Play you had seen this Month. My Lord lost a Thousand pound, *Jack Sharper* won three Hundred, *Tom Whiskin* an Hundred, my Lord *Whimsy* lost five Hundred, *Sir Thomas Rantipol* lost six Hundred, *Sir Nicholas Whachum* won two Hundred, and the Rooks were very busie.

Stan. Then you were not idle?

Prig. No faith: But I am come to get you to look upon the best bred Horse in *England*. *Woodcock* was his Grandfather, he is the Son of Bay Lufty, and the Brother of Redrose; his Sister is the White-Mare, the Cozen-german of Crack-a-fart, Cozen once removed to Nutmeg, third Cozen to my Lord *Squanders* Colt, ally'd to Flea-bitten by the second Venter; in short he is of an excellent Family, and I am going to make a civil Visit to him, he's to run for the Plate at *Brackley*, *Stamford* and *Newmarket*, and goes out of Town to Morrow.

Bell. We cannot see him, we're engaged.

Prig. Engag'd! no faith let's make a match at Tennis to day, I was invited to Dine by two or three Lords, but, if you will let me have

have Pen, Ink and Paper, I'll send my dispatches, and dis-engage my self: How will that Gentleman and you play with *Stanmore*, and I keep his back hand at *Gibbonses*?

Bell. I do not know his Play.

Prigg. We'll take a Bisk of you.

Bell. No, you shan't.

Prigg. You'r half fifteen better than I to a Grain.

Stann. No, that he is not.

Prigg. I never heard the like in my life; gad, you'll never let me make a reasonable Match with you; you beat *Sharper* at a Bisk, and he beats me; what will *Stanmore* and you give *Maggot* and me at *White-hall*, and play the best of your play? hah.

Young Maggot. I never play, I stay at home and write.

Prigg. Pish, 'tis all one for that, we'll play with you at a Bisk, and a fault, for twenty pound.

You. Mag. I will not Sir.

Prigg. Come, I'll hold you twenty pound, you do not make a fairer Match; Let me see——hold——anon——hum——ha——Ay—— 'tis just so to a hairs breadth; Come, we'll play it.

Bell. I tell you I am engag'd to day.

Prigg. We'll play or pay to morrow at ten; where shall we sup?

Stann. No where, you cannot sup.

Prigg. Not sup?

Bell. No, you are not fit to sup.

Prigg. No? I am sure I have as good a stomach, and will eat two meals a day with any man that wears a head.

Car. That will not do.

Prigg. No? I'll eat three then; what say you *Maggot*, will you play?

You. Mag. I will never play as long as I live, at that or any thing else, while I can have Pen, Ink and Paper.

Prigg. O Lord! O Lord! I would not say so for all the world.

Bell. A man must use Exercise to keep himself down, he will Belly else, and the Ladies will not like him.

Young Magg. I have another way to bring down my Belly.

Stann. Another? What's that?

Young. Magg. Why I study, I study and write; 'tis exercise of the Mind does it; I have none of the worst Shapes or Complexions; 'tis writing and inventing does my business.

Car. Will that do't, Sir?

Prigg.

Prigg. Think? What a Pox should a Gentleman think of but Dogs
Horses, Dice, Tennis, Bowls, Races, or Cock-fighting? The Devil
take me, I never think of any thing else, but now and then of a
Whore (when I have a mind to her.)

Carl. This is strange, Mr. *Maggot*, and very curious; how do you
know how much you fall away in a days time?

Yo. Mag. I have an Engine to weigh my self when I sit down to
write, or think, and when I unbend my self agen.

Prigg. How do you unbend?

Yo. Mag. Why I unbend my imagination, my intellect.

Prigg. Your intellect, pray Sir what's that, is't a new word for a
Cross-bow?

Yo. Mag. How I scorn Fops! Why I have been in love these two
Months, and I have wasted above fourteen pound; Love is a great
preserver of the shape, a very great one: You know my Mistress, the
Widows youngest Daughter.

Carl. This is a curious Coxcomb.

Prigg. Love! Ay, if a man gets a Clap, 'twill take him down.

Yo. Mag. May it take down your Nose, you unthinking Animal.

Prigg. What a Devil does he mean?

Yo. Mag. Why I weigh'd my self, when I writ my last Song, and
I wasted six ounces, *aver du pois* weight in the writing: And I was
not above twelve hours about it.

Carl. I beseech you let's hear it Sir.

Yo. Mag. Withal my heart.

*Damon see how charming Chloris,
Who gives love to all that see her,
Burning us yet in coldness glories,
And is never never freer.
Though darts and flames from her eye fly Sr.
And her Breast is warm and spicy,
Yet there is coldness in her eye Sr.
And her heart's all over Icy,
By coldness I am more inflamed,
As in Winter is Spring water,
My love by scorn can not be tamed,
But I the rather would be at her.*

Prigg. Did this make you waste six ounces? I writ a Song t'other day, and it did not make me waste at all.

Bell. Prithee *Prigg* let's hear it.

ONE Night walking in a Wood,
I met one was a Maid as good
As e're she could:
But she fired my Blood,
And to her I stood.

[*Prigg* sings.

With a hey Boys, ding, ding, ding Boys hey,
With a hey Boys, ding, ding, ding.

Quoth I, my pretty Buxom Lass,
From me this time thou shalt not pass:

In any Case;
For the sake of thy Face!
I'll lay thee on the Grass.
With a hey Boys, ding, &c.

Yo. Mag. Oh what violence does he to my Ears,

Prigg. What he does not like it? Pox! these Wits like nothing but what they do themselves, I love a Tavern Song, that will Roar, and make one Merry, a Pox of his *Strephons* and *Phillises*.

Bell. What will become of you *Young Maggot* your Uncle *Maggot*? that common Foe to Wit, is coming up.

Yo. Mag. Hide me Gentlemen, hide me, I am undone if he finds me in your Company.

Bell. Step in there.

[*Yo. Mag.* retires.

Enter Maggot.

Magg. Gentlemen I come to look out an ungracious Nephew of mine, who I hear by virtue of your Company, sets up for a Wit: Will any of you keep him when you have made him good for nothing.

Bell. Good for nothing! why, he is the darling of the Ladies, they dote on him for his Songs, and fear him for his Lampoons, and the men think no Debauch perfect without him.

Magg. Yes, I hear he writ a Libel, I shall have him scribe away his ears, or write himself so far into the Ladies favours, to lose his Nose, or be knock'd o'th head; these are the fruits of Wit.

Carl. The disasters rather.

Magg.

Magg. The World will bear with you that have Estates, tho you have a little; but 'tis enough to undo a man that is to make his Fortune. My roguy Nephew must leave *Cook* upon *Littleton* for *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*.

Stan. Poetry is an ornament to a man of any profession.

Magg. 'Tis a damn'd Weed, and will let nothing good or profitable grow by it; 'tis the Language of the Devil, and begun with Oracles. Where did you know a Wit thrive, or indeed keep his own?

Carl. They part with their Money for Pleasure, and Fools part with their Pleasure for Money; the one will make a better Last Will and Testament, but the other lead a happier Life.

T. Mag. Profit begone, what art thou but a breath.
I'll live proud of my Infamy and shame,
Grac'd with the Triumphs of a Poets name:
Men can but say, Wit did my Reason blind,
And Wit's the noblest frailty of the Mind.

Methinks it runs well thus.

Mag. What noise is that? ha! My ungracious Nephew repeating Verses. Come out you Rascal; dost thou not tremble at my anger? Thou that mightest have been a Judge in time, to make a Wit of thy self thus!

Bell. Good Sir be patient; Did not the great Pleader *Cicero* make Verses?

Mag. And you see what came on't, he died a Beggar, and of a violent death.

T. Mag. Sir, The Verses were not my own.

Mag. Sir, Be gone to the Temple, and let me once more find you at Wit, and I'll dis-inherit you.

T. Mag. Good Sir hear me.

Mag. Be gone, I say.

Carl. This is ridiculous enough, and odd.

Bell. There is a powerful faction against Wit.

Stan. Come, let's take the Air.

[*Ex. omnes.*]

Enter Lady Cheatly, and Mr. Lump her Brother.

Lump. I see, Lady Sister, you are resolv'd to push on the remnant of your Estate, and make the Snuff of your Fortune burn clearest.

L. Cheatly. As my Fortune was, it would do us no good; but this Town, and the way I take, may advance it, or at least dispose of my own Person.

Lump. You shall not want my Money, so long as I have Deeds of Trust from you ; you shall have the Name on't. I have help'd you to sober, solid, godly men, who will help to carry on your design.

L. Cheatly. Some cautious old Fellow or other (who is wise enough to have his own Wisdom contribute to the cheating of him) may snap at me ; and some rash, amorous, young Fellows may catch at my Daughters.

Lump. I wish you had set up in the City among our Party, and gone to Meetings, it might have been a great advantage ; I my self have made much benefit of Religion, as to my temporal Concerns, and (so long as it be directed to a good end) it is a pious fraud, and very lawful.

L. Cheat. No Brother, The godly have two qualities, which would spoil my design ; great Covetousness (which would make 'em pry too narrowly into our Fortune) and much Eating (which would too soon devour what I have left.)

Lump. Reproach not the godly, Lady Sister, I do not like it.

L. Cheat. Where is there a better Market for Beauty, than near the Court ? And who will more likely snap at the shadow of a good Fortune, than the Gentlemen of this end of the Town, who are most of 'em in debt ? And I have chosen the best Instrument in the world to make 'em believe me Rich.

Lump. Who is that ?

L. Cheat. A very busie old Gentleman, and very credulous, that loves to tell News, and always magnifies a true Story till it becomes a Lye, one Mr. *Maggot*.

Lump. I know he is a Person of Parts, but he is not solid, he's hot-brain'd, and has not Method in him ; for my own part, I think not any one wise, who does not know what he shall do this day fifty years, if he lives ; I for my part do.

L. Cheat. I hope 'tis dining with me, Brother.

Lump. No, Upon the one and twentieth of *March*, I shall fifty years hence, dine with Mr. *Ananias Felt*, an Elder of our Church, if we live, and he observe his Method ; my Journal tells what I shall do each day of my life.

L. Cheat. Can you tell what you shall do next *Midsummer-day* fifty years ?

Lump. I shall go down to my House in *Kent*.

L. Cheat. Do you never alter your Day ?

Lump. By no means ; if one link of the Chain be broken, Wisdom falls to the ground.

L. Cheat.

L. Cheat. What do you do upon the sixth of *May* come fifty year?

Lump. This Book will tell you — *May* — *May* — 6th —
6th. Let me see — 6th — I take Phyfick, and shave my self.

L. Cheat. What, sick or well, Beard or no Beard?

Lump. 'Tis all one for that, I never break my Method — Let me see — the next day — I walk to *Hampstead*, Dine at the *Queens-Head*, Come back in my Coach, Visit Sr. *Formall Trifle*, and at night I do Communicate with my Wife.

L. Cheat. Not fifty years hence; you'll go near to break that Method.

Lump. I never break any — No man can be wise without this Principle — But Sister, I am to give you a main Caution; Have a care of Wits at this end of the Town; Wits are good for nothing, of no use in a Commonwealth, they understand not Business.

L. Cheat. The better for my purpose. They value pleasure, and will bid high for't.

Lump. I say they are good for nothing; they are not men of Method and Business.

L. Cheat. So Fools say, who seem to be excellent men of Business, because they always make a business of what is none, and seem to be always very industrious, because they take great pains for what a witty man does with ease.

Lump. You are out, you are out; hang 'em Wits, when did you see any of 'em Rise?

L. Cheat. No, Because the Fools are so numerous and strong, they keep 'em down; or rather because men of Wit (that have Fortunes) know what a senseless thing the drudgery of Business and Authority is, and those that have none, want the Impudence, Flattery, and Importunity of Blockheads.

Lump. I fear you are tainted, vilely tainted with Wit; if you had fix'd in the City, you might have scap'd the Infection, no body would have put you in the head of Wit there. But hold, my hour is come — At three a Clock I will throw away a quarter of an hour upon you. Farewel. [Ex. Lump.

L. Cheat. Who waits there?

Enter Steward.

Oh my good *Steward*! Are the *Scriveners* come?

Steward. Yes, Madam, Your design prospers beyond our hopes; it has taken fire like a train, and run through all the Town, and all believe you to be a great Fortune.

L. Cheat.

L. Cheat. I have chosen as proper an Engine for my Business as can be, my Lady *Busic*, a perpetual Gossiper, and Visiter in all Families, a very wise Lady, a great Tattle and News-Monger, who being something too old for an Intrigue of her own, is as good a body to help on those of others as can be, and is glad to bring Lovers of any kind together.

Steward. Already the belief of your Wealth has spread so far, that I have had two of the City this morning with me (who having been shrewdly bitten by Goldsmiths) are very desirous to trust their Money in your hands, hearing what Mortgages you have, and believing you can imploy it better than any body.

L. Cheat. You did not sure refuse 'em?

Steward. No, I'll warrant you, Madam, they will bring their Money presently; Mr. *Maggot* too entreats me, that I will be very importunate with your Ladyship, to imploy a thousand pound of his for him.

L. Cheat. There needs no importunity, subtle Rogue; he thinks to lay it here for a Nest-Egg, and that I shall lay many more to it, which he hopes he may have again, together with my Person.

Steward. No, Madam, 'Tis held in Mortmain, never to return again: Besides, we have Presents enough to keep your House this Moneth, brought in this Morning; A red Deer potted, a brace of fat Does, Hams of *Bayon* Bacon, a brace of Swans, potted Charrs, *Brant* Geese, and (besides all this) a piece of the best Wine in *England*. Here are the Names of the Presenters.

L. Cheat. Let me see all Well-willers to my Self or Daughters: Cunning Fools; how very politiek they are? Well, Policy is most commonly the foolishest thing in the world.

Steward. Madam, there are a great many waiting about money-busines without, shall I call any of 'em in?

L. Cheat. By no means — when I am alone: when Company is with me, they are of use, and spread my fame abroad: Entertain 'em well, and bid 'em hasten Dinner. [Ex. Omnes.

The End of the First Act.

ACT II.

Enter Lady Cheatly and Lady Busy.

L. Cheat. **M**Adm I am infinitely oblig'd to your Ladyship, who can be so careful of my whole Family.

L. Busy.

L. Busy. Why truly Madam I love to do good Offices, we are bound in Christian Charity to one another, and I wish'd Mr. *Maggot* to your Ladyship, if he be not somewhat too old for the Vigour of your Ladyship: he is rich, and is discreet, and his other Defects may be supplied elsewhere.

L. Cheat. Your Ladyship's very obliging.

L. Busy. If not, there's Mr. *Prigg*, an ingenious Gentleman, of a pretty Fortune, whom I wish'd to you; he is in great favour with Lords, I warrant you, you shall seldom take him without a Lord in his mouth, they do so court him, they love him mightily.

L. Cheat. And he loves Lords mightily for being so.

L. Busy. Oh mightily! Well Madam, your two Daughters are accounted the Beauties of the Drawing Room; there's no body while they there, will vouchsafe to look upon a Maid of Honour, no, not they, and they are as mad at it.

L. Cheat. 'Tis not the Beauty of my Daughters makes 'em look at 'em so, but they like an indifferent new face better than those faces they are used to every Night. They are weary of 'em.

L. Busy. Oh, no really your Daughters are the prettiest Creatures in Town, and I would fain have 'em well settled, one way or other; I have had several offers of Husbands for 'em, but I do not think I have yet met with Fortunes good enough; but that great Lord I told you of, is very pressing to enjoy your Eldest, and as I said, he offers a Thousand pounds down, and three Hundred pound *per Annum* during life; but that I know your Ladyship is discreet, and one that has seen the World, I dar'd not have propounded this to you.

L. Cheat. My Daughters have Fortunes enough to Marry 'em to good Estates, but your Ladyship is wise, 'tis good to treat with all persons, and all ways, to settle a young — Girl in the World.

L. Busy. Why Madam this will be a great Addition to her Fortune, and besides you do not know how he may prefer her, or for ought we know, after he has try'd her, he may like her so well as to own her — who knows? Be pleas'd to consider how Marriage is cry'd down, and that there are few that are good for any thing will think on't now adays: besides, Custom alters all things mightily — Mothers very frequently do this for their Daughters now, and if it be a fashion you know —

L. Cheat. I am very much oblig'd to your Ladyships advice, I have propounded it to my Daughter, but she is so perverse, she will not listen

listen to me, but says she had rather Marry a Groom, than be Mistres to a Prince.

L. Busy. Oh fy, she has a wrong Notion of the thing, I will try to advise her better.

L. Cheat. Your Ladyship will do me a great favour, here they come both.

Enter Isabella and Gartrude.

L. Busy. Ladies, your Servant.

Isab. } Your Ladyships most humble Servant.
Gart. }

L. Busy. Mrs. *Isabella*, I have something to advise you for your good.

Isab. For my good, Madam?

L. Busy. Yes, Madam, and therefore be pleased to give attention to me.

Isab. Good Manners will make me do that.

L. Busy. Why look you, You are young, I am in years, an ancient Woman, and have seen the World, as they say.

Isab. Ancient? Your Ladyship looks very youthfully.

L. Busy. No, no, You are pleased to Complement me; but, as I said, my Lady and my Self have known the World, as the saying is.

Isab. And you the Flesh, and the Devil, as the saying is. [*Aside.*]

L. Busy. And tis fit the Young should submit themselves to the gravity and discretion of the Old.

Isab. Yes, where they can find it.

L. Busy. Go to——My Lady is a Person whose aim is to settle you well in the World——Do you conceive me——And she knows what's fittest and most convenient for you——And Obedience is the best Vertue.

Isab. Very well, Madam.

L. Busy. Now there is a certain Lord, whom my Lady has mentioned to you.

Isab. A Lord? a Beast, and one that would make me as bad as himself.

L. Cheat. Good Mrs. *Pert*, Keep in that foolish Instrument, your Tongue: A Beast? there are a great many like him.

L. Busy. Be not so forward, all things have two Faces——Do not look upon the wrong one——Go to——You are a fine young Lady, and are brought by your Lady-Mother to Town, the general Mart
for

for Beauty. Well—you would be so settled in the World, as to have a certain Fond, whereon you may rely, which in Age may secure you from Contempt—Good.

Isab. I hope I shall have enough to keep me honest.

