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THE

BEAUX STRATAGEM;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY GEORGE FARQUHAR, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS
FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

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REMARKS.

It is an honour to the morality of the present age, that this most entertaining comedy is but seldom performed; and never, except some new pantomime, or other gaudy spectacle, be added, as an afterpiece, for the attraction of an audience.

The well drawn characters, happy incidents, and excellent dialogue, in "The Beaux Stratagem," are but poor atonement for that unrestrained contempt of principle which pervades every scene. Plays of this kind are far more mischievous than those, which preserve less appearance of delicacy. Every auditor and reader shrinks from those crimes, which are recommended in unseemly language, and from libertinism united with coarse manners; but in adorning vice with wit, and audacious rakes with the vivacity and elegance of men of fashion, youth, at least, will be decoyed into the snare of admiration.

Charmed with the spirit of Archer and Aimwell, the reader may not, perhaps, immediately perceive, that those two fine gentlemen are but arrant impostors; and that the lively, though pitiable Mrs. Sullen, is no other than a deliberate violator of her marriage vow. Highly delighted with every character, he will not, perhaps, at first observe, that all the wise and witty persons of this comedy are knaves, and all the honest people fools.

It is said, that this play was written in six weeks—it is more surprising still, that it was written by a dying man!

Farquhar was a gentleman of elegant person and bewitching address, who, having experienced the vicissitudes of life, as a man of fashion, an actor, a captain in the army, an author, a lover, and a husband; and having encountered bitter

disappointment in some of his adventures—though amply gratified by others—He, at the age of twenty-nine, sunk into a dejection of spirits and decline of health; and in this state, he wrote the present drama.—It had only been acted a night or two, when the author, in the midst of those honours, which he derived from its brilliant reception—died.

As a proof that Farquhar was perfectly sensible of his dangerous state, and that he regained cheerfulness as his end approached, the following anecdote is told:—

The famed actress, Mrs. Oldfield, performed the part of Mrs. Sullen, when the comedy was first produced; and being highly interested in its success, from the esteem she bore the author; when it drew near the last rehearsal, she desired Wilkes, the actor, to go to him, and represent—that she advised him to make some alteration in the catastrophe of the piece; for that she was apprehensive, the free manner in which he had bestowed the hand of Mrs. Sullen upon Archer, without first procuring a divorce from her husband, would offend great part of the audience. "Oh," replied Farquhar, gaily, when this message was delivered to him, "tell her, I wish she was married to me instead of Sullen; for then, without the trouble of a divorce, I would give her my bond, that she should be a widow within a few days."

In this allusion he was prophetic;—and the apparent joy, with which he expected his dissolution, may be accounted for on the supposition—that the profligate characters, which he has portrayed in "The Beaux Stratagem," were such as he had uniformly met with in the world;—and he was rejoiced to leave them all behind.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.	COVENT GARDEN.
AIMWELL	<i>Mr. Holland.</i>	<i>Mr. Brunton.</i>
SIR CHARLES FREEMAN	<i>Mr. Bartley.</i>	<i>Mr. Claremont.</i>
ARCHER	<i>Mr. Elliston.</i>	<i>Mr. Lewis.</i>
SULLEN	<i>Mr. Powell.</i>	<i>Mr. Murray.</i>
FOIGARD	<i>Mr. Johnstone.</i>	<i>Mr. Rock.</i>
BONIFACE	<i>Mr. Palmer.</i>	<i>Mr. Davenport.</i>
GIBBET	<i>Mr. Wewitzer.</i>	<i>Mr. Emery.</i>
HOUNSLOW	<i>Mr. Maddocks.</i>	<i>Mr. Atkins.</i>
BAGSHOT	<i>Mr. Webb.</i>	<i>Mr. Abbot.</i>
SCRUB	<i>Mr. Bannister.</i>	<i>Mr. Munden.</i>
LADY BOUNTIFUL	<i>Mrs. Sparks.</i>	<i>Mrs. Emery.</i>
MRS. SULLEN	<i>Mrs. Jordan.</i>	<i>Mrs. Glover.</i>
DORINDA	<i>Miss Mellon.</i>	<i>Miss Brunton.</i>
CHERRY	<i>Miss De Camp.</i>	<i>Mrs. Martyr.</i>
GIPSEY	<i>Mrs. Scott.</i>	<i>Mrs. Beverly.</i>

SCENE,—*Litchfield.*

BEAUX STRATAGEM.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

An Inn.

Enter BONIFACE, running.—Bar Bell rings.