L. Busy. Nay, Heaven forbid I should persuade you to be dishonest: Vertue is a rare thing, a heavenly thing. But I say still, be mindful of the main——alás a Woman is a solitary, helpless Creature without a Man, God knows——good——how may this Man be had in Marriage say you?——very well——if you could get a fine Gentleman with Money enough, but alas! those do not Marry, they have left it off. The Customes of the World change in all Ages.

Isab. In ours for the worse.

L. Busy. Very well said,——but yet the wisest must obey 'em as they change,——do you conceive, Madam.——

Isab. Yes, I do conceive you to be doing a very Reverend Office. [aside.

Gart. Methinks her Ladyship speaks a great deal of Reason, she's a fine spoken Lady truly.—

L. Busy. Now I say since Custom has so run down Wedlock, what remains? but that we should make use of the next think to it——good——Nay, not but that Vertue is a rare thing,——Heaven forbid I should detract from that;——But, I say, the main is to be respected, a good deal of Money, there's the point.——

Isab. With little or no Reputation,——there's the point.

L. Cheat. Money brings Reputation, Fool, or at least puts one into that Condition, that Fellows dare not question it.

L. Busy. Nay Heaven forbid you should lose that, but I say the next thing to Marriage, is being kind to a noble Lord, &c. And if good terms be made, and you be well settled in the World.

Isab. That would be to be settled out of the World: for I should never dare to shew my face again.

L. Cheat. There are as good faces as yours, and better, my nimble Chaps, that are shown every day in the Play-house, after it, and with the best quality too.

L. Busy. Yes, and in the front of Boxes,——nay, nay, not but that a good Wealthy Marriage is beyond it.

Isab. A very Comfortable thing, for a Gentlewoman to bring her self into a Condition of never conversing with a Woman of Quality, who has Wit, and Honour, again; but must sort with those Tawdry painted things of the Town.

Gart. Can't you keep Company with my Mother and me.

L. Busy. Look you Madam, you are under a great mistake, for do not Ladies of Wit and Honour, keep dayly Company with those things as you call them? But de'e conceive me, the finest things, — the gayest things, — and some the richest things, I say no more, I pray conceive me, as long as you are true to one Man, Madam, you are in a manner his Lady, I say in a manner his Lady, 'tis a kind of Marriage, and great Persons most commonly cohabit longer with Mistresses, than they used to do with Wives.

L. Cheat. My Lady says right, 'tis, now adays, more like Marriage than Marriage it self.

Gart. Oh Sister! do what my Lady says, she's a rare person.

L. Busy. A Thousand pound, and three Hundred pound *per Annum*, — say we bring him to four Hundred pound, good — a great Lord — that is in the way to prefer you, very good — or may be, may like you so well, as to own you — best of all; consider, 'tis enough, Madam, at once, let her ruminare upon this.

Gart. O Lord, pray Sister do; why, we shall be all made, prithee do.

Isab. Go you to your Mr. *Maggot* that Dyes, and makes Songs for you.

Gart. No, I'll swear he's a fine witty person, but he has such a greivous face, I can't abide it; but there's Mr. *Selfish* is the most gentile, well-bred Gentleman, and has the finest ways among Ladies; he will tell you such pretty things of himself, he talks of himself always so prettily, and says such neat, gentile, well-bred things to one.

Enter Steward.

Stem. Madam, some Gentlemen are coming in.

L. Cheat. Bid the Scriveners and the rest of the people come in; Daughters go, and walk in the Garden: I hope your Ladiship will pardon me, this Money-busines must be minded.

[*Exeunt Daughters.*

L. Busy. By all means, Madam: I'll go make a Visit; your Servant.

[*Exit L. Busy.*

Enter Scriveners, and several others.

Scriv. I have brought the Mortgage, and the Mortgager is here ready to seal; upon the payment of the within named Sum.

[*Enter L. Cheat.*

L. Cheat. Has my Council perused it?

Council. Yes, and find it to be very well drawn.

L. Cheat. Let me read it.

Enter Stanmore, Bellamour, Carlos and Maggot.

Steward. The Company is come.

L. Cheat. Peace, I see 'em.

Mag. Look you, did I not tell you, she's always thus busie; I warrant upon a Mortgage, or a Purchase; she's a vast Fortune, I know where her Money lies, and in what hands; she has a vast deal, do not interrupt her, you shall hear.

Bell. Then you know all?

Mag. Know all, ay why, Sir *William*, her late Husband, was my intimate friend: Know, why, I hired this House, and bought all the Furniture for her; her Daughters will be worth ten Thousand pound apeece, at least, to my knowledge.

Stan. This Fellow will outly any Traveller.

Mag. I knew her Father as well as any man in the World; know, why, I know all.

Carl. This Lady must be a Cheat, by doing her business so publickly.

Mag. Mr. *Carlos*, I knew your Father as well as any man in *England*: honest *James*, his Keeper! I have had many a Buck of him.

Bell. Did you know my Father?

Mag. Did I? no flesh alive better, I did more for him, than any man in *England*, I was a Father to him.

Bell. Ay! then you are my Grandfather; but how were you a Father to him?

Mag. How? Why I gave him his second Wife.

Council } To have and to hold.
reads. }

L. Cheat. 'Tis very well; five thousand pound is the sum; *Steward*, pay him the Money, and take the Writings.

Mag. Look you there, did not I tell you?

1 Citizen. Well, She's a rare Woman at Business.

2 Citizen. As ever I saw.

Stew. Here are the two Gentlemen I spoke of, who humbly desire to place some Money in your Ladyships hands.

L. Cheat. I do not love to meddle with other People's Money, you know; besides, I shall have no occasion. I have a great sum to be paid in within this Fortnight.

D. 2. *Stew. I*

Stew. I know it, Madam, but if a Purchase should be offered in the mean time.

Citiz. I beseech your Ladyship, take our Money, we have been so cheated by base Goldsmiths, we are afraid to trust any body but your Ladyship.

L. Cheat. I do not love to stand charged for other People's Money. Oh me Gentlemen! I was so busie I did not see you, you have not waited long, I hope; pray forgive my Rudeness.

Bell. The Rudeness is on our side, to intrude into your Ladyships Privacies.

L. Cheat. By no means; you do me Honour.

Stan. Madam, We take the liberty to present Mr. *Carlos*, a Friend of ours, lately come out of *France*, to your Ladyship?

L. Cheat. Sir, I have heard of your Noble Family, and you'll honour mine in your acquaintance with it. Sweet Mr. *Maggot*; your Servant: Gentlemen, Have but a little patience, till I have dispatch'd some Business, and I'll wait on you.

Mag. God, She's the finest Person in the World, and a vast Fortune; I wou'd my ungracious Nephew had one of her Daughters.

Enter Prigg.

Prigg. Madam, Your most humble Servant.

L. Cheat. Your Servant, sweet Mr. *Prigg*.

Prigg. Sweet Mr. *Prigg*! good; Matters go on well: Come, Gentlemen, since my Lady's busie, let's go to *Langtriloo*, or *Ombre*.

Carl. Is there no way of spending our time but playing?

Prigg. None so good: Why what a Pox should one do?

Carl. Read; it is a manly Diversion.

Prigg. Read? So I have read *Markham*, *The Compleat Farkier*, and two or three Books about *Horses*; a Book that's written about *Ombre*; and that about *Picket*; and for other Books, Pox there's nothing in 'em at all: What think you, *Bellamore*?

Bell. You are in the Right.

Prigg. Look you there; there's nothing in 'em, hah.

Stan. Methinks Discourse is a pretty good way of passing ones time.

Prigg. Gad, So it is: Italk as much as any Man in *England*, my Tongue seldom lyes still; Oh! I love Discourse mightily; and though I say it, I am able to run down all I meet about Dogs and Horses. Now I think on't, Have you ever hunted with my Lord, *Squanders* Fox-Dogs, *Bellamore*?

Prig.

Bell. No: Now he's in.

Prigg. They are the best in *England*; but there is one Dog we call *Ranter*, I Christned him, I was his God-Father; he was gotten upon my Lord's famous Bitch-Lady; you remember what a Bitch she was; Oh poor *Lady*! I was not forryer when my Sister died, than when poor *Lady* died. But let that pass; *Ranter* was gotten by your Father's Dog, *Rockwood*.

Bell. Did you know *Rockwood*?

Prigg. Know him? As well as any Man in the World; his Father was a Dog of my Father's, called *Fowler*; his Mother was my Noble Lord *Squanders* Father's famous Bitch-*Venus*, which you have heard of: I remember, Mr. *Carlos Venus* was Sister to your Father's Dog *Ringwood*; *Rockwood*? I knew him as well as I knew your Father, well rest their Souls of a Dog and a Man, I shall never see two better in the Field than *Rockwood* and your Father.

Carl. How the Rogue has coupled them.

Prigg. Yet *Ranter*'s an admirable Dog, the best at a cold Scent that ever I saw; if there be forty Couple in the Field, I'll hold an hundred pound he works it out soonest, and leads 'em all when he has done. I love and honour *Ranter*, I care not who knows it; I made a Song of him, have his Picture by my Bed-side, and some of his Hair here in a crystal Locket.

Mag. I beseech your Ladyship, Accept of my thousand pound, 'twill make up the Money for that Purchase, sweet Madam.

L. Cheat. Well, Sir, Since you will have it so, I'll give my Bond for it.

Mag. Oh Madam! I scorn it, I'll have nothing under Hand for it.

L. Cheat. Then I will not take it; nay, I have sworn first.

Mag. Well, I'll go and fetch it, and your Ladyship and I will agree upon that. [Ex. Maggots.]

Prigg. Ha! The young Ladies are in the Garden.

Bell. Say you so? Prithee let's steal down to 'em.

Prigg. Do, and leave me with the Widow. [Ex. Bell. Stan. Carl.]

L. Cheat. Steward, Do you take care of all the rest, while I retire from (what I do not care for) Business. Now I am at leisure; Are the Gentlemen gone?

Prigg. They are gone but into the Garden, and will wait on your Ladyship presently. They have left me that happy opportunity I wish'd for, to renew the Suit I have so often made to your Ladyship;

liber-

I beseech you, Madam, be pleas'd to consider my Passion, which is so violent to your Ladyship, I cannot rest since first I saw your Ladyship; for it has indeed put me besides my self. I have not the heart to ride so much as one heat at *New-Market* since, and I us'd to go once in ten days down on purpose; nor have I been able to ride a Fox-Chase, since I have had your Ladyship in chace; I shall be undone, if your Ladyship don't quiet my mind with some assurances: I over-see at *Trick track*, dealt my self ten at *Ombre*, and all through my Passion for your dear Self.

L. Cheat. Sir, Though I have a great esteem for your Person, yet we Widows that have some Fortune, are to consider something besides Passion.

Prigg. As I have told you before, my Estate is not inconsiderable, besides the great Favour I have with the Gameing and Jocky Lords; and besides, if the King frequents *New-Market*, I doubt not but in a short time to Rise.

L. Cheat. But you are a Gamester.

Prigg. Ay Madam, but I never Play, I do but Rook.

L. Cheat. Rook? What's that? Cheat?

Prigg. No, Madam, I go to Twelve, and the better of the Lay; besides, I get five hundred pound a year at Horse-Races, and Cock-Matches, by being in fee with the Grooms, and Cock-keepers; and, Madam, I play as well at *Tennis*, *Ombre*, *Back-gammon*, *Trick track*, and *Crimp*, as any Man, which is no small addition to my Estate. I gave you these things in my particular, if your Ladyship please to remember.

L. Cheat. But you cannot make a Joynture of these things, and therefore I must consider a little longer.

Prigg. With all my heart, Madam; but in the mean time let you and I play a Set at *Trick track*, and when the rest come in, we'll make a Match at *Ombre*.

Enter Steward.

Stew. Madam, There are some Tenants wait without to speak with you.

L. Cheat. You'll pardon me, I must go to 'em. [*Ex. L. Cheatly.*]

Prigg. Come on, Mr. *Steward*, what say you to a Game at *Back-gammon*?

Stew. If you'll retire to my Chamber, have at you.

Prigg. With all my heart.

[*Exeunt.*
Enter

Enter Theodosia, Isabella, Bellamour, Carlos, Stanmore.

Carlos. Who's there, the Lady *Pleasant's* Daughter, *Theodosia*?

Bell. It is: She's young and handsom, has a great deal of Wit, and a very good Fortune, which makes her set up for Marriage, and is impregnable to any thing else.

Carl. She's extream pretty; I lov'd her violently, before I went into *France*, but now she's a Thousand times more Beautiful.

Stann. Ladies, your humble Servant.

Bell. A Gentleman, a friend of ours, lately come out of *France*.
[*He salutes 'em.*

Carl. And glad I am so, for all that Nation could not shew me so much Beauty.

Theod. I see, Sir, you have not been in *France* for nothing; you have imported *French* goods, I mean Compliments, they are a Nation full of Complimenters.

Carl. They are so, Madam; and the Taylor does it full as well as the Gentleman, 'tis a Road of speaking which all of 'em have, I was not dull enough to get it of 'em, nor would I bring so common a thing as a Compliment to you, Madam.

Theod. You can bring it to no Body that dislikes it more.

Carl. Or needs it less.

Theod. Thus have I heard of a very Rhetorical Oration against Eloquence.

Enter Gartrude.

Gart. O Lord, Mr. *Stanmore*, here. [*runs out.*

Bell. Run *Stanmore*, your business is more than half done; 'tis a certain sign, when a Woman seeks Corners, that she means some good by it.

Stann. I'll try that. [*Ex. Stanmore.*

Bell. I see my friend's caught again, for all his Travel; I have a fellow-feeling of his Case, let's retire and give him opportunity.

Isab. With all my heart, opportunity is safe in the begining of an Amour, though it may be dangerous afterwards. [*They retire.*

Theod. I hear never a *French* word from you, and that's strange: for all our Sparks are so refined, they scarce speak a sentence without one; and though they seldome arrive at good *French*, yet they get enough to spoil their *English*.

Carl. If a man means nothing, he cannot chuse a better Language: for it makes a pretty noise, without any manner of thought.

Theod.

Theod. You have scarce brought one substantial Vanitie over with you, what have you learnt there?

Carl. To love my own Countrey, and to think that none can show us so fine Women; in *France* they buy their Beauty, and sell their Love.

Theod. That Fashion is coming up apace here.

Carl. True Beauty, Madam, can no more be bought than true Love; in me behold the one, while I admire the other in your self.

Theod. How many *French* Ladies have you said as much to?

Carl. I went thither to be cured of Love, not to make it.

Theod. What Love?

Carl. My love of you, which began so early in my Heart, self-love was scarce before it. When your disdain could not remove it; I tried absence, but in vain too.

Theod. 'Tis impossible you could bring a Heart unhurt from *France*.

Carl. My Love to you preserved me from all Foreign Invasion.

Theod. If you make Love, you'll grow dull, it spoils a man of Wit, as much as Business.

Carl. If Love be predominant in Conversation, I confess it, but a little relish of it does well.

Theod. The imitation of it may be borne, but the thing its self is a dead weight upon the mind; and a man can no more please under that disadvantage, than a Horse can run a Race with a pair of Panniers on his Back.

Carl. And yet that Horse may do it, if the match be well made.

Theod. I must have my Servant all Wit, all Gaiety, and the Ladies of the Town run mad for him: I would not only triumph over him, but over my whole Sex in him.

Carl. This is hard Doctrine for a man of my sincerity and truth in Love.

Theod. Make *Isabella* slight *Bellamour*, little *Gartrude* sacrifice *Selfish*: Be the third word in every Ladies mouth, from fifteen to five and thirty; and you shall find what I'll say to you.

Carl. To attempt this, were great vanity, and no less dishonesty, to my friend *Bellamour*.

Theod. If you love, you'll think any thing lawful: This must be done, I dare not trust my own judgment; I will have you in vogue, ere I favour you in the least.

Carl. Well, since these Ladies are your outworks, I will on, and by

by the force of imagination, make every one *Theodofia*, but if I fail, think on my constant love, which will not suffer me to use deceit.

Theod. Suppose I should answer you in your whining strein, and say, my love were true as yours, my flame as great, and all your wishes mine.

Carl. Then were *Carlos* the happiest man on Earth.

Theod. No, then the Game were up betwixt us, and there were no more to do but to pay the stakes, and then to something else.

Carl. We might play Set after Set for ever.

Theod. No, one of us would be broke; go get you about your task Ifay. [Ex. *Carl.* and *Theod.*

Enter Selfish and Young Maggot.

Yo. Mag. Did you see how the Ladies flockt about me at Court, when I made a relation of the Rehearsal, and afterwards when I read my Song to 'em.

Self. I think I am as well with the Ladies there as any Man, and they like my Songs too, they say they'r so easie, so gentile, and well bred, and so pat to the Womens understandings: the Men say th'are silly, but they are envious.

Yo. Mag. I'll secure you the Play takes, I have done the Poet's business with the Ladies, who, you know govern the Men, as the Moon does the Sea.

Self. There is a pretty Creature, not past Eighteen, whom I have formerly enjoy'd, has to oblige me, taken upon her the figure of a procurer, and is to bring me a maidenhead anon, which fell in love with me at a Play.

Yo. Mag. But I'll shew you my Song.

Self. Of late I have had no leisure to make a Song, I am so overrun with new Acquaintances.

Yo. Mag. Damon see how charming *Chloris*, &c.

Reads. How do you like it?

Self. 'Tis soft, and very much after my own way, and I like it well. But how like you this Peruque?

Yo. Mag. 'Tis very proper.

Self. I have five as good by me, I have an hundred pound I got at *Ombre*, *Mr. Whimsy* owes me two hundred, I have a Pad or two, and when I get this debt in, I will buy a Chariot, and perhaps have as good Equipage as any Man, if I can get an hundred pound *Sir Nicholas Whachum* owes me; I only want a couple of Hunters for *Windsor*, and then.

To. Mag. You don't mind my Song, 'tis to my Mistress!

Self. Yes, but I was saying, now I am at ease in my Fortune till next *Michlemas*.

To. Mag. But to go on.

Self. I have lately got such a Conquest over a Lady, the prettiest Creature; I snatch'd a Rose from her soft Bosom, she is of quality, all the Town were mad after her, and she threw her self into my Arms, and I am the happy Man.

To. Mag. Well, to be in love is the greatest pleasure in the World, it makes one so sweetly Malancholly, and Compos'd, and so fit to write; besides, it keeps one in shape.

Self. I have not much occasion for Love, the Ladies follow me and love me so, I have no time for't, why, I have had three Maiden-heads this week.

To. Mag. I would not be without love, and writing, for all the World; I had a Billet from the prettiest Creature of Sixteen to Day, I'll tell you.

Enter Carlos, Bellamore, Theodosia and Isabella.

To. Mag. I have an Amour.

Self. I.

To. Mag. I.

Self. I.

To. Mag. I.

Self. This Fellow is always talking of himself, one can't speak to him, bus he is always at I, I. I wonder at the impertinence of such people.

Theod. These Fools are always talking of themselves.

Isab. They are the worst things they can talk of.

Carl. Or we either; therefore, Madam, hear me on the last Subject.

Theod. That's as bad.

Bell. He went a Mile to put on that fair Peruque, for the sake of his Complexion.

Theod. Prithee *Isabella* let's find fault with 'em both, and break his heart.

Enter Stanmore and Gartrude.

Gert. Fy upon you Mr. *Stanmore*; I'll ne're come near you agen, if you use me so, you nothing but kiss one, and ruffle one, and spoils one things, that you do.

Stan. Why are you so pretty then, to provoke a man beyond all patience?

Gart.

Gart. Why, how do *I* provoke you? *I* have done nothing to anger you, have *I*?

Bell. What are you fallen out with your Mistress?

Stan. No, but since she's insensible of all, *I* can speak to her, and yet so pretty, *I* cannot but love her; if words won't move her, actions must.

Self. Oh! here are the Ladies; now you shall see what Advances they will make to me, but especially *Gartrude*, that pretty Creature.

Yo. Mag. This is a very conceited Fellow, and wou'd call a Gypsee that lik'd him, pretty Creature.

Self. Ladies, your most humble Servant; now you shall see *Maggot*, dear pretty Creature, let me kiss that Nosegay; well, 'tis a Thousand times sweeter in that pretty Bosom, than in its own Bed; though at the Sun rising, when the Morning Dew is in drops upon it, sweet Madam, let me kiss that hand that gather'd it.

Gart. Oh fine, what rare words are these! He uses me like a Princess: Sir, 'tis more your goodness, than my desert. Sister, this is a rare man, Mr. *Stanmore* is a Wit they say, but *I* don't understand him half so well, *I* always think they Jeer one.

Isab. Indeed 'tis a hard thing for Wit to descend to your Capacity.

Self. *I* was with some Ladies last Night did so commend you, and said you were the most delicate Creature; they did me the favour to say your Eyes were black, and sparkling like mine, and your Nose very much resembling mine, and that you have a pretty pouting about the mouth like me, and fine little blub-lips, *I* am very well with the Ladies at Court, but *I* see none like you.

Stan. Do you know *I* love that Lady?

Self. If you do, *I* pity you, she is otherwise engaged to my knowledge.

Enter Prigg.

Prig. Come, faith, since we are all together, let's go to *Ombre*, two Companies, and make an Afternoon on't.

Yo. Mag. I desire you will not interrupt me; *I* am singing the Ladies a new Song.

Prig. Song? Pish, Is not Gaming better than hearing of Songs? here's such a stir with these Wits.

Isab. No, pray let's hear it.

[*Yo. Mag.* Sings, *Damon*, &c.

Prig. I observe you Wits are always making Songs of the Love of Shepherds, and Shepherdesses, a company of block-headed, clown-

ish, ugly, tawny, Sun-burnt People ; I had e'en as live hear Songs upon the Love of their Sheep as their own.

Car. I see these Fools need no body to shew 'em, they shew themselves well enough.

Prig. Methinks that old Song is very pretty : *My Mistress is a Tennis-Ball, &c.*

To. Mag. This Rogue has nothing but Tennis-Courts and Bowling-Greens in his Head.

Bell. Prithee *Prigg* sing one of your own making.

Prig. With all my heart.

Enter Lady Cheatly.

L. Cheat. Mrs. *Theodosia*, your humble Servant : Gentlemen, I hope you'll pardon me, I could not neglect Business ; I think one had better be poor, than be troubled with Money thus : But if you please to walk in, there's a small Banquet waits, and Fiddles, to dance, if you please.

Isab. Pray, Madam, let's hear Mr. *Prigg's* Song first, 'tis his own.

Prig. I am glad your Ladyship is come to hear it. [Sings.

*Hey ho, hey ho,
The merry Horn does blow.
'Tis broad day,
Come away.
Twivee, twivee, twivee, hey,
Do not stay.
Then have at the Hare,
Let old Puffs beware.
Twivee, twivee, twivee, ho,
The merry Horn does blow.
Come away.*

To. Mag. What a happy thing 'tis to have Wit.

Prig. Hang Wit, give me Mirth. This is a Catch that I made, and my Lord *Squander* and I always roar it out after a Fox-Chase ; Pox, I hate your Swains and your Nymphs.

Sel. Do they wear Breeches thus cut in *France* ?

Car. Yes, Sir.

Sel. What Blockheads are our *English* Taylors ; I must have some new Cloaths made immediately in this Fashion, I cannot rest till I bespeak 'em.

Isab.

Isab. Pray, Madam, joyn with us, we shall have very good sport. Are you well, Mr. *Selfish*? Sure you are not, I never saw you look so ill before.

Theod. He looks extream ill; your Complexion seems to have too much of the Olive in it to day.

Sel. Pardon me, Ladies, I think my Complexion is well enough, or my Glass is false, I never lookt clearer.

Car. That Trimming too, with your favour, is very disagreeable, and does not cohere with your Complexion at all.

Sel. I assure you, Sir, all the Ladies I saw to day, are of another opinion, they said, my Complexion was much like pretty Mrs. *Gartrudes* here.

L. Cheat. Methinks you look mighty lean and thin, I fear you are going into a Consumption, Sir.

Sel. Oh no, Madam! I am very plump, I am only afraid of being too gross, and bellying; I am very fat, I assure your Ladyship, pray feel my Ribs, Madam.

Prig. They laugh at him. The Devil take me, I never saw a Fellow so altered in my life; thou canst not live long, thou smell'st of Earth, fo.

Sel. You mistake, I am one of the vigourest Fellows, the strongest Bodies in *England*; I was taken for Mr. *Carlos* to day at a little distance.

Bell. Prithee *Selfish* do not play the fool with thy self, get a Physician, I never saw your Complexion so fallow, thou look'st prodigiouly ill.

Sel. Good Sir, I know what I am; my Cheeks are as plump, and my Complexion as fresh as any here, my Eyes and Mouth as chearful, and every thing.

Car. Nothing will mortifie the Rogue; he thinks so well of *Selfish*, that he thinks *Selfish* can never look ill, nor be ill, I believe he thinks *Selfish* can never die.

Sel. I have a Face that will not alter, if I were a dying, 'twould look well; indeed my Complexion changes sometimes, but never looks ill, I assure you.

Gart. I wonder you should be so mistaken all, methinks he looks very neatly.

Bell. This is a damn'd Perruque, why did you put it on to day?

Car. But indeed that Suit is an odious thing, and the Trimming the worst I ever saw; tis your Taylor's fancy, it becomes you very ill.

Sel. Methinks it is very pretty, *I* think they are all out of their wits.

L. Cheat. 'Tis enough, we shall make the man hang himself.

Y. Mag. Do you think I'll suffer you for ever to cross me with your damn'd insipid Songs? let me tell you, it is a grand impertinance.

Prig. Gad, I do not know what you mean by your Gibberish, but I suppose you call me impertinent, and therefore I'll be before-hand with you, you are a Son of a Whore. [*gives Y. Mag. a box on the Ear.*]

Sel. I will wait upon the Ladies. [*They draw, the Ladies run out*]

Bell. Hold, hold. [*shrieking.*]

Carl. Let 'em alone, if you offer to part 'em, they'll hurt one another.

Y. Mag. I'll not be *Brutal*, you shall answer for it; Sir, you are lately come out of *France*, and cannot deny a Man of Honour your assistance.

Prig. Prithee *Stanmore* be my Second, I'll wit him with a Pox to him.

Y. Mag. To morrow morning, done.

Prig. Let my Second appoint the place.

Y. Mag. With all my heart; Monsieur *Carlos* agree with him.

Stan. Come, let's in, and put it off to the Ladies as if you were friends.

Prig. Ay, with all my heart; what care I?

Y. Mag. Morbleau, *Brutal*.

The End of the Second Act.

ACT III.

Enter La. Cheatly, Carlos, Bellamore, Stanmore, Isabella, Theodosia, Gartrude, La. Busy, Young Maggot, Selfish, Prigg, Maggot, Lump.

Lump. **L**ady Sister, *I* am much offended to see you take this course of Vanity; would any wise Woman make use of Fiddlers, Minstrels and Singers? *I* am very much ashamed of it; it is folly, great folly, not becoming the blood of the *Lumps*.

Isab.

Isab. Lets withdraw, we shall have a Lesson from this formal Uncle. [*Ex. all but L. Cheat. Lump, Prigg, and Old Maggot.*]

Gart. I can't abide him.

Lump. What pleasure can there be to hear Fellows scrape upon Cats-guts? There's nothing in't.

L. Cheat. 'Tis the way to get credit at our end of the Town, as singing Psalms, and praying loud in a fore-Room, is at yours.

Lump. You talk not wisely; do not several godly men by those means, and by frequenting Meetings, get credit enough to break for a hundred thousand pound, and are made by it for ever.

Mag. He is one of the wisest men of the Nation, he is a mighty sober, solid Fellow, and a rare man at business, and loves business mightily.

Lump. And for the Wits that come hither, I doubt not but these Gentlemen are of my opinion; I say, they are dangerous, scandalous, and good for nothing.

Mag. 'Tis true, Madam, they are a company of flashy, frothy Fellows, and have no solidity in them.

L. Cheat. I find these Coxcombs mistake dulness for solidity. [*aside.*]

Prig. They talk of Wit, and this and that, and keep a Coyl and a Pother about Wit, there's nothing at all in't, what a Pox is't good for? I would not give a farthing for Wit; here's *Young Maggot*, and *Selfish*, why they don't know how to bett at a Horse-Race, or make a good Match at Tennis, and are cross-bitten at Bowls; hang Wit.

Mag. Wit is one of the Grievances of the Nation.

Lump. It is, as this Gentleman has wisely observ'd, a Grievance, a fore Grievance, and I would have an Act of Parliament against it.

Mag. Let me take a Wit at Business, see how I'll handle him, *I* would not be a Wit for all the World.

Prig. Nor *I* neither, *I* hate it, they are a company of fleering, jeering, ill-natur'd Fellows to boot too.

L. Cheat. Be comforted, Gentlemen, you are in no danger.

Lump. *I* say they are in danger, and you too, of catching it; if you suffer them to come amongst ye; *I* have known solid men, by keeping that base company, become Witty, and have ruin'd themselves; for my own part, *I* would as soon catch the Plague, as that Disease of Wit.

L. Cheat. Oh Brother! you have a strong Antidote against it.

Lump. Thanks be to Heaven, *I* have Wits! out upon 'em; they write Satyrs upon good men, and will laugh at wise men,

L. Cheat.

L.Cheat. Why truly, Brother, sometimes wise men will provoke 'em very much.

Lump. You are i'th wrong.

Enter Steward.

Steward. Here is your Scrivener, Mr. *Lump*, and several others met, upon Money-business.

Lump. I ordered mine to come to you; I have four thousand pound paid in this day, which you may use; I will leave my Scrivener to take your Assignments, either of Bonds, Judgments, or Mortgages, as it shall happen to be dispos'd by you.

L.Cheat. But will the Scrivener be true, and publish it to be my Money?

Lump. I warrant you, he's a godly Man, and you may trust him, he has contributed more to your Fame than any one; I my self have brought in *Ananias*, and he will send Money to you, to put out for him. 'Tis near four, I must be gone; though hast does not become a wise man, yet at the present I have some upon me.

L.Cheat. The hast of a Fool is the slowest thing in the World.

Lump. It is my hour of Walking.

L.Cheat. Will you not stay and take the Assignments?

Lump. I will not break my Method for the World; I have these twenty years walk't through *Turn-stile Alley* to *Holborn Fields* at Four, all the good Women observe me, and let their Bread into the Oven by me, and by no other Clock; when I go by, I hear 'em call, Carry the Bread to the Oven, the old Gentleman is going by; I do love to be taken notice of for my Method. Farewel. [*Ex.Lump.*

L.Cheat. Let's into the Garden.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

Enter Bell. and Isab.

Bell. By Heaven, I love thee more than light or liberty, joy of my heart.

Isab. Such hearts as yours are seldom near their mouthes.

Bell. A kiss of this fair hand will bring mine thither; 'tis there, but if it were your lips, where would it be?

Isab. Raptures in Love have no more meaning in 'em than Rants in Poetry, meer Fustian; 'tis the stum of Love that makes it fret and fume, and fly, and never good.

Bell. Can a young Lady in so warm an Age be insensible of Love?

Isab. A vertuous Woman is ever insensible of such a Love as is unfit for her; but you Sparks, like Wolves, after many battels, by often preying upon Carkasses, come at last to venture upon the living:

ving: modest or not, 'tis all one to you, you are so well flesht.

Bell. Not so, Madam; I know my duty and your worth, and would time stand still, I could be content to gaze upon that face, and not tempt you; but our Love is frail, and we must take our pleasures while we may.

Isab. I must consider while I may, and on the shore think on the ruines of a shipwrackt Fame.

Bell. We shall never reach Love's *Indies*, if we fear tempests already.

Isab. Think not to conquer me by dint of Simile, I'll never venture the pain and peril of such a bold Voyage.

Bell. As tender Barks make it daily, and return home richly fraught, keep Coaches, and live splendidly the rest of their lives.

Isab. Infamously rather.

Bell. I know not that; but they have their days of Visiting, play at Ombre, make Treats as high and as often as the Persons of Quality, wear as good cloaths, and want no fashionable Folly that Woman's heart can wish for, and of all such my *Isabella* shall ride Admiral.

Isab. Can you pretend to love, and tempt me from my Honour? Coaches and Cloaths! so Rogues will rob, to live like Gentlemen.

Bell. 'Tis no dishonour, custom has made it otherwise.

Isab. When a Man of Honour can turn Coward, you may prevail on me; the case is equal.

Bell. On the contrary, Kindness in Women is like Courage in Men.

Isab. Did not the general licence of the time excuse you, I ne'r would see you more.

Bell. What will nothing down, but to have and to hold? I'll marry no body else, and when my inclination dies, leave you its wealthy Widow, you may marry after it.

Isab. I'll bring no infamy, where I bring my person.

Bell. This coldness inflames me more: consent to my desires, and none of all the Ladies shall outshine, no Equipage exceed yours.

Isab. And I the while shall be but a part of your Equipage, to be kept; what is it but to wear your Livery, and take Board-wages?

Bell. I love you well enough to marry you, but dare not put my self into your hands, knowing what a Jade I am at a long Journey.

Isab. If you ever loved, you can never hate, and I can be content where I have had the best, to keep the rest, and if you love me less, shall lay the fault on Nature, not on you.

Bell. It goes more against a man's heart to fall in his Love, than his Expence, and they that do either, most commonly remove for it,

there is no enduring it in the same place. Think on my Love, my Fortune shall be yours.

Isab. I scorn a Fortune, with the ruine of my Honour.

Bell. It is but heading with another sort of People, leaving the melancholy hypocrites for the gay chearful sinners, the envious for the envyed.

Isab. These tales may catch unheedful silly Creatures, whom Nature half debauches to your hands; but for my self I swear.

[*La. Busy appears to em.*

La. Busf. Swear not, ungracious Child, I have heard all your Discourse; the Gentleman is a fine Gentleman, and his proposals are as reasonable as any Lady can wish for; every man cannot bring himself to marry, and yet may love better and longer than those that do.

Bell. Right, Madam: this is an unexpected assistance.

La. Busf. There's Mr. *Maggot* kept Mrs. *Wagtail*, after the whole Town had done with her, and loves her very well still; nay, some have not grutch'd to spend ten thousand pounds upon a Mistress, though they have starv'd their Wives and Children.

Isab. Have you see'd this Lady to plead for you, or is it the baseness of her own Nature?

La. Busf. Is my Charity thus rewarded? my Honour question'd I that am companion to the Ladies of the best quality, the jealous Lord thinks his Lady safe in my company, my Honour is dearer to me than all the World, and but for endeavouring to have you well settled in the World, as I have my Daughters, do I deserve this?

Isab. She is as silly as she's naught; when you see me next, bring nobler thoughts and better purposes. And so farewell. [*Ex. Isabella.*

Bell. What a Devil shall I do? She's vertuous, and fit enough for a Wife; Ounds, how that word makes me start? but all this may be a copy of her countenance, there may be Huffs in vertue as well as courage.

La. Busf. I hope, Sir, you'll not conceive amiss for what she says.

Bell. No, Madam: Pox on this Bawd, I love the treason, but I hate the traitor. [*Ex. La. Busf. and Bellamore.*

Enter Stanmore.

Stan. Your humble Servant, Madam; has your Ladyship had the goodness to mind my Affair?

La. Busf. I have, Sir; I see her coming, retire, and let me alone. Come pretty Mrs. *Gatty*.

Enter,

Enter Mrs. Gartrude.

Gart. Your Servant, Madam.

L. Busy. Thou art a pretty Creature, ah! 'twould do a man good to lye by such flesh and blood as thou art ; all the matter is to chuse a good Bedfellow, and for that trust me ; there is the prettiest man, and the finest Gentleman not far off.—

Gart. Ay, so there is really ; Mr. *Selfish* is the finest person, so civil, and well bred, and is very ingenious too, I vow 'twould do one good to have such a Bedfellow.

L. Busy. You are out, 'tis Mr. *Stanmore* is the Man, and will make a good Settlement, go to, which the other cannot.

Gart. He is a fine Gentleman indeed, but really I don't care for a Wit, I do not know what to say before 'em ; but I can talk with Mr. *Selfish* all the day long, oh! he does tell such pretty Stories of himself! he is a very fair spoken man, and I'll swear he is the purest company for a Lady that ever was, and so handsom.

L. Busy. Not comparable to *Stanmore*.

Gart. Oh Gemini! that your Ladyship should say so.

L. Busy. I have experience in the World, I know what I say, your Lady Mother has desired me to take care to put you into the World: youth is indiscreet and unwary, trust us, and 'twill be your own another day ; I say, Mr. *Stanmore* will settle ten times more upon you than the other is worth.

Gart. But really, Madam, I must confess I don't love a Wit, they say they are not good natur'd, and they don't admire one half so much as others do neither.