Bon. Chamberlain! Maid! Cherry! Daughter Cherry! All asleep? all dead?

Enter CHERRY, running.

Cher. Here! here! Why d'ye bawl so, father? d'ye think we have no ears?

Bon. You deserve to have none, you young minx:—The company of the Warrington coach has stood in the hall this hour, and nobody to show them to their chambers.

Cher. And let them wait, father;—there's neither red coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

Bon. But they threaten to go to another inn to-night.

Cher. That they dare not, for fear the coachman should overturn them to-morrow—[*Ringing.*] Coming! coming!—Here's the London coach arrived.

Enter several PEOPLE with Trunks, Bandboxes, and other Luggage, and cross the Stage.

Bon. Welcome ladies.

Cher. Very welcome, gentlemen——Chamberlain, show the lion and the rose.

[*Exit with the COMPANY.*]

Enter AIMWELL, in a Riding Habit, ARCHER as Footman, carrying a Portmanteau.

Bon. This way, this way, gentlemen.

Aim. Set down the things; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubbed.

Arch. I shall, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, I'm old Will Boniface, pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

Aim. O, Mr. Boniface, your servant.

Bon. O, sir,—what will your honour please to drink, as the saying is?

Aim. I have heard your town of Litchfield much famed for ale, I think: I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire; 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy, and will be just fourteen years old the fifth day of next March.

Aim. You are very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, sir, as I am in the age of my children: I'll show you such ale—Here, tapster, broach number 1792, as the saying is:—Sir, you shall taste my Anno Domini—I have lived in Litchfield, man and boy, above eight and fifty years, and I believe have not consumed eight and fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, sir; I have fed purely upon ale: I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon ale.

Enter TAPSTER, with a Tankard.

Now, sir, you shall see: your worship's health: ha! delicious, delicious—fancy it Burgundy, only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. [*Drinks.*] 'Tis confounded strong.

Bon. Strong! it must be so; or how would we be strong that drink it?

Aim. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord?

Bon. Eight and fifty years, upon my credit, sir; but it killed my wife, poor woman, as the saying is.

Aim. How came that to pass?

Bon. I don't know how, sir; she would not let the ale take its natural course, sir: she was for qualifying it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is, and an honest gentleman, that came this way from Ireland, made her a present of a dozen bottles of Usquebaugh—but the poor woman was never well after; but, however, I was obliged to the gentleman, you know.

Aim. Why, was it the Usquebaugh that killed her?

Bon. My Lady Bountiful said so—she, good lady, did what could be done; she cured her of three tympanies, but the fourth carried her off; but she's happy, and I'm contented, as the saying is.

Aim. Who's that Lady Bountiful, you mentioned?

Bon. 'Ods my life, sir, we'll drink her health. [*Drinks.*] My Lady Bountiful is one of the best of women: her last husband, Sir Charles Bountiful, left her worth a thousand pounds a year; and I believe she lays out one half on't in charitable uses, for the good of her neighbours: she cures all disorders incidental to men, women and children; in short, she has cured more people in and about Litchfield within ten years, than the doctors have killed in twenty, and that's a bold word.

Aim. Has the lady been any other way useful in her generation?

Bon. Yes, sir, she has a daughter by Sir Charles, the finest woman in all our country, and the greatest fortune: she has

a son too by her first husband, 'Squire Sullen, who married a fine lady from London t'other day; if you please, sir, we'll drink his health.

Aim. What sort of a man is he?

Bon. Why, sir, the man's well enough; says little, thinks less, and does—nothing at all, 'faith: but he's a man of great estate, and values nobody.

Aim. A sportsman, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, he's a man of pleasure; he plays at whist, and smokes his pipe eight-and-forty hours together sometimes.

Aim. A fine sportsman truly! and married, you say?

Bon. Ay, and to a curious woman, sir—but he's a—— He wants it here, sir.

[*Pointing to his Forehead.*]

Aim. He has it there, you mean.

Bon. That's none of my business; he's my landlord, and so a man, you know, would not—but I'cod he's no better than—sir, my humble service to you. [*Drinks.*] Though I value not a farthing what he can do to me; I pay him his rent at quarter day; I have a good running trade; I have but one daughter, and I can give her—but no matter for that.

Aim. You are very happy, Mr. Boniface; pray what other company have you in town?

Bon. A power of fine ladies; and then we have the French Officers.

Aim. O that's right, you have a good many of those gentlemen: pray how do you like their company?