L. Busy. Come, come, Madam, if a Wit will keep, he will serve as well as a Fool (let 'em say what they will) and you have a way to be too hard for the best of 'em for all their Wits.

Enter Selfish.

Gart. Oh Lord, here he is! I wonder you should say Mr. *Stanmore* is as handsom as he ; well, he's a lovely Man.

Self. Ladies, I kiss both your hands ; methinks I see the freshness of the Spring in one, and the fruitfulness of the Autumn in the other.

Gart. Oh rare, what a saying that is, and so like a Gentleman!

[*Stanmore enters.*

Stan. Now 'tis time to speak for my self ; she is very pretty, but why should I love a Fool, that loves a Fool? I see I am a devilish carnal Fellow, and mind nothing but the Body.

L. Busy. I'll steal out to my Lady, and leave you, we have business of consequence. [*Ex. L. Busy.*]

Stan. Madam, your humble Servant:

Self. Mr. *Stanmore*, your Servant ; were you not at the Audience this Afternoon ?

Stan. No, Sir.

Self. Indeed I have committed a great fault, to wait upon these Ladies, when the Court was to appear in all the splendor it could be, with all the well-drest and well-bred men about it, and I was not there ; I wish it be not taken ill.

Stan. O Vanity, vanity !

Self. I know I was miss't, and ask't for there, but I can mind nothing when Ladies are in the way, especially such pretty Creatures as Mrs. *Gatty*.

Gart. You are pleas'd to say so.

Stan. Well, my dear little one, I am resolv'd to be reveng'd upon this Beauty of yours, for making me so mad in Love with you.

Gart. Why, what will you do with it ?

Stan. I'll have no mercy on't, I'll never spare it, faith, you shan't think to make me in Love with you for nothing.

Self. I shall have a new Suit come home to morrow morning, in Mr. *Carlos* his fashion ; but I assure you 'tis something better fancied, both for the Colour and the Garniture.

Gart. Really, Sir, methinks Mr. *Selfish* is the prettiest modish person, and so gentile, is not he ?

Stan. S'heart, what an entertainment is this to me, that I should love such a thing ? don't mistake him, he is an Ass, I assure you.

Gart. Oh Lord, that you should say so now ! he does every thing so like a Gentleman, as my Lady *Busy* says, and is so well-bred.

Stan. Well-bred ? hang him, he is a finical Clown, he has not breeding enough for a *Valet de Chambre*.

Gart. What a strange man are you ? well, you Wits never speak well of one another, I vow.

Stan. Ounds, what a pretty Fool she is ? but I am vigorous still, her folly cannot thrust me off, so much as her beauty pulls me to.

Self. I am going to buy me a pretty convenient Coach, what Colour do you fancy, dear Mrs. *Gatty* ? I think Purple will suit best with my Complexion.

Gart. O yes, Purple will be very pretty.

Self. Nay, I'll say that for my self, my fancy always pleases the Ladies.

Ladies. Pretty Miss, let me see that delicate Busk, I will write a Distick upon it, and present it to you.

Gart. Pray do.

Self. Let me kiss that happy Busk, that goes so near your lovely body, and that delicate, sweet, white, soft hand that gave it me.

Gart. Well, he's a rare Man, and is so full of fine Courtship.

Stan. Do you know that I will not suffer you to smile, and cringe, and play the Monkey here?

Self. I cannot help it; if Ladies will love me, and be affected with my person, what is it to me?

Stan. Get you gone, you Coxcomb, I'll endure it no longer.

[he fillips him, and pulls off his Peruque.]

Gart. Nay, what have you done to poor Mr. *Selfish*?

Self. I wonder you should have no more breeding, one would have thought I might have taught you more in this time.

Gart. Pray let me help you, I'll set it right again.

Stan. Death and damnation! what's this?

Self. The Devil take me, if I could not find in my heart to ruffle your Cravat, before the Lady, for this outrage of yours.

Stan. Do you hear, Sir? be gone, and leave us, or by Heaven I will cut your Throat.

Self. Well, I cannot be ill bred, though you can, and therefore I take my leave. *[Ex. Selfish.]*

Gart. Nay, look you now, udds fiddles, what have you done? you have made Mr. *Selfish* go away. I'll follow him, that I will.

Enter Lady Cheatly and Maggot.

L. Cheat. Do you hear, Minx? be civiller, than I hear you are, to Mr. *Stanmore*, and know, I'll turn you out of my house, if you think on *Selfish*. Sir, your Servant.

Gart. Oh lack! what does she say?

Stan. Nay, I'll follow you. *[Ex. Gartrude and Stanmore.]*

Mag. Catch her, Man, she'll be a vast Fortune, my Lady wallows in money, she knows not what to do with it. But, good Madam, let me humbly petition you to consider my passion, and have some regard to my Estate, which is a plentiful one. And then, Madam, for business, you see a proof; did you ever see a man tell money better than I do; I do all the Ladies business hereabouts, and great Persons, &c.

L. Cheat. I must first consider of reducing my Estate into some order, before I think of disposing my Person.

Mag.

Magg. If any Man follicits your business like me — try me, Madam, I do every thing for the Ladies.

Enter Steward.

Stew. Madam, I have private business for your Ladyship's Ear.

Mag. Your Servant, Madam, I will retire, be pleased to consider me. [*Ex. Maggot.*

Stew. My business concerns your Ladyship and my self so nearly, that you must pardon me, if I urge it home.

L.Cheat. What means he? [*Aside.*

Stew. That I have serv'd you faithfully, your self can witness.

L.Cheat. I can, and I'll reward you largely.

Stew. 'Tis that I ask. Think, Madam, I have in your Service lost my honesty, lay'd by my conscience, and while I contribute to your fraud or others, I must not be deceiv'd my self.

L.Cheat. What will he drive at? I am sorry you ask for what I intended to give you; I did resolve to give you a thousand pound.

Stew. Do not I know that all the Bonds you have given to people, and the Assignments, and Declarations of Trust to your Brother, are written with the ink I bought of a great Artist, and that within a moneth it will wear out, and nothing will remain but blanks?

L.Cheat. What then? my Husband was cheated of his Estate by my Brother, and other Rascals, and 'tis fit I should take Letters of Reprisal.

Stew. No doubt. Your Bonds you have taken from others are written with ink I had of the same man, which (rub'd over with a spirit) makes impressions into many sheets, so that you have many Bonds for one, the sums are easily altered.

L.Cheat. What would this Rascal have? [*aside.*

Stew. A thousand pound! I scorn it, I aim at higher things, I am a Gentleman in birth, your Equal.

L.Cheat. Heaven and Earth! what have I brought my self to? When my Estate is out of dispute, I will increase your reward.

Stew. No, Madam; I have long honour'd and lov'd your Ladyship, and nothing less than your Person can ever satisfy me.

L.Cheat. How, Sir!

Stew. Hold, Madam; if you use me roughly, I in a moment will blast all your Fortunes, and you shall fly from hence as naked as you came; but if you'll marry me, I'll be as humble a Servant as I have been before.

L.Cheat. Insolent Villain. [*aside.*

Sure

Sure thou art not in earnest.

[to him.

Stew. By Heaven, I am, and I will perish, or attain my ends.

L.Cheat. He may undo me; Oh that I should lay my Plots so shallow! I must have a trick for the Rogue.

[aside.

Give me time to consider of it.

Stew. I can give none, nor will.

L.Cheat. Marriage would stop my business, and I shall get no more money of my Brother, or others.

Stew. We'll keep it private.

L.Cheat. (Though modesty would not let me propose it to you, and I would rather have died than done it) I must confess the thing I wish'd for upon Earth.

Stew. Then I am happy, and will serve you 'till my death.

L.Cheat. Forgive this frailty, and use me well, shame and blushes will confound me.

Stew. Dear Madam! there's no shame in Love and Marriage. I see she loves me.

[aside.

L.Cheat. There yet remains one difficulty; You are my main Witness, and (when we are married) you can be none; therefore if you will go to a Master in Chancery, and swear to all my Deeds, and make Affidavit to my false Estate, the next hour shall make you Master of me, and mine.

Stew. Hah! I may be catch'd, and after I have sworn to that, I have no hank upon her.

[aside.

Before, Madam, I never will; but after, for my own sake, I must. I'll get a Parson (whom I can trust) and none shall know of the Marriage but himself.

L.Cheat. This will not do, I must have another trick for the Rascal. [aside. You have convinc'd me; but I am engaged to a Parson already, whom I promised that Office to; I'll send for him presently.

Stew. I am transported with my happiness.

L.Cheat. Withdraw, Sir, I'll come to you instantly.

Enter Prigg.

Hah! this Fellow shall be my Engine, and I must lose no time.

L.Cheat. I am glad you are come; I have a business to communicate to you, that concerns you nearly, in which you must be secret.

Prig. Does it concern my Honour? Madam, I'll cut their throats.

L.Cheat. No, Sir, it concerns your Love.

Prig. Then I'll cut their throats too.

L.Cheat. No, it is not come to that; but just as I was resolv'd (ha-

ving

ving considered your passion, to bestow my self upon you.) —

Prig. Oh dear Madam! let me kiss your fair hand.

L.Cheat. Would you believe it? this villainous Steward having Writings in his hands for the greatest part of my Estate, is arriv'd to that insolence, he threatens to burn 'em, unless *I* will instantly marry him.

Prig. Oh dog! Rogue! your Servant, Madam, *I*ll cut his throat immediately.

L.Cheat. Hold, Sir, he's an odd humorous Fellow, and will not have his throat cut.

Prig. Will he not? why then *I*won't.

L.Cheat. *I* have design'd a better way, to put a false Marriage upon him, and you shall be my Chaplain, you can get the habit of a Parson.

Prig. Ay, ay, this is very pretty; I your Chaplain? ha, ha! if my face would but look solid enough for a Divine.

L.Cheat. I warrant you, 'tis a very judicious face, and will be very Parsonical.

Prig. Not so, a Gamster's at your service.

L.Cheat. And you can read the Common-Prayer, that's material; for some Gentlemen can scarce read now adays.

Prig. I warrant you, Madam: this will be the prettiest trick.

L.Cheat. When you have married him and me, about an hour hence (no body else being by) *I*ll take care to pack him far enough afterwards, and thus reserve my self for you. Get a Habit quickly, and lay it in the Closet, here's the Key, there you shall shift; *I* must be gone. [Ex. *L.Cheatly.*

Prig. Oh happy Man! *I* shall never need to sneak after a Lord, to sing Catches, break Jest, to eat and rook with him; well, *I*ll go no more to Twelve, that's certain; *I*ll get me a pack of Fox-Dogs, hunt every day, and play at the Groom-Porter's at night. [Ex. *Prig.*

Enter Theodosia and Isabella in the Garden.

Theod. Dear *Isabella*, how *I* love these solitary Walks, free from the noise and importunity of Men.

Isab. So much the contrary, that should you hear the ratling of a Coach, you'd be ready to leap over the Wall.

Theod. If it were *Bellamour's*.

Isab. Why *Bellamour's*? no, though you knew it to be a tired Hackney, with six dusty Passengers in't; thou art the giddiest Creature.

Theod.

Theod. I do not love to be solid as you are, and fix upon one Man ; 'tis better to like all, and love none.

Ifab. Thou hypocrite ; do not I know that none but *Carlos* can please you, he has caught you fast ?

Theod. No, never think so : Do but hear the Men talk of another, and 'tis antidote enough against 'em, they are as malicious as we Women, and would quarrel as often, if it were not for fear of fighting.

Ifab. Of all men I wonder *Stanmore* scapes it, he speaks well of no man.

Theod. 'Tis fit to speak ill of Fops, who were lost to the World, if men of Wit might not show 'em.

Ifab. For ought I see, laughing at them does them no hurt ; for they rise and get Fortunes for all that ; Fools are lawful prize ; but *Stanmore* speaks ill of witty men.

Theod. When the witty men fall upon one another, they make sport for the fools, and so laughing goes round, no matter how.

Ifab. *Stanmore* says, *Carlos* has an ill breath, and takes Physick of a *French Surgeon* ; and that *Bellamore* keeps a Player, and will run out his Estate.

Theod. And yet you see how dear they are one to another when they meet, 'tis the fashion.

Enter Gartrude.

Gart. Oh Sister, come hither ! here are four men measuring of swords, I believe they are going to fight in the next field:

[*Carlos, Prigg, Stanmore, and Young Maggot* in the field.

Yo. Mag. How shall I kill this *Prigg* ? he wants two of his vital parts, a Brain and a Heart.

Prig. I'll spoil your writing ; have at your Madrigal arm, you Wit you. [Prigg disarms Yo. Mag. and comes up to Carlos.

Stan. *Carlos*, you see our advantage.

Car. And scorn it ; have at you first. [He disarms Prigg. Now, Sir, for you. [to Stanmore.

Stan. We are friends, I love thee, prithee let it alone.

Car. Not so great friends, I over-heard you speaking ill of me to my Mistress.

Stan. Prithee *Carlos*, that's nothing ; we all speak ill of one another, and it goes for nothing.

Car. I am not of your opinion, have at you. [Carlos disarms Stanm.

Stan. At you ? well, you have it, and I am glad I had to do with a brave man.

Car. You are men of Honour, and may be trusted with your swords; let's in amongst the Ladies, as if nothing had pass'd between us.

Prig. You may do what you will; but the valiant *Prig* desires his Widow may hear of his prowess at least.

Yo. Mag. That I should be worsted by an Ass.

[*Exeunt.*]

The Ladies re-enter.

Gert. I am afraid *Carlos* has hurt honest Mr. *Stanmore*; but *Carlos* is a fine Gentleman, and fights so like a Gentleman; he said the prettiest things to me in an Arbor, Mr. *Selfish* could not have courted me at a higher rate, I vow I begin to like him strangely, I like a Wit better than I did.

Isab. Thou'lt like any Body.

Theod. Pray Heaven *Carlos* be not hurt.

Isab. You seem disordered.

Theod. No, no, what makest thou think so?

Isab. I am confident *Carlos* is not hurt.

Theod. I think not of him.

Isab. I cannot blame you; I believe he has honesty to his wit, and honour to his courage, I never saw a finer Gentleman.

Gert. He has almost as taking a way with him as Mr. *Selfish*.

Theod. I don't like his face, 'tis too serious; his meen is stiff, and he dances ill.

Isab. You are too nice; his looks and meen are manly, and he dances like a person of quality; you are for a Page's face, and a dancing Master's legs, and I hate both.

Theod. Nay, never let's fall out about him.

Isab. If we should, he's here to part us.

Enter Carlos, Prigg, and Young Maggot.

Theod. He goes on faster with his task than I'd have him.

Yo. Mag. There is no living two hours out of the *Beau mond*; I am out of the Lady's company like a Fish out of the water; is not that well said, *Prigg*?

Prig. Not at all, the Devil take me.

Theod. Not so mute as a Fish, I hope.

Yo. Mag. No; we witty men are always talking, now and then two or three of us at a time, invention does so flow; but I had rather say one fine thing to a Lady, than twenty to the best Wits in Town.

Prig.

Prig. Say fine things? what a Pox don't we all speak alike? don't we all speak English?

Theod. Had you never a Mistress that was a Fool?

Yo. Mag. None are so gross but they guess when a man says a witty thing; when I say it, I am sure.

Prig. Pox on saying, I love doing a witty thing; to win a man's money is to out-wit him, I think, and I'll undertake to win yours at ten several Games.

Yo. Mag. What, cheat me?

Prig. No, upon the square, by meer judgment. A Wit is like a running Horse, good for no earthly thing beside; when did you ever know any of 'em well with a great Man, or so much as taken down to a Lord's house a Buck-hunting? they can drink some of 'em; but then they talk of Philosophy, History, Poetry, as if they came into company to study; this is stuff the Devil would not hear.

Theod. What would you have 'em talk of?

Prig. Why Dogs, Hawks and Horses, Crimp, Trick track, and Primero; make me a match at Bowls or Tennis over a Bottle; come, even or odd for two Pieces, I hate to be idle.

Isab. What an intolerable Fool is this?

Prig. There are three matches to be run at *New-market*, I'll bett money on every one of 'em: I'll hold you six to four of the Gelding against the Mare; gold to silver on the bay Stone-horse against the Flea-bitten; and an even fifty pound, or what you will.—

Yo. Mag. You need not run your self out of breath, I will never bett while I live.

Prig. Ladies, what think you of five merry Guineys? will either of you bett?

Theod. I do not like *Carlos* his talking so long with that Fool; she is young and handsom, she has beauty enough to invite, and folly enough to grant.

Prig. I hold five pound I make a Tennis-ball lye upon that Stand once in thrice.

Isab. This Fellow has no Genius but to play, nor no argument but a wager.

Yo. Mag. One that wants Wit, deserves not to bear the figure of a Man.

Theod. Such Fellows are but cyphers to you men of Wit, they make you of greater value.

Yo. Mag. I'll swear that's well said, I don't think I could have said better my self.

Prig. What will you give me for this Ring at the day of Marriage?

Carlos. You are so pretty, and so obliging, there's no resisting both. But will you come and see my Lodgings? I have the finest *French* things.

Gert. Really, Sir, you are so courteous and well-behaved, I cannot deny you coming; you put me so in mind of Mr. *Selfish*, you have his way with you to a hair: do you write too? he is a very pretty Poet.

Car. Were I not sharp set, this would turn my stomach: *Selfish* steals all he writes out of *French* Poetry; he has neither Wit nor Money but what he borrows, forget him, and I'll be your Servant.

Gert. You shall promise to be very civil, when I come.

Car. She is very easie, pray Heaven she be sound; I'll promise any thing. [*aside.*

—Well, *Theodosia*, if I be false, 'tis your command has pusht me into temptation.

Prig. Come, here's ten Guineys, I'll lay 'em upon my Toe, and in six times kick 'em all into my mouth.

Isab. And what if you do?

Prig. Talk of Wit; I'll play at Prick-penny for twenty pound, with any one here.

Car. I am for you at Tennis.

Prig. I'll give you a bisk at *Longs* for ten pound.

Theod. Bowling methinks is better.

Prig. I'll give him one in seven for ~~four shillings~~. *fifty pound*

Car. We had better reserve our strength; I'll hunt to morrow.

Prig. With all my heart; hollo, hey *Ringwood*, *Rockwood*, *Fowler*; hey. Well, I'll go and play in the mean time: Pox, this is the basest company, there's no money stirring. [*Ex. Prigg.*

Theod. What could you do with that Fool all this while?

Car. In obedience to your command, I suffered her impertinence: You are a very Tyrant; your Beauty obliges me to love none but you, and yet you'll have me make Love to all; flesh and blood is not able to bear it.

Theod. Not so: I would have you gain their esteem, and be cryed up among 'em; using us scurvily, often does that; Women love the careless, insolent, and loud.

Car. Faith, Madam, I am a moral man, I do as I would be done by.

Theod. I would not be in Love with you for a million, 'twould tempt you horribly.

Car. It would tempt me to vanity, but never to ingratitude.

Theod.

Theod. Vanity and ingratitude are as inseparable as old age and ugliness ; they that think too well of themselves, ever think too ill of others ; and I will give you no temptation of any kind.

Car. You are nothing but temptation ; your face, your shape, your voice, nay, your very coldness is a tempter, and therefore have a care on't.

Isab. You have met with the greatest Tyrant of our Sex:

Car. The greatest Conqueror : But she has too much goodness for a Tyrant ; however, I'll tire her cruelty with my patience, and I'll hold her the greatest wager in the World that I get her heart at last.

Theod. You have a pretty confidence ; pray what's your wager ?

Car. A Wedding-night:

Theod. Who shall be Judg ?

Car. Your Friend here.

Theod. I can't have a better ; done:

Car. Done, Madam ; I am sure good service and perseverance will gain a reasonable Woman, where there is not a down-right antipathy, and I am resolved never to give you over.

Theod. Love in this Age is as well counterfeited as Complexion ; what with the Men's lying and swearing, and the Women's waters and washes, we know not what to make of one another.

Car. Try me with Commands.

Theod. I must have you Poetical, that's a great sign of Love in a Man of Wit ; I must have Songs and Sonnets plenty.

Car. Very well.

Theod. I must never have you see a Play but when I am there:

Car. That is, I must see none at all ; for when you are there, I can see nothing but your self.

Theod. Then upon no pretence whatsoever must you go behind the Scenes.

Car. That's grown the sign of a Fop, and for my own sake I'll avoid it.

Theod. But the Women have Beauty and Wit enough to hearken to a Keeper.

Car. Some of 'em are so far from having Wit of their own, that they spoyl that little the Poets put into 'em, by base utterance ; and for Beauty they lay it on so, that 'tis much alike from fifteen to five and forty.

Theod. Item, You must not talk with Vizors in the Pit, though they look never so like Women of quality, and are never so coming.

Car.

Car. Be it so: I never knew any good come of that way of fooling yet; for if they were afraid of me, I was ever more afraid of them. But how shall I arrive at the general Fame and Reputation you spoke of, with these restraints? The Men in vogue forbear none of all these things; they dive like Ducks at one end of the Pit, and rise at the other, then whisk into the Whore-Boxes, then into the Scenes, and always hurry up and down, the Devils in an *Opera* are not so busie.

Theod. You must take other Courses.

Car. I have bespoken a Play for you, and all the good company of this House; when the other is done, I hope, Madam, you will honour it with your presence.

Theod. I'll do as the rest do.

Isab. This is a new piece of Gallantry, *Theodosia.*

Theod. The invitation's general.

Gar. How mad would they be, if they knew this were meant to me?

Enter Maggot, unseen by the rest.

Yo. Mag. Now pretty Mrs. *Gartrude*, and the rest of the good company, I have the Poem about me, which I told you I writ upon Beauty; 'tis elaborate, I kept my Chamber about it as long as a Spark does, of a Clap, or a Lady of a Child; I purged, and bled, and enter'd into a Diet about it, and that made me have so clear a Complexion, and write so well, and brought down my Belly, too.

Mag. How now, Wit! let me see that damn'd Poem you lay in of so long, when you should have studied the Law.

Yo. Mag. Oh Heaven! I am undone.

Mag. I shall spoyle that Moneth's Work.

Yo. Mag. Ladies, pray intercede for me, and save my Poem.

Theod. Hold, Sir, reprieve it:

Yo. Mag. 'Tis not mine, 'tis a Friend's of mine.

Mag. Ah graceless Fool! the worst Friend thou hast, thy self thou meanest. *[He tears it, and scatters it.]*

Yo. Mag. Save this, and I will never be witty again.

Mag. No, Sir, there, there, so, 'tis done: By Heaven, touch a piece on't, and I'll disinherit you. *[Yo. Mag. goes to gather up the pieces.]*

Car. Let me intercede for him, he'll mend, and be less witty every day.

Yo. Mag. Forgive me once, and I'll mend, and be as dull as an old fat Alderman, that sleeps over Justice at the *Old-Baily*.

Mag. At your Simile's again, Oh you incorrigible Wit! let me see what Poetry you have about you. *Yo.*

Yo. Mag. Ladies, for Heaven's sake, plead for me, or I am utterly ruin'd: Sir, will you disgrace me before my Mistress *Gartrude*?

Mag. Hang you, *Coxcomb*; she hates Wit, because she's a fool, as I do, because I am wise. Stand still. [*He pulls out bundles of Papers.*]

Yo. Mag. Mercy upon me! what will become of me?

Isab. Good Mr. *Maggot*, be more merciful.

Mag. What's here? A Poem call'd, *A Posie for the Ladies Delight*. A second, *The Flower of Love's Constancy*. - *An Answer to it*. *Disticks to write upon Lady's Busks*. *Epigram written in a Lady's Bible in Covent-Garden-Church*. Oh wicked Wit! *Posies for Wedding-Rings*, Oh idle Rake-hell! I shall have you come to write to Tobacco-Boxes, and Sword-Blades, and Knives, and to all the Iron-work at *Sheffield*; all these go to it.

Yo. Mag. Hold, good Sir, hold; upon my knees I beg you'd hold: here cut off this Joynt, this, this, any Joynt about me, so you'll spare my Poetry.

Theod. Have pity on the poor Gentleman.

Gar. Oh pray give me those upon the Busks.

Mag. Not one shall live to make him in favour: Must you needs be a Wit, to the dishonour of your Family, and the disturbance of your good old Father's ashes? I never knew one of our Family before. I'll alter my Will instantly. [*Ex. Maggot.*]

Yo. Mag. Nay, now you may hang me and you will, now you have torn my Poetry, I have never a Copy of any of 'em; I will go hide my self in a hole, and never shew my head again. [*Ex. Yo. Mag.*]

Car. Come, Ladies, shall we prepare for the Play after this Farce?

Isab. With all our hearts.

The End of the Third Act.

ACT IV.

Enter *Carlos*, *Theodosia*, *Prigg*, *La. Cheatly*, *Maggot*, *La. Busy*, *Bellamore*, *Isabella*, *Stanmore*, *Gartrude*, *Young Maggot*, and *Selfish*, and others coming into the Play-house, seating themselves.

The Scene, *The Play-house.*

Isab. BY being masqued, I shall observe *Bellamore's* Actions.

Gert. NOW no Body will know me; they'll take me for you in this Petticoat. [*Isab.*]

Ifab. If you hold your Tongue, Sister ; but that makes a great difference betwixt us.

Gart. Ay ; but I'll whisper, and they shall not know my voice.

Ifab. But they'll soon discover your sence.

Car. My dear Mistress, since you accept my service, I am resolv'd to ply you so, that I must win at last.

Theod. You are very resolute, and shall find me so ; you think to go on like the *French King* ; we shall have you do as he does by a Town in *Flanders*, set a day when you will take it.

Car. I hope to corrupt you within with Love, and make my conquest the easier.

Bell. I wonder *Isabella* is not here, *Stammore* ; I am so damnably in Love, I am afraid thou'lt never own me ; I am a very Recreant.

Stan. My Mistress is not here neither ; her folly has a little cool'd my Love ; but I have a most abominable lust to her, the wiser passion of the two, and no despair : Though that Rogue *Selfsb* has her Mind, I do not doubt but to get her Body, which is worth two of it for my use.

To. Mag. I wonder pretty Mrs. *Gartrude* is not here.

Self. I am amaz'd at it ; for she knew I was to come.

A great knocking at the Door. Enter Door-keeper.

Car. How now ! What means that knocking ?

Door-keep. Sir, Ladies and several Gentlemen knock to get in.

Car. Let the Ladies in for nothing, but make the Men pay.

[*Ex. Door-keeper.*

Prig. Had you ever such a Chaplain ? I was so disguis'd, he could not suspect me ; methinks I dispatch'd the business as well, as if I had been used to be married my self.

L.Cheat. 'Twas very well. I have since gotten my Deeds from him ; and because he was a main Witness to many of my Bonds, and Mortgages, I have made him swear to 'em all before a Master in Chancery, upon pretence that when it should be known he was my Husband, his testimony would not be good.

Prig. Ha ! ha ! ha ! This was the prettiest invention, and will make well for us. But where is the Fool ?

L.Cheat. There is a Kinsman of mine going for the *Indies*, I sent him to him with an hundred pound for a Venture, and have taken care he shall not come back again ; for he'll clap him under Hatches, carry him away, and sell him for a Rogue as he is ; he sayls this Tide.

Several

Several more come in, Women mask'd, and Men of several sorts.

Several young Coxcombs fool with the Orange-Women.

Orange-Wo. Oranges; Will you have any Oranges?

1 Bull. What Play do they play? some confounded Play or other.

Prig. A Pox on't, Madam! what should we do at this damn'd Play-house? Let's send for some Cards, and play at Lang-trilloo in the Box: Pox on'em! I ne'r saw a Play had any thing in't; some of 'em have Wit now and then, but what care I for Wit.

Self. Does my Cravat fit well? I take all the care I can it should; I love to appear well. What Ladies are here in the Boxes? really I never come to a Play, but upon account of seeing the Ladies.

Car. Door-keeper, Are they ready to begin?

Door-keep. Yes, immediately.

Self. Now you shall see the Ladies make up to me; where e're I am, they flock about me: I think I am one of the happiest Men on Earth; I thank Heaven every day for making me just as I am; *Bella-more.*

Bell. That's *Isabella*, I am sure, I know the Petticoat; what a Devil makes her talk to that Rogue? [*Gartrude chuses to sit by Selfish.*]

To. Mag. You'll find it an admirable Plot; there's great force and fire in the writing; so full of business, and trick, and very fashionable; it pass'd through my hands; some of us helpt him in it.

1 Bull. Dam'me! When will these Fellows begin? Plague on't! here's a staying.

2 Man. Whose Play is this?

3 Man. One *Prickett's*, Poet *Prickett*.

1 Man. Oh hang him! Pox on him! he cannot write; prithee let's to *White-hall*.

Y. Mag. Not write, Sir? I am one of his Patrons; I know the Wits don't like him; but he shall write with any of 'em all for an hundred pound.

Prig. Ay that he shall. They say, he puts no Wit in his Plays; but 'tis all one for that, they do the business; he is my Poet too; I hate Wit.

Enter several Ladies, and several Men.

Door-keep. Pray, Sir, pay me, my Masters will make me pay it.

3 Man. Impudent Rascal! Do you ask me for Money? Take that, Sirrah.

2 Door-keep. Will you pay me, Sir?

4 Man. No: I don't intend to stay.

2 *Door-keep.* So you say every day, and see two or three Acts for nothing.

4 *Man.* I'll break your Head, you Rascal.

1 *Door-keep.* Pray, Sir, pay me.

3 *Man.* Set it down, I have no Silver about me, or bid my Man pay you.

Theod. What, do Gentlemen run on tick for Plays?

Car. As familiarly as with their Taylors?

3 *Door-keep.* Pox on you, Sirrah! go, and bid 'em begin quickly.

[*Ex. Door-keeper.*]

They play the Curtain-time, then take their places.

Car. Now they'll begin. [*Selfish and Young Maggot go to sit down.*]

T. Mag. Don't come to us; let your Wits sit together.

Prig. These Fellows will be witty, and trouble us; go to your Brother Wits, and make a noise among your selves, Brother Wits.

[*They go on the other side.*]

Self. I am always hated by the Fools; but I think it rather out of envy than malice.

Bell. Faith! you shan't sit by us.

Stan. Gentlemen, Do not mistake your selves; for you are no Wits, though you are Poets, and we will not own you of our Party.

Yo. Mag. This is meer envy against us Writers, *Selfish.*

Self. It is so: I for my part will throw my self at a Lady's feet, play with her Fan, and fan her gently with it.

The Play begins.

Enter Lover and Wife.

Lover. Dear Madam, Let us not omit any occasion; but take every opportunity by the hand, to improve those Amours, which have rendered us so happy, to be elevated above the reach of Envy.

Wife. Sir, I should not entertain a thought, that might in any wise be prejudicial to our Amours, or the improvement thereof, if I were not so extremely obnoxious to the great infelicity of being subject to a Husband, whose Jealousie has so much the Ascendant over him, that it renders him so vigilant, not seldom to interrupt our happiest hours.

Lover. That turbulent temper does too often disorder the fair quiet of his own mind, as well as discompose ours; and Jealousie proves as often an obstruction to his own tranquillity, as it does an impediment to our fruition.

Wife. It is a priviledge too absolutely imperious (which by a seem-

ing

ing Conjugal right) our Husbands' claim over us, to make so subtil a scrutiny into all our enterprizes, since they, with too great a regret, entertain the least motion of ours, whereby we would insinuate into their Affairs.

Lover. But since Fortune (by so many frequent Signalizations) has demonstrated how much she is a friend to us, in assisting us with so many Subterfuges, when most we have needed them, it will be a hainous tergiverlation from her, to abandon that trust we formerly have reposed in her, and she may justly take a Picque at our infidelity, and, in that Caprice, may contrive a revenge sutable to our delinquency.

Wife. Rather Fortune may be apt to believe us too audacious, in tempting her with so much importunity, that it must needs be more vexatious than agreeable; and while we make such vigorous addresses to another Deity, for ought we know, Love may wax jealous of our Applications to it: For though he's blind, he can descry, and will greatly resent our Dereliction; and, when he is incensed, his Nature is highly vindicative.

Lover. When Fortune takes such pains to assist us in our Amours, Love will certainly be very sensible of our Omission; and when he is once provok'd, he seldom buries Injuries in the grave of Oblivion.

Theod. This is very lewd Stuff: Is this the new way of Writing?

Car. A Man would think these Lovers in Plays did not care a farthing for one another, when they find nothing to do but to be florid, and talk impertinently when they are alone.

To.Mag. This is a very strong, sinewy, and correct Style, and yet neat, and florid.

Self. I have taught 'em all this way of Writing; I always strive to write like a Gentleman, so easie, and well bred.

Prig. These are very good Lines, faith.

T.Mag. Nay, 'tis admirably worded, that's the truth on't.

1 Man. Dam'me! I don't like it.

2 Man. Pox on the Coxcomb that writ it! there's nothing in't.

1 Man. God I love Drums, and Trumpets, and much ranting, roaring, huffing, and fretting, and good store of noise in a Play.

Lover. I have sufficiently confuted all your Argumentation; and nothing then remains, but that I should humbly petition to hold the Honour of your fair Embraces.

Wife. The Motion is so civil, and favours so much of a sincere Affection, that I can no longer resist it.

Lover. Let us retire.

Wife. Come.

[Ex. *Lover* and *Wife.*
Bell.

Bell. So: now they are come to the Matter in hand: But here comes the Husband.

The Husband knocks at the Door, and turns his back.

The Lover kicks him several times, and retires.

To. Mag. Now it begins to warm; 'tis an admirable Plot.

Self. Bellamore, See how kind the Ladies are to me: Pretty Rogue! Let me repose my Head in thy soft Bosom.

Bell. 'S death! What's this? She will not speak to me, yet suffers that familiarity with that Rascal, as if it were on purpose to provoke me.

Car. Why does not the Fool look where the Blows come?

Theod. Oh! that would spoyl the Plot.

Husband. This must be the Devil that strikes me: Some whoring Rogue or other is gotten with my Wife, and the Devil pimps for him; but I have a Key to a Back-door, and will surprize him. [*Ex. Husband.*]

Stan. I cannot find my Mistress; but I'll divert my self with a Vizard in the mean time.

1 Man. What, not a word? all over in disguise: Silence for your Folly, and a Vizard for your ill Face.

2 Man to a Vizard. Gad! some Whore, I warrant you, or Chamber-maid, in her Lady's old Cloaths.

[*He sits down, and lolls in the Orange-wench's Lap.*]

3 Man. She must be a Woman of quality; she has right Point.

4 Man. Faith! she earns all the Cloaths on her Back by lying on't; some Punk lately turn'd out of Keeping, her Livery not quite worn out.

Isab. I deserve this by coming in a Masque; and if I should now discover my self, 'twould make a Quarrel.

Prig. You shall see what tricks I'll play; faith! I love to be merry. [*Raps people on the Backs, and twirls their Hats, and then looks demurely, as if he did not do it.*]

Enter two Lovers, and Wife.

2 Lover. Have I catcht them? I was jealous of this before; but now I will make further discovery. [*2 Lover goes under the Table.*]

1 Lover. In verity it favours of Incivility, to interrupt our Joys in the middle of our Felicity; but since the barbarous Intruder is defeated, let us embrace the present occasion, which seems to court us.

Wife. If any thing which I can do can felicitate you, you may command my Person.

2 Lover. Oh damn'd Jade!

Enter

Enter *Husband*.

[*The Husband falls over a Form, and breaks his Shins, and puts out the Candle.*
Takes up the Candle, and blows it in again.]