Bon. So well, as the saying is, that I could wish we had as many more of them; they are full of money, and pay double for every thing they have; they know, sir, that we paid good round taxes for the taking of them, and so they are willing to reimburse us a little; one of them lodges in my house.

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. Landlord, there are some French Gentlemen below, that ask for you.

Bon. I'll wait on them——Does your master stay long in town, as the saying is? [*To ARCHER.*]

Arch. I can't tell, as the saying is.

Bon. Come from London?

Arch. No!

Bon. Going to London, mayhap?

Arch. No!

Bon. An odd fellow this; [*Bar Bell rings.*] I beg your worship's pardon, I'll wait on you in half a minute. [*Exit.*]

Aim. The coast's clear, I see—Now, my dear Archer, welcome to Litchfield!

Arch. I thank thee, my dear brother in iniquity.

Aim. Iniquity! pr'ythee, leave canting; you need not change your style with your dress.

Arch. Don't mistake me, Aimwell, for 'tis still my maxim, that there's no scandal like rags, nor any crimes so shameful as poverty. Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough, let them bustle; fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their industry.

Aim. Upon which topic we proceed, and, I think, luckily hitherto: would not any man swear now, that I am a man of quality, and you my servant, when, if our intrinsic value were known——

Arch. Come, come, we are the men of intrinsic value, who can strike our fortunes out of ourselves, whose worth is independent of accidents in life, or revolutions in government: we have heads to get money, and hearts to spend it.

Aim. As to our hearts, I grant ye, they are as willing tits as any within twenty degrees; but I can have no great opinion of our heads, from the service they have done us hitherto, unless it be that they brought us from London hither to Litchfield, made me a lord, and you my servant.

Arch. That's more than you could expect already, but what money have we left?

Aim. But two hundred pounds.

Arch. And our horses, clothes, rings, &c. Why we have very good fortunes now for moderate people; and let me tell you, that this two hundred pounds, with the experience that we are now masters of, is a better estate than the ten thousand we have spent——Our friends indeed began to suspect that our pockets were low, but we came off with flying colours, showed no signs of want either in word or deed.

Aim. Ay, and our going to Brussels was a good pretence enough for our sudden disappearing; and, I warrant you, our friends imagine, that we are gone a volunteering.

Arch. Why 'faith if this project fails, it must e'en come to that. I am for venturing one of the hundreds, if you will, upon this knight errantry; but in the case it should fail, we'll reserve the other to carry us to some counterscarp, where we may die as we lived, in a blaze.

Aim. With all my heart, and we have lived justly, Archer; we can't say that we have spent our fortunes, but that we have enjoyed them.

Arch. Right; so much pleasure for so much money; we have had our pennyworths; and had I millions, I would go to the same market again. O London, London! well, we have had our share, and let us be thankful: past pleasures, for aught I know, are best; such we are sure of; those to come may disappoint us, but you command for the day, and so I submit:—At Nottingham, you know, I am to be master.

Aim. And at Lincoln, I again.

Arch. Then, at Norwich, I mount, which, I think, shall be our last stage; for, if we fail there, we'll embark for Holland, bid adieu to Venus, and welcome Mars.

Aim. A match——

Enter BONIFACE.

Mum.

Bon. What will your worship please to have for supper?

Aim. What have you got?

Bon. Sir, we have a delicate piece of beef in the pot, and a pig at the fire.

Aim. Good supper meat, I must confess—I can't eat beef, landlord.

Arch. And I hate pig.

Aim. Hold your prating, sirrah! do you know who you are? [*Aside.*

Bon. Please to bespeak something else; I have every thing in the house.

Aim. Have you any veal?

Bon. Veal, sir! we had a delicate loin of veal on Wednesday last.

Aim. Have you got any fish, or wild fowl?

Bon. As for fish, truly, sir, we are an inland town, and indifferently provided with fish, that's the truth on't; but then for wild fowl!—We have a delicate couple of rabbits.

Aim. Get me the rabbits fricasseed.

Bon. Fricasseed! Lard, sir, they'll eat much better smothered with onions.

Arch. Pshaw! Rot your onions.

Aim. Again, sirrah;—Well, landlord, what you please; but hold, I have a small charge of money, and your house is so full of strangers, that I believe it may be safer in your custody than mine; for when this fellow of mine gets drunk, he minds nothing—Here, sirrah, reach me the strong box.