Wife. Oh God! my Husband.*Lover*. 'S death! What shall we do?*To. Mag.* Now it thickens; an admirable Plot.*Husb.* Oh my Shins, my Shins!*Wife*. 'Tis as we wisht.*To. Mag.* There's a turn: Who would expect that? As great a turn as can be, from darkness to light: Can any thing be greater?*Lover*. Now we are undone again.*Husb.* Now tremble at my Vengeance, thou most perfidious Strumpet; for I will kill thee before thou prayest.*Wife*. What means my dearest Honey?*Husb.* Oh thou salacious Jade! Canst thou ask, when that stallion-Rogue is there?*Wife*. What Rogue? Art thou mad? Here's no Body.*Husb.* No Body? Why, who's that? thou most lascivious Quean!*Wife*. Where?*Husb.* There.*Wife*. I see no Body; thou art distracted.*Lover*. How I adore her for her Wit.*Husb.* What Fellow's that, Huswife?*Wife*. Which? I see none.*Husb.* But I do; and have at him first.*Wife*. Hold, my Dear; if thou seest any Body, it is the Devil; and if thou strik'st it, it will tear thee in pieces.*Husb.* Are you mad? Do you see no Body there?*Wife*. No, Heaven knows, not I. Oh Heaven! the House is haunted: What does it look like?*Husb.* Oh Lord! it looks like a Man: hah! Methinks he has glaring Eyes: Oh! Oh! I see his cloven Foot; this is that that struck me just now: Oh Heaven help me!*Wife*. Oh help? I swoond, I swoond.*Husb.* Oh my dear Wife! Oh the Devil!*Lover*. Have I caught you, Sir? [*Lover goes under the Table.*]*Lover*. Since you have, for the Lady's sake, don't discover me.*Wife*. Oh! Is it there still my Dear?*Husb.* No, I think 'tis gone; hah! 'tis vanish.*To. Mag.* Well, it concerns me so, I am not able to bear it.*Husb.* My poor Dear! I have wrong'd thee; prithee forgive me.*Wife*. I am always abus'd thus by you; I am too honest.*Husb.* Prithee forgive me, I will never tax thee more; but I must change my House, if it be thus haunted.*Wife.*

Wife. I am afraid to live here any longer ; do, my Dear.

Isab. I see *Bellamore* minds no Woman but my foolish Sister (whom, I fear, he takes for me) yet she is so ridiculouſly fond of that Fool, that he cannot reaſonably imagine I would be.

Self. Do you not ſee how fond that pretty Creature is of me ? I make no doubt but I ſhall enjoy her Perſon.

Bell. Damnation on this Rascal ! Can a Woman of ſo much Wit like him ? I'll watch her ; Women have odd, fantaſtick Appetites, and there's no truſting of 'em.

2 Lover. Tis too apparent that ſhe's falſe to me, and I'll revenge it, by diſcovering her to her Husband, for all her trick. [*They ſcuffle under the*

1 Lover. I will cut your throat, if you offer it. [*Table, riſe with it on*

2 Lover. Nay then, you Rascal, have at you. [*their Backs ; the Table*

Huſb. Oh villainous Woman ! Are theſe Spi- [*falls down ; they draw*

rits ? Now I am convinc'd, I know one Whore- [*their Swords, and fight.*

maſter too well to believe it. [*Prig ſtrikes a Bully over*

1 Man. Zounds you Rgue ! Do you play [*the Back he takes it to be*

your tricks with me ? [*another, and ſtrikes him.*

2 Man. Have at you, Dog. [*They fight ; Bell. Stan.*

Car. Impudent Rascals ! Have at you all. [*Car. beat the Bullies out*

of the Houſe ; the Actors run off ; Ladies run out ſhrieking.

Self. I will make good the Lady's Retreat. [*He retreats behind the*

Bell. Where is this *Selfiſh* gone ? I muſt watch him and the La- [*Ladies, with his Sword drawn.*

dy. [*Ex. Bellamore.*

Car. What Rascals and Cowards are theſe Bullies ? Where are the

Ladies ? Boy, go out, and bid the Players go on.

Enter *Theodoſia* and *Iſabella*.

Oh Madam ! I am aſham'd of this diſorder.

Theod. Are you not hurt, Sir ?

Car. Only a little in the Hand.

Theod. Come to morrow, and my ſhock Dog ſhall lick you whole. A Hurt in the Hand ? Why, 'tis gotten with opening of Oysters, and cured with a Cobweb.

Car. If you will but pity the Wounds you give your ſelf, I'll ne'r complain to you of any other.

Isab. *Theodoſia* may affect ill Nature, which perhaps her Heart is no more guilty of than mine. But, I am ſure, I am extremely troubled at your Hurt, and would not have you neglect it.

Car. You are too obliging ; 'tis ſlight, and worth neither of our cares.

Car.

Gart. Oh Lord ! Mr. *Carlos* is hurt, I shall swoon : Oh dear Sir ! my Heart went pit a pat all the while you were fighting.

Car. That pretty Heart should only leap for joy.

La. Busy. Sir, Pray let me be so happy, as to apply my white Oyntment ; 'tis very soveraign for a green Wound.

La. Cheat. I have a Balsom that never fails, and I were most unhappy, if one I esteem so well, should miscarry for want of it.

Theod. Here's a doe about a slight Hurt ; a Butcher at the *Bear Garden* makes nothing of forty such : I would have the Sun shine through my Servant now and then.

Car. You would have one serve you as they do a Mountebank, to be run through for him.

Isab. I cannot rest till I see if *Bellamore* be wounded. [Ex. *Isab.*

Enter one of the Actors.

Actor. Sir, We cannot go on with our Play, one of our young Women being frighted with the Swords, is fallen into a Fit, and carried home sick.

Car. Boy, Go and find the Company ; I have prepar'd an Entertainment upon the Stage ; we'll have an Entry, a Song, or some Musick ; there is no loss of the Play, this *Prickett* can write none but Low Farce, and his Fools are rather odious than ridiculous.

Theod. You are once in the right.

Car. My cruel Mistress ! You see I had some Favour from every one but your self.

Theod. I believe it has cost you five pound in penny gleeke, to get the good Will of the old Ladies ; and the hopes of Marriage has prevail'd upon the young ones.

Car. I was never so serious as that comes to, with any but your self.

Theod. No more of this ; I accept your Entertainment.

The Scene changes to the Stage and Scenes.

Enter Selfish and Gartrude.

Self. Now if your Love has any resolution, you may enjoy me, and make yourself the happiest Lady in Town, and please me too.

Gart. Indeed you are so well bred, and so much a Gentleman, the Ladies cannot but love you.

Self. I have no reason to complain.

Gart. And then you dress so finely.

Self. Indeed most young Fellows when they come to Town, dress at me : But, pretty Creature, let us retire.

Gart. What you please, dear Sir, if you'll be civil.

Self. Pretty Soul ! how she loves me ? I am a Rogue to be false to these poor Creatures : While they divert themselves with the vulgar Entertainments of Musick and Dancing, I will steal the happiest minute that Love and Beauty can afford.

Gart. You shall not need to steal, I'll give you any thing : But will you make a Song on me ?

Self. Thou shalt be my *Chloris*, my *Phyllis*, *Cælia*, my All : Let's away my Dear. [Ex. *Selfish* and *Gartrude*.

Enter *Bellamore*.

Bell. Whither is that Rascal carrying *Isabella* ? She must do this on purpose to make me mad ; for I can never believe she can like *Selfish*. I'll follow. [Ex. *Bell*.

Enter *Stanmore* and *Isabella*.

Stan. Well, You must be my Mistress ; my Heart beats, and I have a thousand Disorders upon me, which none but she can cause.

Isab. It beats a false Alarm for once, you see I am not she, but she is some-where behind the Scenes ; pray go, and look after her. [Ex. *Stan*.

Enter *Carlos* and *Theodosia*.

Theod. Prithee pull off thy Mask, and conceal thy self no longer.

Isab. Do not discover me. I hear *Bellamore* keeps a Player ; I am resolv'd to watch him, and see if I can make any Discovery.

Enter *Lady Cheatly*, *Lady Busy*, *Prigg*, and *Maggot*.

Mag. Madam, Your Ladyship is so pester'd with this Gamester *Prigg*, that I cannot have time to talk with you.

L.Cheat. I am so ; and I have Business of great concernment, to confer with you about ; wou'd I were rid of him.

Mag. I'll have a trick for him.

Prig. Sirrah *Maggot* ! I will not suffer you to talk to my Lady ; she is mine, you old Fool.

Mag. Come out, you young Blockhead, and let our Swords try whose she is.

Prig. Let's fight here ; I would have my Mistress see how I put in my Pass, and what a jerk I give it.

Mag. Thou o're-grown Coward !

L.Cheat. Gentlemen, I must not suffer quarrelling before me ; Mr. *Prigg* be more temperate.

Prig. I will, Madam ; though 'tis hard, when Love or Honour bids me draw.

Enter

Enter *Young Maggot*.

Yo. Mag. Gentlemen, Be not so much troubled, that the Play was interrupted by the Bullies; for I have a Poem about me, which I'll entertain you with, that perhaps may be more agreeable; I will read it to you.

Car. But first let's have a Dance.

Yo. Mag. With all my Heart.

L. Cheat. Do you hear, Carpenter? Can you make the Machine's Work? I shall have use of 'em.

Carpent. Yes, Madam.

L. Cheat. Pray be ready when I give you Order: Do you hear? Thus. Let us all sit and see this Dance. [*An Entry of Clowns.*

Enter *Lump*.

L. Cheat. My Brother's here; what shall we do now?

Lump. I am asham'd, Sister, of your Sin, and Vanity, and cannot in conscience let you alone in your evil ways. What makes you in this wicked place? this sink of sin? this house of Abominations? where wise men, and godly men are abus'd: It is great wickedness, and I cannot be silent; my zeal and wisdom will not let me be silent.

L. Cheat. Brother, Have a little Breeding, as well as Zeal and Wisdom, and do not disturb the Gentlemen.

Lump. I care not for Breeding; shall Zeal and Wisdom give place to that? I say, 'tis not lawful, 'tis sinful, 'tis abominable, to come under the Roof with these Hornets; there is Wit, flashy Wit stirring here; and I would as soon be in a Pest-house.

L. Cheat. I must comply with those I have designs upon, for my Fortune's sake, and for my Daughter's.

Lump. That does something mollifie the sin; but it is too great, and I cannot bear it: Cannot you take religious Courses, in order to your design, and then you may serve Heaven and your self together? You are foolish, very foolish, and have no method in you.

Car. This Gentleman is going to read a pious Poem to us; pray do not interrupt him.

Lump. Sir, I must interrupt him, I have a Call, a great Call to it; all Poetry is abominable, and all Wit is an Idol, a very *Dagon*, I will down with it; all the wise and godly Party of the Nation hate Wit.

Yo. Mag. None but Fools hate Wit, and those that cannot think; for my part, I will venture my Blood in defence of Poetry.

Lump. I will preach against it, while I have breath.

Yo. Mag. Peace, Fool! I will read on.

Lump. Sister, You shall not hear it; 'tis prophane, abominable, a

Grace-resisting, Soul-destroying, Conscience-choaking, most unutterably Sin-nourishing thing, and I cannot bear it ; I cannot suffer it.

Lady Cheatly whistles, two mock-Devils descend and fly up with Lump.

Murder, murder, What dost thou do, Satan? whither dost thou fly with me?

To. Mag. This is very well: Ha! ha! ha! now I may read in quiet.

Prig. Pray, my Dear, let's be going; I hate this Wit; I think Mr. *Lump* is in the right.

L. Cheat. Sit but a while, and I'll go.

To. Mag. Beauty, thou great preserver of the World, [reads.]
By which into dead Lumps quick life is hurl'd.

L. Cheat. So, now I shall have time to speak with you.

[Ex. *Mag.* *L. Cheatly*, *Lady Busy*.

Prigg and Young Maggot are carried up in their Chairs, and hang in the Air.

Prig. Hold! hold! Murder! murder! What a Devil do you mean? My Dear! Honey! Where is my Lady? Madam! Madam!

To. Mag. What can this mean? But hold, I'll read on, if you will.

Beauty, thou great &c. [All go out, and leave 'em hanging.]

Prig. They are all gone; what shall I do? Pox on your Wit, Sirrah! This is your Wit, you damn'd Wit, you.

To. Mag. You lye, Fool! 'tis a Wheadle, a Cross-bite of the Widow's.

Prig. Oh you damn'd scribbling, senseless, sing-Song Wit!

To. Mag. Oh you damn'd, gaming, Jocky, hunting, Tennis-Fool!

Enter *Bellamore*.

Bell. Hell, and Damnation! What have I seen? A Curse on all the Sex! Is this the Vertue she pretended to? To be lewd with so despicable a Coxcomb as *Selfish*, so nauseous a Fellow! Death and Hell!

Prig. Hark you, *Bellamore*: Prithee help me down.

To. Mag. Pray let me down.

Bell. Pox on you both!

Enter *Selfish*.

Self. Ah *Bellamore*! I am the happiest Man, I think, that ever the Sun shin'd on: I have enjoy'd the prettiest Creature, just now, in a Room behind the Scenes: I cannot help telling of thee, because thou art my Friend; Faith! telling is half the pleasure to me; for I confess to thee, I think, we that are happy in Lady's Affections, make Love, as much for Vanity, as any thing else: You know the Lady.

Bell. Damn the Dog. [aside.]

'Twas one of my Lady *Cheatly's* Daughters; which of 'em was it?

Self. Well, I can keep nothing from thee; it was one of 'em; but upon

upon your Honour keep it secret; guess which; they are both desperately in Love with me, hah!

Bell. Impudent Rascal and Coxcomb!

[*He strikes him, then beats him with his Sword.*]

Self. What ill Breeding is this? Are you distracted?

Isab. Heaven! What's the matter? Hold, hold.

Bell. Be gone, Rascal, or I'll run you through.

Self. I will not be uncivil before a Lady, another time I shall call you to an account; an ill-bred Fellow!

[*Ex. Selfish.*]

Isab. What's the reason of this Quarrel?

Bell. Here, Carpenter.

Carpent. Here, Sir.

Bell. Let down those Fools, and dispose of 'em, so they may not trouble us.

Prig. So, this is well:

Yo. Mag. *Bellamore*, I thank you.

[*Carpenter lets 'em down, and presently they sink down and roar out.*]

Bell. You know too well the occasion of the Quarrel.

Isab. What do you mean?

Bell. Is all your pretence of Vertue come to this? and must my Love be thus rewarded?

Isab. This rudeness of yours amazes me.

Bell. 'Tis I have cause to be amazed, to be refus'd the Favour, and you to grant it to that filthy Fool, *Selfish*; there's nothing but dissembling, treachery, and ingratitude in your whole Sex.

Isab. A Favour to *Selfish*? The Fool of all the World, I scorn and hate the most; but now I see you'll give me occasion to rank you with him.

Bell. No, you shall never rank me with him; I scorn to be oblig'd to one, who is so free to lay out her self upon such an Ass.

Isab. Has that vain Rascal lyed on me? and do you believe him?

Bell. My Eyes will not lye, Madam; I will trust them; and though you have let down your Skirt, I know the Petticoat too well.

Isab. Unworthy Man! I could stab thee for this Affront, but that thou art not worthy of a serious thought. Is this the Petticoat you mean? What has my foolish Sister done?

Bell. How? this is not the Petticoat.

Enter Stanmore and Gartrude bare-faced.

Heaven and Earth! 'twas *Gartrude*, I see now.

Isab. I scorn and hate thee for thy base suspicion, more than all Mankind.

Bell. Madam, I am a Dog, a Villain, not fit to live ; kill me, for if you forgive me not, I'll do't my self.

Isab. I'll never see thy odious Face again, do what thou wilt ; fare-wel base Man. [Ex. *Isabella.*

Bell. Hell and Devils! What has my Rashness brought me to? [Ex. *Bell.*

Stan. Pretty Miss ! Be not so troubled ; I have us'd thee kindly, very kindly.

Gart. Kindly ? Oh sad ! I'll tell my Mother what you have done to me, so I will.

Stan. Thou art not mad, Child ! Prithee don't.

Gart. But I was mad to let you be so uncivil, and I will tell her ; here she is.

Enter *La. Busy*, *La. Cheatly*, and *Maggot*.

Stan. S'heart ! What a Fool she is ? I'll not stand the brunt. [Ex. *Stan.*

Mag. Well, Madam, I'll dispatch the business, and wait on you again. [Ex. *Maggot.*

Gart. Oh Madam ! what shall I do ? what shall I do ?

L. Cheat. What's the Matter ?

Gart. I thought what 't would come to ; you charg'd me to be civil to *Stanmore*, and I am deflowr'd, so I am.

L. Cheat. Oh Heaven ! What did he ravish you ?

Gart. No ; because you bid me be civil to him, I consented ; I was afraid to anger you, Madam.

L. Cheat. Civil ? that was civil with a vengeance ; let me come, I'll knock her on the head, filthy Creature.

L. Busy. Hold, Madam ; be wise, and make the best on't ; let me alone to manage this Affair : Come, pretty Mrs. *Gartrude*, has he made no Settlement upon thee ?

Gart. He settled nothing but himself upon me, that I know.

L. Cheat. No, that's the Plague ; I knew there was no Settlement, if that had been done, it had been somewhat.

L. Busy. Go to ; be patient ; let me alone ; withdraw, good Madam, and trust me. [Ex. *L. Cheatly.*

Enter *Stanmore*.

Come on, Mr. *Stanmore*, I must talk with you a little.

Stan. Now for a wise Lecture.

L. Busy. Look up, pretty Miss, come on.

Sir My Lady *Cheatly* is a worthy Person, and of good quality ; right — Mrs. *Gartrude* is a very pretty young Lady — true — nor is it fit my Lady (who has entertain'd you so often, and so nobly, in her house) should be abus'd — do you conceive me — nor is it fit that this pretty young thing should be injur'd — you understand me —

Stan.

Stan. Your Ladyship speaks like an Oracle.

L. Busy. Very good—this pretty thing, I understand, has been very kind to you. Very well—

Stan. Fie Miss! fie! tell tales out of School? if she has, I am sure, I was as kind as she could be for her heart.

L. Busy. Very good—Come, I understand you—Ah what pleasure 'tis to lye by such a sweet Bedfellow! such pretty little swelling Breasts! such delicate black sparkling Eyes! such a fresh Complexion! such red powting Lips! and such a Skin! I say no more—in short, she would make a Husband very happy—Come, let it be so—and let no more words be made of this Matter.

Stan. I'll do what I can to help her to one.

L. Busy. Go to—that's well said—your self then be the Man—Oh how the Town will envy you the enjoyment of so fine a Lady!

Stan. S'heart, Madam, what do you take me for? if you knew all, what need I marry for the Matter?

L. Busy. Go to; she may make as good a Wife as can be for all that; have you not many Examples?

Stan. No, Madam; I have made a Vow of Chastity that way, which I will never break.

L. Busy. I would not my Lady should know this for the World, she would be reveng'd to the last degree: Let me tell you, you have been very uncivil.

Stan. Faith, Madam! I think not.

Gart. Yes, but you have been uncivil though, that you have.

L. Busy. Go to—do you mind? Do you think a Family is to be dishonoured? is that like a Gentleman—nay, not but that humane frailty must be pass'd by—for young people, when they meet, are apt and lyable—'tis confess'd—but then—ay what then?—why, your Gentlemen and your worthy Persons strive to make it good: Very well—but how is it to be made good? hum—why, either by Marriage, or Settlement.