Arch. Yes, sir,—this will give us reputation. [*Aside.—Brings the Box.*

Aim. Here, landlord, the locks are sealed down, both for your security and mine; it holds somewhat above two hundred pounds; if you doubt it, I'll count it to you after supper: But be sure you lay it where I may have it at a minute's warning: for my affairs are a little dubious at present; perhaps I may be gone in half an hour, perhaps I may be your guest till the best part of that be spent; and pray order your ostler to keep my horses ready saddled: But one thing above the rest I must beg, that you would let this fellow have none of your Anno Domini, as you call it;—for he's the most insufferable sot—Here, sirrah, light me to my chamber.

Arch. Yes, sir!

[*Exit, lighted by ARCHER.*

Bon. Cherry, daughter Cherry.

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. D'ye call, father?

Bon. Ay, child, you must lay by this box for the gentleman, 'tis full of money.

Cher. Money! all that money! why sure, father, the gentleman comes to be chosen parliament man. Who is he?

Bon. I don't know what to make of him; he talks of keeping his horses ready saddled, and of going, perhaps, at a minute's warning; or of staying, perhaps, till the best part of this be spent.

Cher. Ay! ten to one, father, he's a highwayman.

Bon. A highwayman! upon my life, girl, you have hit it, and this box is some new purchased booty.—Now, could we find him out, the money were ours.

Cher. He don't belong to our gang.

Bon. What horses have they?

Cher. The master rides upon a black.

Bon. A black! ten to one the man upon the black mare: and since he don't belong to our fraternity, we may betray him with a safe conscience: I don't think it lawful to harbour any rogues but my own. Lookye, child, as the saying is, we must go cunningly to work; proofs we must have; the gentleman's servant loves drink; I'll ply him that way, and ten to one he loves a wench; you must work him t'other way.

Cher. Father, would you have me give my secret for his?

Bon. Consider, child, there's two hundred pound, to boot. [*Ringing without.*] Coming, coming—child, mind your business.

[*Exit BONIFACE.*]

Cher. What a rogue is my father! My father! I deny it—My mother was a good, generous, free-hearted woman, and I can't tell how far her goodnature might have extended for the good of her children. This landlord of mine, for I think I can call him no more, would betray his guest, and debauch his daughter into the bargain,—by a footman too!

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. What footman, pray, mistress, is so happy as to be the subject of your contemplation?

Cher. Whoever he is, friend, he'll be but little the better for't.

Arch. I hope so, for, I'm sure, you did not think of me.

Cher. Suppose I had?

Arch. Why then you're but even with me; for the minute I came in, I was considering in what manner I should make love to you.

Cher. Love to me, friend!

Arch. Yes, child.

Cher. Child! manners; if you kept a little more distance, friend, it would become you much better.

Arch. Distance! good night, saucebox.

[*Going.*]

Cher. A pretty fellow; I like his pride.—Sir—pray, sir—you see, sir. [*ARCHER returns.*] I have the credit to be entrusted with your master's fortune here, which sets me a degree above his footman; I hope, sir, you an't affronted.

Arch. Let me look you full in the face, and I'll tell you whether you can affront me or no.—'Sdeath, child, you have a pair of delicate eyes, and you don't know what to do with them.

Cher. Why, sir, don't I see every body!

Arch. Ay, but if some women had them, they would kill every body.—Pr'ythee instruct me; I would fain make love

to you, but I don't know what to say.

Cher. Why, did you never make love to any body before?

Arch. Never to a person of your figure, I can assure you, madam; my addresses have been always confined to people within my own sphere, I never aspired so high before.

[ARCHER *sings.*

*But you look so bright,
And are dress'd so tight,
That a man would swear you're right,
As arm was e'er laid over.*

Cher. Will you give me that song, sir?

Arch. Ay, my dear, take it while it is warm. [*Kisses her.*] Death and fire! her lips are honeycombs.

Cher. And I wish there had been a swarm of bees too, to have stung you for your impudence.

Arch. There's a swarm of Cupids, my little Venus, that has done the business much better.

Cher. This fellow is misbegotten, as well as I. [*Aside.*] What's your name, sir?

Arch. Name! egad, I have forgot it. [*Aside.*] Oh, Martin.

Cher. Where were you born?

Arch. In St. Martin's parish.

Cher. What was your father?

Arch. Of—of—St. Martin's parish.

Cher. Then, friend, goodnight.

Arch. I hope not.

Cher. You may depend upon't.

Arch. Upon what?

Cher. That you're very impudent.

Arch. That you're very handsome.

Cher. That you're a footman.

Arch. That you're an angel.

Cher. I shall be rude.

Arch. So shall I.

Cher. Let go my hand.

Arch. Give me a kiss.

[*Kisses her.*]

Boniface. [*Calls without.*] Cherry, Cherry!

Cher. I'm——My father calls; you plaguy devil, how durst you stop my breath so?—Offer to follow me one step, if you dare. [*Exit.*]

Arch. A fair challenge, by this light; this is a pretty fair opening of an adventure; but we are knight-errants, and so fortune be our guide! [*Exit.*]

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA meeting.

Dor. 'Morrow, my dear sister; are you for church this morning?

Mrs. Sul. Any where to pray; for Heaven alone can help me: but I think, Dorinda, there's no form of prayer in the Liturgy against bad husbands.

Dor. But there's a form of law at Doctors' Commons; and I swear, sister Sullen, rather than see you thus continually discontented, I would advise you to apply to that: for besides the part that I bear in your vexatious broils, as being sister to the husband, and friend to the wife, your examples give me such an impression of matrimony, that I shall be apt to condemn my person to a long vacation all its life—But supposing, madam, that you brought it to a case of separation, what can you urge against your husband? my brother is, first, the most constant man alive.

Mrs. Sul. The most constant husband, I grant ye.

Dor. He never sleeps from you.

Mrs. Sul. No, he always sleeps with me.

Dor. He allows you a maintenance suitable to your quality.

Mrs. Sul. A maintenance! do you take me, madam, for an hospital child, that I must sit down and bless my benefactors, for meat, drink, and clothes? As I take it, madam, I brought your brother ten thousand pounds, out of which I might expect some pretty things, called pleasures.

Dor. You share in all the pleasures that the country affords.

Mrs. Sul. Country pleasures! racks and torments! dost think, child, that my limbs were made for leaping of ditches, and clambering over stiles; or that my parents, wisely foreseeing my future happiness in country pleasures, had early instructed me in the rural accomplishments of drinking fat ale, playing at whist, and smoaking tobacco with my husband; and stilling rosemary water, with the good old gentlewoman my mother-in-law?

Dor. I'm sorry, madam, that it is not more in our power to divert you; I could wish, indeed, that our entertainments

were a little more polite, or your taste a little less refined; but pray, madam, how came the poets and philosophers, that laboured so much in hunting after pleasure, to place it at last in a country life?

Mrs. Sul. Because they wanted money, child, to find out the pleasures of the town: Did you ever hear of a poet or philosopher worth ten thousand pounds? if you can show me such a man, I'll lay you fifty pounds you'll find him somewhere within the weekly bills. Not that I disapprove rural pleasures, as the poets have painted them in their landscapes; every Phyllis has her Corydon, every murmuring stream, and every flowery mead give fresh alarms to love—Besides, you'll find, their couples were never married:—But yonder, I see my Corydon, and a sweet swain it is, Heaven knows—Come, Dorinda, don't be angry, he's my husband, and your brother, and between both, is he not a sad brute?

Dor. I have nothing to say to your part of him; you're the best judge.

Mrs. Sul. O sister, sister! if ever you marry, beware of a sullen, silent sot, one that's always musing, but never thinks—There's some diversion in a talking blockhead; and since a woman must wear chains, I would have the pleasure of hearing 'em rattle a little.—Now you shall see; but take this by the way; he came home this morning, at his usual hour of four, waked me out of a sweet dream of something else, by tumbling over the tea-table, which he broke all to pieces; after his man and he has rolled about the room like sick passengers in a storm, he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket; his feet cold as ice, his breath hot as a furnace, and his hands and his face as greasy as his flannel night-cap—Oh matrimony! matrimony!—He tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his shoulders, disorders the whole economy of my bed, and my whole night's comfort is the tuneable serenade of that wakeful nightingale, his nose.—O the pleasure of counting the melancholy clock by a snoring husband!—But now, sister, you shall see how handsomely, being a well-bred man, he will beg my pardon.

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. My head aches consumedly.

Mrs. Sul. Will you be pleased, my dear, to drink tea with us this morning? it may do your head good.

Sul. No.

Dor. Coffee, brother?

Sul. Pshaw?

Mrs. Sul. Will you please to dress, and go to church with me? the air may help you.

Sul. Scrub!

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Sir!

Sul. What day o'the week is this?

Scrub. Sunday, an't please your worship.

Sul. Sunday! bring me a dram; and, d'ye hear, set out the venison pasty, and a tankard of strong beer upon the hall table, I'll go to breakfast. *[Going.*

Dor. Stay, stay, brother, you shan't get off so; you were very naught last night, and must make your wife reparation: come, come, brother, won't you ask pardon?

Sul. For what?