Stan. I have a private Reason must keep me from doing either.

L. Busy. No, no, that won't pass: I know you are too much a Gentleman; besides, you made me promise you would keep; and let me tell you, my Honour is concern'd in it, and I would not have my Honour touch'd for the World.

Stan. I did not promise to keep for another, as I must if I keep her.

Gart. You do not say true then.

L. Busy. Fie, Mr. Stanmore; that you should say such an ungentile thing! Come, Miss, bear up, and do not cry: how can you endure—

to see a young Lady's tears, and not melt: Come on, pretty Miss, I am sure you will be kind, and constant to Mr. *Stanmore*, will you not?

Gart. Yes, yes.

L. Busy. Good. Why look you, Sir, I know you are a worthy Gentleman, and will consider of a Settlement, such as befits a Gentlewoman.

Stan. No, Madam: *Selfish*, this Evening, in a green Room, behind the Scenes, was before-hand with me; she ne'r tells of that: Can I love one that prostitutes her self to that Fellow?

L. Busy. How's this?

Gart. Oh sad, that you should say such a thing! I am sure, he will not say so for the World; would I might ne'r stir out of this place alive now, if I did.

Stan. I had it from his own Mouth.

Gart. O Lord, I'll be far enough, if you had! I'm sure, he's too fine a Gentleman, and too well bred, to tell such a grievous lye of a Lady; I am sure, he did not say so, that he did not.

Stan. How she commends him?

L. Busy. You know, *Selfish* is the vainest Fellow that ever was born; can you believe that Coxcomb? it is not generous.

Stan. Shall I believe *Bellamore's* Eyes? He saw it: Good Madam, be pleas'd to forbear your Tricks upon me. Farewel, I hate the leavings of a Fool; I'll as soon eat the Meat he has chew'd, or wear his foul Linnen after him. Adieu, good Madam. [Ex. *Stanmore*.

L. Busy. Now see what your Indiscretion has done; did I not tell you, *Selfish* would undo you?

Gart. Oh what shall I do! what shall I do! Does your Ladyship think, you could not get Mr. *Selfish* to marry me? Oh! he's the prettyest Man; I could live and die with him.

L. Busy. Go to; you will utterly ruine your self: Do you think, a Fellow that has been so base to boast of your Kindness, will marry you? Peace, I say; I will try another; *Young Maggot* shall be the Man.

Gart. I can't abide him.

L. Busy. I say, go to—you must marry him, if he will, and be glad on't too: *Stanmore* has forsaken you; *Selfish* can't keep you; your Mother will turn you out of doors, and you will starve. Come, come, along with me, and be better advis'd. [Exeunt.

The End of the Fourth Act.

ACT

ACT V.

Enter *Prigg* and *Lady Cheatly*.

Prig. **N**OW, Madam, I hope, you will be perswaded to dispatch this business of Wedlock this Morning; 'twould be much more convenient for me than to morrow, because I am to go to *New-market* to a Cock-Match: I have lay'd fifty pound upon *Jack-an-Apes*, against *Tom Prigg's Boxen Beak*; my *Dun* fights a Battel with *Tom Whiskin's Duck Wing*, for fifty pound.

'Twill be the best Sport in the World; I would fain marry to day, and go thither to morrow: Will your Ladyship go and see it?

L.Cheat. No, pray, Sir, if that be the best Sport in the World, see that first, and marry afterwards.

Prig. *New-market's* a rare place, there a Man's never idle: We make Visits to Horses, and talk with Grooms, Riders, and Cock-keepers; and saunter in the Heath all the Forenoon; then we dine, and never talk a word but of Dogs, Cocks, and Horses; then we saunter into the Heath again; then to a Cock-Match; then to a Play in a Barn; then to Supper, and never speak a word but of Dogs, Cocks, and Horses again; then to the Groom-Porters, where you may play all night. Oh, 'tis a heavenly Life! we are never idle.

L.Cheat. For ought I see, you are never otherwise.

Enter *Steward*.

Heaven! Is this Villain return'd?

Stew. Yes, Perfidious Woman! I am return'd; and will make you know, that I am not to be us'd so. What? to be clap'd under Hatches, and carried to the *Indies*, to be sold for a Slave? a fine Design truly: But, come, Madam, I will make you know your Lord and Master.

L.Cheat. What means your Impudence?

Stew. Impudence! to command my Wife? Know your Duty.

Prig. Your Wife? Why, you are her Man; are you not?

Stew. What Fellow's this? I must have new Orders; I must have no such Customers about my House.

L.Cheat. Call a Constable, the poor Fellow's distracted.

Stew. No, but I may make the Lady so, if she persists in her Impudence.

Prig. Thou art very sawcy to thy Lady and Mistress.

Stew.

Stew. Peace, Fool ! Sawcy to my Wife ?

Prig. Fool ? hah, Fool ! What a Pox would you be at ?

L.Cheat. Impudent Villain ! thy Wife ?

Stew. Most audacious Woman ! Darest thou deny it ? Was *I* not married to you yesterday in your own Chamber, by a Parson of your own chusing.

L.Cheat. How dar'st thou affirm so impudent a Lye ? Where didst thou dream this ?

Prig. *I* have my Que ; *I*'ll have my hand in the Plot. [*Ex. Prig.*

Stew. Why, thou most infamous of Women ! Canst thou deny this ?

L.Cheat. Yes, thou most impudent of Rascals, *I* will deny it to all the World, and *I* have taken care that thou shalt never prove it.

Stew. Hell and Devils ! Is there one amongst you like this Woman ?

L.Cheat. Well, if you will be quiet, and stir no farther in this Business, a thousand pound is yours ; if not, you never shall have me, nor any thing of mine. Marry such a Fellow ?

Stew. No, base Woman ! *I*'ll undo thee.

L.Cheat. 'Tis out of your power, Fool ; you have sworn to all my Bonds and Deeds already.

Stew. Most Vile of Cheats ! *I*'ll find your Parson, if he be in *England*.

Enter Prigg, in the Habit of a Parson.

Oh happy Fortune ! here he is.

L.Cheat. What means this Coxcomb, *Prigg* ?

Stew. Now, Madam, did not you marry me to this Lady yesterday ? Speak, upon the word of a Priest.

Prig. Yes, *I* did.

Stew. Now, what says your Impudence ? *I* thought *I* should catch you : Were you so cunning to deny it ? Where do you live, Sir ?

Prig. Madam, Pray help me off with my Habit.

L.Cheat. This is well enough.

Stew. Hah ! What a Devil's this ? Were you the Parson ?

Prig. Yes, good Sir.

L.Cheat. Yes, This was my Chaplain, you sawcy Fool ! Could you think, *I* would marry such a filthy Fellow as you are ?

Stew. *I* will give you to understand, Madam, that 'tis a good Marriage, and *I*'ll bring you into the Court to swear it, Sir.

Prig. If you do, Sir, *I*'ll hold six to four, *I* forswear it, Sir.

Stew. Why, sure you dare not ?

Prig. By Heaven, *I* dare, and will not forswear my self for such a Widow ; Gentlemen forswear themselves to get Whores, and make nothing

nothing on't : Be gone out of my house, she is mine ; Fellow, be gone, I say.

Stew. Curse on my shallow head ! that I should be so credulous, to believe her to be true to me, when I was an hourly Witness of her falsehood to others : I will have you my Wife, or be reveng'd to that degree ; you shall repent this Treachery your whole life : I am going to visit all those you have had Business with this moneth, and I shall tell 'em such a Tale. [Ex. *Steward.*

Prig. I'll cut his Throat ; say no more.

L.Cheat. Pray hasten after this malicious, clamourous Rascal, and stop him some way or other ; he'll invent a thousand lyes of me ; get him arrested upon an Action of ten thousand pound at my Suit.

Prig. Let me alone ; I'll do as becomes a Gentleman. [Ex. *Prig.*

L.Cheat. This Trouble joyn'd with that Fool my Daughter, will undo me ; but I will find out *Maggot*, and he shall help to salve up all.

Enter *Maggot*.

Oh Mr. *Maggot* ! I have Business to communicate to you, of the greatest concernment to me that ever hapned.

Mag. Gad, Madam, do ! If any Man in *England* understands Business, or loves it better than I do, I'll be burnt.

L.Cheat. Every Man loves what he is good at ; give me a Man of Business for my Friend : the fine Gentlemen of the Town, are like Fiddlers, only good at idle hours.

Mag. There are no great Persons at this end of the Town, have any Business, but I do it for 'em ; I am the busiest Man in *England*, and, I hope, Madam, you'll consider of my Love to Business, and to your Ladyship.

L.Cheat. Why, that is part of the Business I am to confer with you about.

Enter *Lady Busy* and *Young Maggot*.

L.Busy. Madam, I beg you will retire ; I have an Affair with *Young Mr. Maggot*, that concerns you, and Mrs. *Gartrude*.

L.Busy. Mr. *Maggot*, I can never enough admire your Uncle *Maggot*'s aversion to Wit and Breeding ; nor can I chuse but pity you, who are like to be so great a sufferer for your Love to both.

Yo. Mag. I glory in my suffering for so good a Cause.

L.Busy. Well, many a Man would be proud of such a Nephew ; but is it true, that you are like to be dis-inherited ?

Yo. Mag. It is as true, as I my self will ever be to Wit and Beauty ; unless I will recant my Works, and for the future renounce Tropes, Figures, Similes, and all ornaments of Speech.

L. Busy. These are hard Conditions.

To. Mag. A Man of my vigorous Imagination, had as good have been born dumb: I will sing, and starve to death, like a Grasshopper, ere I submit.

L. Busy. Go to: Suppose some Friend of yours, more careful of you, than you are of your self, should find a way to compose this matter, without prejudice to your Poetry.

To. Mag. That Friend should be another *Apollo*, if a Man, and a tenth Muse to me, if a Woman.

L. Busy. Good. There is a Woman, a pretty one, young and rich too in the case: Very well; but how shall I come by this Woman, say you? Go to; let me alone; a fine Woman, with a good Fortune, were no ill refuge from the anger of your Uncle, hah!

To. Mag. But if I should marry, what will the World say of my Wit? I had rather lose my Honour, and starve, than lose the name of a Wit.

L. Busy. Your Reputation is establisht already; go to, consider.

To. Mag. But, Madam, my Heart is engaged, and the poor Soul loves me again to madness; I did but kiss my hand to a Lady in a window t'other day; and the poor Thing fell into a Fit; she will never out-live such a hainous Tergiversation.

L. Busy. Come, come, you know not the World; this is some soft-hearted Fool, that will be as fond of another in three days. Go to; I know the Sex better than you; but such a Reputation, such a Face, and such a Fortune!

To. Mag. Nay, if she have a better Face, and Reputation, than my *Gartrude*, I will forswear Poetry, and write Short-hand at Conventicles, all the rest of my Life.

L. Busy. Is she the Woman? My Lady *Cheatly* looks very high for her Daughter, *Stannmore* and several Fortunes are about her; do you conceive me?

To. Mag. That's all one.

*As for my part I have chosen one,
And I'll have my Love, or I'll have none.*

L. Busy. Hold: A Lady of Fortune, Beauty, and one that loves you, and admires you for your Wit, is not to be neglected.

To. Mag. How? then she has Wit too.

L. Busy. How else should she admire it in you?

To. Mag. Since she has Wit, I will see her, that's certain, and love her, if I can; if not, I'll make her some handsome excuse for't in my next Song.

Enter

Enter *Gartrude*.

L. Busy. Well then, here she comes.

It is this pretty *Gartrude*: Ah! what a Bedfellow is this, with above ten thousand pound too.

Yo. Mag. Pretty Creature! Are you she?

Gart. Yes, that I am.

Y. Mag. But, Madam, do you not think Marriage will spoyl my Poetry?

Gart. I would not marry you, if I thought it would; for I love your Verses dearly.

L. Busy. *Stanmore* and *Selfish* will hang themselves, when they hear of your good Fortune.

Yo. Mag. Ay, so they will.

Gart. Every Body says, they love one to ones face; but you said so behind my back; I heard you tell my Lady so, and I am resolved I will have you, though my Mother turn me out of doors, that I will.

L. Busy. Go, get you together, loving Rogues, and let me alone to make your peace with my Lady *Cheatly*. [*Exeunt*.

Enter *Selfish* and *Isabel*.

Self. Consider my Person, and my Breeding; think not of *Bellamore*, he has two Ladies with Child by him, and one claims Marriage.

Isab. You had best marry her for him, he'll give a good Portion.

Self. I did not think so harsh a Repartee could have come out of that pretty mouth: Sure you take something ill from me; my conduct among the Ladies does not please you: I confess, I have been somewhat too general in my Addresses; but I am resolved to apply my self to you, and be less Gallant hereafter.

Isab. Be less vain, and less a Coxcomb, and know, that nothing you forbear or do, can please or trouble me.

Self. Were I not skill'd in the various Dispositions of your soft Sex, these words would make me despair; but I have often known such peevishness the Child of Love.

Isab. Were I a Man, I'd cudgel you out of this conceit of your self; but as I am, I can only despise, and laugh at you.

Self. Hah! hah! hah! You are pleasant, and I am glad to find you so: I often discover Lady's Affections to me that way; for I am sure they love me, when they are so familiar with me, my pretty Raylleur.

Isab. Monster of Vanity! be gone.

Enter *Bellamore*.

Bell. I beg upon my knees, you will once more hear me.

Isab. I never will.

Self. It is in vain: Give her over, *Bellamore*; what would you have

her do, poor Lady? she loves me; dost thou think ever to get a Lady where I am? Why, my Mother has often told me, I was born with a Cawl upon my head, and she wrapt me up in her Shift, to make me lucky to Ladies.

Bell. Impudent Coxcomb! I will not disturb the house; but follow me, or I'll cut your Throat here; you are the occasion of this Storm.

Self. With all my heart: I did intend to demand satisfaction for your ill Breeding at the Play-house, and you shall find I can fight, as well as I can make Love.

Bell. Come on, Vanity.

Enter *Carlos* and *Theodosia*.

Theod. I see you are resolved to watch me, to make me confess Love, as they do Witchés, to make 'em own their Contracts with the Devil.

Car. If you would but look a little guiltily, I would take you upon suspicion.

Theod. And so hurry me away to Execution. Alas, poor *Carlos*! Don't I look as if I died for thee? Are not my eyes languishing enough?

Car. You are pleasant, Madam, as becomes a winning Gamester.

Theod. If I should play on, luck may turn, I think tis best to give over as I am.

Car. But consider how entirely I love you.

Theod. Consider how little I care for you.

Car. The greatest Beauties are not always most sincerely loved.

Theod. No, they are commonly like great Places, courted, and won by vain designing Knaves; and were I such, I should be yet more suspicious.

Car. A Man that's ready to die a Martyr, need make no other Professions, I should else——

Theod. Talk like an Ass, of Charms and Tyranny of mine, of Chains and Slavery of yours; a Man that should over-hear you, would think you had been taken by the *Turk*.

Car. 'Tis not in your power, to make me leave loving you.

Theod. 'Tis very unreasonable, that my indifference should not make you love me less.

Car. 'Tis very unreasonable, that my perseverance should not make you love me more; but I will yet hope.

Theod. Hope is a thin Diet, and may be allow'd in your Feverish condition, and indeed is the only Food that Love can live on.

Car. Oh, Madam, Marriage!

Theod. Is to Love, as the *Jesuit's* Powder to an Ague, it stops the Fit, and in a little time wears it quite off.

Enter

Enter *Isabella*.

Isab. My Dear, how dost thou?

Carlos, Will you forgive me? Lovers take it as ill to be parted, as Men of Honour.

Car. I was just upon the point of yielding.

Theod. I scorn to take Advantages; but I had reduced him to offer Marriage.

Isab. Then, it seems, he is weary of being your Slave, and would make you his.

Car. Madam, you should be generous, and take the weakest side. No, I am resolved ever to be her Servant, but would be glad of a nearer employment about her Person.

Theod. Come, prithee *Isabella*, let's take a Turn in the Garden, and see if we can talk of something else.

Car. Where e're I go, I shall carry my Love with me, and that will not suffer me to talk or think of any thing but your dear Self. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter *Bellamore* and *Selfish* in the Field.

Bell. Come, Sir, I hope you like this Place, you are very nice in choosing one.

Self. Yes, I like this; for here I ran one Man through, and gave another his life.

Bell. Let me see if you be Arm'd; or not.

Self. No, I am too well bred for that.

Bell. Make ready.

And yet I am damnably afraid: But if I should not fight, the Ladies will not be so apt to love me, as they are.

Bell. Come, will you never have done?

Self. Yes, Sir, What great hast are you in?

Beauty, What art thou? But a fading Flower.

Bell. Beauty? What a Devil hast thou to do with Beauty? You are a damn'd ugly, ill-bred Coxcomb, and the Ladies care not one jot for you. Draw.

Self. Come on, I will vindicate my self and the Ladies. Now for the Ladies: Do not kill me; consider, how the Ladies will hate you, if you should.

Bell. No, prithee live, and be an Ass still; but trouble me no more.

{ *They fight;*
Bell. *throws*
Self. *down;*
and takes his
Sword.

Self.

Self. Thou art a strange, rough, ill-bred Fellow, to fight so, to fling a Man down, and spoil his Cloaths; you have dirted all my Garniture, and spoil'd my Cravat: Could not you have fought easily, handsomely, and like a Gentleman? You were never bred in an Academy; they never fight thus brutally in *France*.

Bell. This is ridiculous enough.

Self. I warrant, you have done me ten pounds worth of hurt, with fighting with me; I do not know how to appear before the Ladies; I can't abide such Tricks.

Bell. Fare thee well: if I were not extremely troubled about *Isabella*, I would divert my self with this Coxcomb. [Ex. *Bellamore*.

Self. A Brutal Fellow! to spoil one's things thus: But I'll go home, and dress me. [Ex. *Selfish*.

Enter *Lady Cheatly* and *Maggot*.

L. Cheat. You see I have considered your Passion, and how apt you are for Business; I am afraid of a Suit or two in Law, which I know you can manage.

Mag. As well as any Man in the World.

L. Cheat. I have told you of the Insolence of the Steward, and the Artifice I used to get rid of him.

Mag. That shews, your Ladyship understands Business; how happy shall I be? how I shall laugh at, and triumph over all my Rivals?