Dor. For being drunk last night.

Sul. I can afford it, can't I?

Mrs. Sul. But I can't, sir.

Sul. Then you may let it alone.

Mrs. Sul. But I must tell you, sir, that this is not to be borne.

Sul. I'm glad on't.

Mrs. Sul. What is the reason, sir, that you use me thus inhumanly?

Sul. Scrub!

Scrub. Sir!

Sul. Get things ready to shave my head.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. Have a care of coming near his temples, Scrub, for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor. [*Exit SCRUB.*] Inveterate stupidity! did you ever know so hard, so obstinate a spleen as his? O sister, sister! I shall never have good of the beast till I get him to town; London, dear London, is the place for managing and breaking a husband.

Dor. And has not a husband the same opportunities there for humbling a wife?

Mrs. Sul. No, no, child; 'tis a standing maxim in conjugal discipline, that when a man would enslave his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would be arbitrary with her husband, she wheedles her booby up to town—A man dare not play the tyrant in London, because there are so many examples to encourage the subject to rebel, O Dorinda, Dorinda! a fine woman may do any thing in London: On my conscience, she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

Dor. I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Litchfield; you have drawn the French Count to your colours already.

Mrs. Sul. The French are a people that can't live without their gallantries.

Dor. And some English that I know, sister, are not averse to such amusements.

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think, one way to rouse my lethargic, sottish, husband, is to give him a rival; security begets negligence in all people, and men must be alarmed to make them alert in their duty; women are like pictures, of no value in the hands of a fool, till he hears men of sense bid high for the purchase.

Dor. This might do, sister, if my brother's understanding were to be convinced into a passion for you; but, I believe, there's a natural aversion on his side; and I fancy, sister, that you don't come much behind him, if you dealt fairly.

Mrs. Sul. I own it; we are united contradictions, fire and water. But I could be contented, with a great many other wives, to humour the censorious vulgar, and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him but to dissemble a little kindness, to keep me in countenance.

Dor. But how do you know, sister, but that instead of rousing your husband by this artifice to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury?

Mrs. Sul. Let him:—If I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

Dor. But how must I behave myself between ye?

Mrs. Sul. You must assist me.

Dor. What, against my own brother!

Mrs. Sul. He is but your half brother, and I'm your entire friend: If I go a step beyond the bounds of honour, leave me; till then, I expect you should go along with me in every thing; while I trust my honour in your hands, you may trust your brother's in mine—The Count is to dine here to-day.

Dor. 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like that man.

Mrs. Sul. You like nothing; your time is not come; love and death have their fatalities, and strike home one time or other:—You'll pay for all one day, I warrant ye—But come, my lady's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church time.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Inn.

Enter AIMWELL, dressed, and ARCHER.

Aim. And was she the daughter of the house?

Arch. The Landlord is so blind as to think so; but, I dare swear, she has better blood in her veins.

Aim. Why dost think so?

Arch. Because the baggage has a pert *je-ne-sçai-quoi*; she reads plays, keeps a monkey, and is troubled with vapours.

Aim. By which discoveries, I guess that you know more of her.

Arch. Not yet, 'faith: the lady gives herself airs, forsooth; nothing under a gentleman.

Aim. Let me take her in hand.

Arch. Say one word more o'that, and I'll declare myself, spoil your sport there, and every where else: lookye, Aimwell, every man in his own sphere.

Aim. Right; and therefore you must pimp for your master.

Arch. In the usual forms, good sir, after I have served myself.—But to our business—You are so well dressed, Tom, and make so handsome a figure, that I fancy you may do execution in a country church; the exterior part strikes first, and you're in the right to make that impression favourable.

Aim. There's something in that which may turn to advantage: the appearance of a stranger in a country church draws as many gazers as a blazing star; no sooner he comes into the cathedral, but a train of whispers runs buzzing round the congregation in a moment:—Who is he? whence comes he? do you know him?—Then I, sir, tip the verger half a crown; he pockets the simony, and inducts me into the best pew in the church; I pull out my snuff-box, turn myself round, bow to the Bishop or the Dean, if he be the commanding officer; single out a beauty, rivet both my eyes to hers, set my nose a-bleeding by the strength of imagination, and show the whole church my concern, by my endeavouring to hide it: after the

sermon, the whole town gives me to her for a lover; and, by persuading the lady that I am dying for her, the tables are turned, and she, in good earnest, falls in love with me.

Arch. There's nothing in this, Tom, without a precedent; but, instead of riveting your eyes to a beauty, try to fix them upon a fortune; that's our business at present.