L. Cheat. Not a word of what has pass'd betwixt us, till a fitter opportunity.

Enter *Prigg*, with a Plaster upon his Face.

How now, Mr. *Prigg*; what ayls your Face?

Prig. Be not frightened, my Dear; 'tis no great hurt.

Mag. My Dear! Poor Fool, how I pity him?

Prig. I went to stop that Rogue, your Steward, and demand satisfaction, as becomes a Gentleman; and, in fine, we drew, and after some two or three and thirty Passes, I found my self run into the Arm, and the Face; but I worsted him: Yet when I was at a Surgeon's, the Rascal got away.

L. Cheat. I am sorry you should venture so much for me.

Prig. Oh, Madam! 'Twas for my self; for we are to be all one Flesh: Now nothing troubles me, but that this Hurt will hinder my Journey to *New-market* to morrow.

Mag. He, all one Flesh with her? poor Coxcomb!

Enter two *Scriveners*.

1 *Scriv.* Madam, I wonder, a Lady of Quality should be guilty of such Fraud and Covin, to write Bonds with Ink, that will wear out in a Moneth.

2 *Scriv.*

2 Scriv. Other Ink, you have too, that with a Spirit rubb'd upon the Paper, will make Impression through a whole Quire.

L.Cheat. What mean these Fellows? Are you mad?

1 Scriv. No, but this is enough to make us mad, for our selves, and our Clients, to be cheated of such Sums.

2 Scriv. Pray, Madam, give us Security, and let me renew the Bonds with my own Ink.

L.Cheat. Go home, and sleep, and be sober.

Mag. What's the meaning of this? is my Lady a Cheat?

Prig. This is the Rogue, your Steward's Lye.

L.Cheat. Oh, Gentlemen! You have been with that Rascal, my Steward, the most impudent Villain, who having most of the Writings, that concern my Estate, in his hands, had the Impudence to threaten to burn 'em, unless I would marry him.

Prig. 'Tis very true, upon my Honour.

L.Cheat. I, by a Wile, got 'em out of his hands, and he, out of revenge, for being so disappointed, has invented these malicious Lyes; but I shall lay him fast enough.

Enter two Citizens.

1 Cit. Madam, We did not think your Ladyship would put such things upon us, to give us false Notes for our Money.

2 Cit. Notes written with Ink that will wear out; we shall have nothing but Blanks for our Money.

1 Cit. Pray let me have my five hundred pound again.

2 Cit. And me, mine; you have not lay'd it out yet.

L.Cheat. What, my Rogue Steward, has been with you too, has he?

2 Cit. Rogue! He's an honest Man, to give us notice of this Deceit: Madam, I wonder, your Ladyship is not asham'd.

Prig. How now, Impudence! I tell you, the Steward is the Cheat, and Rogue, he has ly'd and abus'd you; my Lady is a Person of Honour.

Mag. Hah! There must be something in this; he would not be so foolish, to tell so silly a Lye.

2 Scriv. My Lady is a worthy Person, and the Steward has invented these Lyes, out of revenge; because he had the Impudence to pretend to marry my Lady, and would have kept all her Writings; he'd force her to do it, but she was too hard for him: We know all.

2 Cit. This is strange.

Enter Lump.

Lump. Oh thou vile Woman! thou Reprobate! thou most audacious, seared-Conscienced Creature! Could such a wicked Branch spring from our Family, who are precious, godly Men and Women, all but thy self?

L.Cheat.

L.Cheat. Are you mad, Brother?

Enter *Steward.*

Lump. I knew you would cheat the rest.

But must you betray me, and give me false Deeds?

Must I have nothing but Blanks for my Money?

1 Scriv. What ayls she?

1 Cit. How are we cheated?

Mag. S'death! There must be some Fire under all this Smoak.

Lump. Had it not been for this honest Man, who was troubled in Conscience, and could no longer conceal your Fraud; I had ne'r known it; but now I will make an example of you.

1 Cit. How, Sir? Are you a precious, godly Man, and knew of a Cheat, and would not discover it?

2 Cit. One of our own Church, to suffer us to be betray'd?

Lump. I had no Call to it, till now I am my self concern'd.

L.Cheat. Will you believe this most infamous Rascal, that would have dishonoured your Family, and having all my Writings, would have married me, or have burnt 'em? I, by seeming to content to his desires, got 'em out of his hands, made him swear to 'em before a Master in Chancery, then I turn'd him away for a Villain, as he is.

Lump. What say you, Sir?

Prig. Say? I'll hold six to four, he cannot say a word.

Upon my Honour, this is all true, to my knowledge.

Stew. She caus'd me to be clapp'd under Hatches, in a Ship going to the *Indies*, because I knew this Secret; and I do assure you, ye are all cheated, and in less than a Moneth, will have nothing to shew for all your Money: I cannot in Conscience but reveal this.

L.Cheat. Impudent, lying Varlet! how darest thou affirm so devilish a Lye?

Stew. Will you marry me yet, and I will retrieve all? [*Whispers.*

L.Cheat. Oh Heaven and Earth! The Villain whispers me in the Ear now, and tells me, if I will marry him, he will deny all.

Stew. Mercy upon me! Will your Ladyship's Conscience give you leave to say that? Pray, Madam, consider your Soul.

1 Cit. Ay, Madam, consider your Soul.

2 Cit. And the payment of my Money.

L.Cheat. Heaven can witness what I say is true; even just now he ask'd me to marry him.

Lump. If this be true, Lady Sister, I will ask your pardon.

Stew. What need I ask that, which I have already? I am married to her.

All. How!

Stew.

Stew. And her great Anger, and the Reason she would have sold me to *Jamaica*, was, because I could not in Conscience conceal these Deceits, though I might have had the benefit of 'em.

L.Cheat. This is so extravagantly ridiculous, it makes me laugh: I will not give a serious Answer to it.

Mag. Ha! Married? You did not consummate, I hope: Who married you?

Stew. Why, the truth is, she thought to put a false Marriage upon me: When she discovered my intention, of making Restitution to those she had injur'd, she dress'd that Fellow *Prigg* in the disguise of a Parson, and he married us in her Bed-chamber: But I'll make her know, 'tis a good Marriage.

Mag. Did you know him in the disguise?

Stew. No, till this day he appear'd in it to me, and then pull'd it off, to shew me 'twas a mock-Marriage, as they thought; but I will make 'em know otherwise.

L.Cheat. This is the most amazing Impudence: Mr. *Prigg*, declare your self; deny it, or we are undone. [aside.]

Prig. Is there ever a Magistrate here? I will swear, that there is not one word of all this true; I know not what he means; I hold Gold to Silver he's mad.

L.Cheat. Do you see, Brother, what a Rascal you have believ'd? and how you have injur'd me?

Lump. Why thou wicked Locust! thou spawn of a Serpent! to invent such cursed Lyes: I'll lay thee within four Walls.

Stew. By Heaven, 'tis all true; I'll swear it; nay, I'll swear with you for a thousand pound.

Mag. Let him swear it, that we may have his Ears.

1 *Cit.* Madam, We ask your pardon, with all our hearts.

2 *Cit.* Impudent Fellow! to abuse my Lady so.

Stew. Let me but speak.

1 *Scriv.* No, base Fellow! thou shalt not speak.

2 *Scriv.* Abuse so worthy a Lady? Out thou wicked Fellow!

Stew. 'Tis very fine.

Lump. Lay an Action of ten thousand pound upon him; see who will bayl him: To my certain knowlege, she has a great Estate, and has been always a very conscientious Woman; indeed I was something amaz'd at this Story.

1 *Cit.* Ay, Sir, we believe your Worship.

2 *Cit.* We know, you are a precious, godly Man.

Stew. Are you distracted? Well, be all cheated, and you will, I have discharg'd my Conscience.

L

Lump.

Lump. Conscience? thou Seed of *Belzebub!*

Prig. Conscience? An impudent Rogue! that offers to forswear himself: I offer'd to lay him ten to one, 'twas all false, and you saw he durst not bett.

1 *Scriv.* Hang him.

2 *Scriv.* Base, lying Rogue!

Enter *Sergeants.*

1 *Seng.* I arrest you at the Suit of my Lady *Cheatly*, in an Action of ten thousand pounds.

Stew. Oh vile Woman!

L.Cheat. Away with him.

2 *Cit.* Away with him.

All. Away with the Rogue.

Lump. I do beseech your pardon, Sister: I was mistaken, which I do not use to be; yet that Trick at the Play-house was base.

L.Cheat. I could not help it; I knew not of it.

Enter *two Creditors.*

1 *Cred.* Madam, You have undone us; you gave us Bonds for two hundred pound a piece, about six Weeks since, and we have nothing but the Seals left.

2 *Cred.* All the Ink is worn out; behold here, Madam. [*Shews a Paper.*

L.Cheat. Impostors! lying Rogues! I owe you nothing.

Lump. These are Instruments of this Rascally Steward's; how come they by the Seal?

L.Cheat. From the Steward.

1 *Cred.* Are ye all mad? We had it from you, for which you had two hundred pounds a piece from us.

Prig. Out you impudent Rogue! Get you gone.

1 *Cit.* Away, lying Fellows!

Lump. Be gone, ye Vipers!

[*They thrust 'em out.*

L.Cheat. Now, Gentlemen, I desire you that remain, to take part of a Collation with me, and I will shew all the Evidences of my Estate to you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter *Isabella* and *Bellamore.*

Isab. There can be no defence to suspect me, and with that Wretched Selfish too.

Bell.

Bell. Jealousie, like the Small-Pox; if it comes out kindly, is never mortal; and my Love will be the stronger, and the more vigorous, for this short Distemper.

Isab. It may relapse again.

Bell. 'Tis past all danger now.

Isab. And will you still give a thousand pounds down, and three hundred pounds a year, for this Tenement, notwithstanding the incumbrance of *Selfish* upon it.

Bell. When I made these offers, I did not know half your worth: I was a fair Chapman for your Beauty; but your Vertue, and other Perfections, are inestimable.

Isab. And shall I flant it in the Park with my grey *Flanders*, crowd the Walk with my Equipage, and be the Envy of all the Butterflies in Town?

Bell. Forget that vain Discourse, as I have done, and take me and all I have for ever.

Isab. Sure a Man of your Wit will never marry; every rich Fool can get a Woman that way.

Bell. Do not insult, but take me quickly to your mercy.

Isab. I'll not deceive you: What-ever show my Mother makes, I have no Portion, nor was ever troubled at the thought of it till now.

Bell. I am glad of it; for now my Love will be the more easily believed, and better taken.

Isab. No, *Bellamore*.

Bell. How, Madam?

Isab. No, I say—for were I Queen of *Europe*, your Love would be as well accepted as 'tis now.

Bell. You surprize me with an Honour too great to bear.

Enter *Lady Cheatly*.

L.Cheat. What? Are you agreed yet? She is a foolish Girl, Sir, and looks as high as better Women.

Bell. She's very humble, and is pleased to accept of me for a Husband, and there wants only your consent, and a few words from a Parson, to compleat my happiness.

L.Cheat. You honour our Family, and cannot doubt of my consent: She is yours.

Enter *Lady Busy*, *Young Maggot*, and *Gartrude*.

L.Busy. I present you here with a Son and Daughter: I saw 'em married; give 'em your Blessing.

L. Cheat. Heav'n bless you ! Madam, I can never thank you enough ; you have made me happy, in removing my greatest affliction.

Enter *Selfish* and *Stanmore*.

L. Busy. I love to put Lovers together : Vertuous actions reward themselves.

Stan. *Young Maggot* married ? Give you Joy, Sir : Your Love to Wit and Beauty is at length rewarded.

To. Mag. I will now keep company with none but the top-Wits, and write Plays, Songs and Lampoons, in defiance of the Fop my Uncle.

L. Busy. Not so fast : Get him to settle first.

L. Cheat. I'll call my Brother, and the rest of my company, to be Witnesses to my happiness. [Ex. *L. Cheatly*.

Self. Pretty Mistress ! You look to day like a delicate Picture, and *Young Maggot* your Foyl.

Gart. I vow, you court me so gentilely, I shall die to part with you : I cryed in the Church, that I did, and had like to have spoyl'd all.

Self. But will you promise me a Meeting ?

To. Mag. Stand off : She's mine.

Self. You are to have her ever after ; methinks you should allow her one day, to take leave of her Friends.

Enter *Lady Cheatly*, *Lump*, *Maggot*, *Prigg*, &c.

To. Mag. Uncle, Your Unkindness has made me look about me, and Heaven has blest my Wit and Poetry with a rich Wife here, Mrs. *Gartrude* : I won her by 'em.

Mag. Ay, Boy, I know it, and know her Fortune as well as my own : Thou art a mettled Lad, and I like thy Humour well ; give me a *Phillis* with ten thousand pounds, I could sing one of thy own Songs my self, I am so taken with this Match.

To. Mag. I hope then you will settle your Estate, as you always promised, if I married to your liking.

Mag. If I have no Children by my dear Wife, her Mother here.

Prig. *La Cheatly*, your Wife, she has promis'd me Marriage.

Mag. What-e're she has promis'd you, she has perform'd Marriage with me this Morning. Be gone, Rook, they stay for thee at the Twelve-penny Ordinary.

Prig. What say you, Madam ?

L. Cheat.

L.Cheat. 'Tis very true.

Prig. Then you are very false.

Mag. As your Dice: Gamester, I'll hold you Cock-pit Lay, ten pound to a Crown, she's Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Fleth.

L.Cheat. This is the Gentleman I'll live and die with.

Prig. Death and Hell! I'll declare all I know.

L.Cheat. You will declare your self a perjur'd Knave, if you do.
Hark here. [*aside.*]

Mag. What do they whisper for?

L.Cheat. All the Steward says, is true: I am worth little or nothing; my whole Fortune a Cheat; this old Gentleman I chose, because he is governable, and loves Business, of which my broken Fortune will give him enough.

Prig. What a Cross-bite have I scaped? This Sham was well carried on, Madam: Did you hear, old Fool?

Mag. Ounds! I am cheated, undone, and my Nephew ruin'd, and married to a Beggar.

Yo. Mag. I must even write hard for the Play-house; I may get the reversion of the Poet *Laureat's* place: I thought, Uncle, you had known every foot of her Estate.

Prig. Well, I'll go to *New-market*, and never have to do with a two-legg'd Jade more: I shall rook, and go to Twelve, let what will come on't.

Mag. Since she has no Fortune, I shall have no Business neither.

Yo. Mag. None, but that which I am afraid you can't do, Uncle.

Mag. Is this a time for Wit, you Rascal, when we are both undone.

Stan. A Mus, a Mus.

A Copy of Verses upon a Flea, presented to his Mistress, in a gold Chain.

*Oh happy Flea! that maist both kiss and bite,
Like Lovers, in th ir height of Appetite;
Her Neck so white.*

*Pretty black Alderman, in golden Chain,
Who suck'st her Blood yet putt'st her to no pain,
Whil'st I in vain.*

Mag. What would become of the writing-Coxcombs, if it were not for reading ones? I'll hear no more.

L.Cheat. If you will go on, and maintain what I have done, I shall have a good Estate yet, though it belongs of right to other People.

Mag.

*He beats Yo.
Mag. Perriwig
off, from under
it drop several
Copies of Ver-
ses.*

Mag. Right? 'Tis no matter for Right: I'll show 'em Law.

Theod. The Plague of Marriage rages in this House; let us fly from the Infection.

Car. I am so far gone, 'tis to no purpose to remove. Well, if you continue to be so unkind, you will ruine my Soul, Body, and Estate.

Theod. How so?

Car. Why, I can never marry any other; and in despair of you, I shall turn the most debauch'd whoring Rogue, 'twould grieve your heart to see it: I shall never be able to sleep without my three Bottles, and a fresh Woman every night.

Isab. 'Tis an act of Charity to redeem him.

Theod. The Devil seldom loses any thing by Matrimony; they most commonly grow worse for't.

Car. I will lead a solid, sober, Husbandly life, if you will marry me; if not, Whoring and Drinking will ensue.

Isab. Nay, now I must judge against you: You have lost your Wager, and you must pay it; you have confest to me you lov'd him infinitely.

Theod. Believe her not, I deny it.

Car. Though I distrust my self, I must believe my fair Judge: I will have a Canonical Bom-Baily, and arrest you upon Execution.

Theod. I will have a Moneth's time; you shall be so long a Probationer, before you enter in the Order.

Car. In hope of your good Nature, I will press no farther at this time: Now you that have reacht at your Inn of Matrimony, will pray for us Travellers upon the Road.

Stan. So, Gentlemen, we have lost ye, ye are not Men of this World; now make much of your Matrimonial Bonds; I am glad, I have done my Business without 'em.

Self. Ladies are so kind to me, I need never marry one for the matter. Well, I will go home, and put on a very delicate, neat, convenient Suit, to dance with the Brides in here.

Lump. I give you all Joy. You see, Sister, how things prosper, when godly Men are the Instruments. I say to all, to all of you I say,

Be godly, observe Method, and be wise;

Car. Most excellent means to cover Cheats and Lyes.

EPILOGUE,

By the

AUTHOR.

IN troubled Times, like these—the Ancients chose:
T' exhibit Feasts and Plays, and publick Shows.
By such Diversions t' allay men's Fears,
Compose their Minds, and mollifie their Cares.
If they did well then, now your Mirth to raise,
Were of such merit, you th' attempt should praise.
But 'tis a Task too hard for Comedy,
Which ne'r agen expects good Days to see.
The num'rous Herd of Fopps and Knaves arise,
Such as to Poets should be lawful prize,
Whom they like Magistrates ought to chastize.
Th' Embargo's lay on Wit, and stop our Trading,
If noted Knaves or Coxcombs be the Lading:
But this Proceeding would be too severe,
Whom the Town scorns, sure we may laugh at here:
All Prodigies to publick Marts should come,
Heav'n made not Coxcombs for a private Room.
If sullen Fools would make no sport to th' Nation,
We lose the only use of their Creation.
If such be drawn unlike, we punish none,
And if too like some Fopps those persons own.
Our Poet therefore Sale-work Habits makes,
But of particular Men no Measure takes.
Variety of Garments we expose
For Wits, for Knaves, for Fools, all sort of Cloaths:
If any want that Honesty, or Wit,
To think our Fools or Knaves their Persons hit,
Here they may have 'em, and w' are glad they fit.

E I N I S.

REVISION

By

W. B. E. R.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the above mentioned matter. I have the pleasure to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
W. B. E. R.