Aim. Pshaw! no woman can be a beauty without a fortune.—Let me alone for a marksman.

Arch. Tom!

Aim. Ay!

Arch. When were you at church before, pray?

Aim. Um—I was there at the coronation.

Arch. And how can you expect a blessing by going to church now?

Aim. Blessing? nay, Frank, I ask but for a wife!

[*Exit.*

Arch. Truly, the man is not very unreasonable in his demands.

[*Exit, at the opposite Door.*

Enter BONIFACE and CHERRY.

Bon. Well, daughter, as the saying is, have you brought Martin to confess?

Cher. Pray, father, don't put me upon getting any thing out of a man; I'm but young, you know, father, and don't understand wheedling.

Bon. Young! why, you jade, as the saying is, can any woman wheedle that is not young? Your mother was useless at five and twenty! Would you make your mother a whore, and me a cuckold, as the saying is? I tell you, silence confesses it, and his master spends his money so freely, and is so much a gentleman every manner of way, that he must be a highwayman.

Enter GIBBET, in a Cloak.

Gib. Landlord! Landlord! is the coast clear?

Bon. O, Mr. Gibbet, what's the news?

Gib. No matter; ask no questions; all fair and honourable. Here, my dear Cherry. [*Gives her a Bag.*] Two hundred sterling pounds, as good as ever hanged or saved a rogue; lay them by with the rest. And here—three wedding, or mourning rings—'tis much the same, you know—Here, two silver hilted swords; I took those from fellows that never show any part of their swords but the hilts: here is a diamond necklace, which the lady hid in the privatest part in the coach, but I found it out: this gold watch I took from a pawnbroker's wife; it was left in her hands by a person of quality; there's the arms upon the case.

Cher. But who had you the money from?

Gib. Ah! poor woman! I pitied her—from a poor lady, just eloped from her husband; she had made up her cargo, and was bound for Ireland, as hard as she could drive: she told me of her husband's barbarous usage, and so, faith, I left her half a crown. But I had almost forgot, my dear Cherry; I have a present for you.

Cher. What is't?

Gib. A pot of ceruse, my child, that I took out of a lady's under petticoat pocket.

Cher. What, Mr. Gibbet, do you think, that I paint?

Gib. Why, you jade, your betters do; I am sure, the lady that I took it from had a coronet upon her handkerchief.—Here, take my cloak, and go, secure the premises.

Cher. I will secure them.

[*Exit.*

Bon. But, harkye, where's Hounslow and Bagshot?

Gib. They'll be here to-night.

Bon. D'ye know of any other gentlemen o' the pad on this road?

Gib. No.

Bon. I fancy, that I have two that lodge in the house just now.

Gib. The devil! how d'ye smock them?

Bon. Why, the one is gone to church.

Gib. To church! that's suspicious, I must confess.

Bon. And the other is now in his master's chamber: he pretends to be a servant to the other; we'll call him out, and pump him a little.

Gib. With all my heart.

Bon. Mr. Martin! Mr. Martin!

Enter ARCHER, brushing a Hat, and singing.

Gib. The roads are consumed deep; I'm as dirty as Old Brentford at Christmas.—A good pretty fellow—Who's servant are you, friend?

Arch. My master's.

Gib. Really!

Arch. Really.

Gib. That's much—The fellow has been at the bar, by his evasions:—But pray, sir, what is your master's name?

Arch. *Tall, all, dall.* [Sings, and brushes the Hat.] This is the most obstinate spot—

Gib. I ask you his name?

Arch. Name, sir,—*Tall, all, dall*—I never asked him his name in my life. *Tall, all, dall.*

Bon. What think you now?

Gib. Plain, plain; he talks now as if he were before a judge: but pray, friend, which way does your master travel?

Arch. On horseback.

Gib. Very well again; an old offender—Right; but, I mean, does he go upwards or downwards?

Arch. Downwards, I fear, sir! *Tall, all.*

Gib. I'm afraid thy fate will be a contrary way.

Bon. Ha! ha! ha! Mr. Martin, you're very arch—This gentleman is only travelling towards Chester, and would be glad of your company, that's all—Come, Captain, you'll stay to-night, I suppose; I'll show you a chamber—Come, Captain.

Gib. Farewell, friend—

[*Exeunt* GIBBET *and* BONIFACE.]

Arch. Captain, your servant—Captain! a pretty fellow! 'Sdeath, I wonder that the officers of the army don't conspire to beat all scoundrels in red but their own.

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. Gone, and Martin here! I hope he did not listen: I would have the merit of the discovery all my own, because I would oblige him to love me. [*Aside.*]—Mr. Martin, who was that man with my father?

Arch. Some recruiting sergeant, or whipped out trooper, I suppose.

Cher. All's safe, I find.

[*Aside.*]

Arch. Come, my dear, have you conned over the catechism I taught you last night?

Cher. Come, question me.

Arch. What is love?

Cher. Love is I know not what, it comes I know not how, and goes I know not when.

Arch. Very well, an apt scholar. [*Chucks her under the Chin.*] Where does love enter?

Cher. Into the eyes.

Arch. And where go out?

Cher. I won't tell you.

Arch. What are the objects of that passion?

Cher. Youth, beauty, and clean linen.

Arch. The reason?

Cher. The two first are fashionable in nature, and the third at court.

Arch. That's my dear—What are the signs and tokens of that passion?

Cher. A stealing look, a stammering tongue, words improbable, designs impossible, and actions impracticable.

Arch. That's my good child, kiss me.—What must a lover do to obtain his mistress?

Cher. He must adore the person that disdains him, he must bribe the chambermaid that betrays him, and court the footman that laughs at him!—He must, he must—

Arch. Nay, child, I must whip you if you don't mind your lesson; he must treat his—

Cher. O! ay, he must treat his enemies with respect, his friends with indifference, and all the world with contempt; he must suffer much, and fear more; he must desire much, and hope little; in short, he must embrace his ruin, and throw himself away.

Arch. Had ever man so hopeful a pupil as mine? Come, my dear, why is love called a riddle?

Cher. Because, being blind, he leads those that see; and, though a child, he governs a man.

Arch. Mighty well—And why is love pictured blind?

Cher. Because the painters, out of their weakness, or privilege of their art, chose to hide those eyes they could not draw.

Arch. That's my dear little scholar, kiss me again.—And why should love, that's a child, govern a man?

Cher. Because that a child is the end of love.

Arch. And so ends love's catechism—And now, my dear, we'll go in, and make my master's bed.

Cher. Hold, hold, Mr. Martin—You have taken a great deal of pains to instruct me, and what d'ye think I have learned by it?

Arch. What?

Cher. That your discourse and your habit are contradictions, and it would be nonsense in me to believe you a footman any longer.

Arch. 'Oons, what a witch it is!

Cher. Depend upon this, sir, nothing in that garb shall ever tempt me; for, though I was born to servitude, I hate it:—Own your condition, swear you love me, and then—

Arch. And then we shall go make my master's bed?

Cher. Yes.

Arch. You must know, then, that I am born a gentleman, my education was liberal; but I went to London a younger brother, fell into the hands of sharpers, who stripped me of my money; my friends disowned me, and now my necessity brings me to what you see.

Cher. Then take my hand—promise to marry me before you sleep, and I'll make you master of two thousand pounds.

Arch. How!

Cher. Two thousand pounds, that I have this minute in my own custody; so throw off your livery this instant, and I'll go find a parson.

Arch. What said you? A parson!

Cher. What! do you scruple?

Arch. Scruple! No, no, but—two thousand pounds, you say?

Cher. And better.

Arch. 'Sdeath, what shall I do?—But harkye, child, what need you make me master of yourself and money, when you may have the same pleasure out of me, and still keep your fortune in your own hands?

Cher. Then you won't marry me?

Arch. I would marry you, but——

Cher. O, sweet sir, I'm your humble servant; you're fairly caught: Would you persuade me that any gentleman, who could bear the scandal of wearing a livery, would refuse two thousand pounds, let the condition be what it would?—No, no, sir; but I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken, since it was only to inform myself of the respect that I ought to pay you. [*Going.*

Arch. Fairly bit, by Jupiter!—Hold, hold! And have you actually two thousand pounds?

Cher. Sir, I have my secrets as well as you—when you please to be more open, I shall be more free; and, be assured, that I have discoveries that will match yours, be they what they will.—In the mean while, be satisfied that no discovery I make shall ever hurt you; but beware of my father—— [*Exit.*

Arch. So—we're like to have as many adventures in our inn, as Don Quixotte had in his—Let me see—two thousand pounds! if the wench would promise to die when the money were spent, egad, one would marry her; but the fortune may go off in a year or two, and the wife may live—Lord knows how long! then an innkeeper's daughter; ay, that's the devil—there my pride brings me off.

For whatsoe'er the sages charge on pride,
The angels' fall, and twenty faults beside,
On earth, I'm sure, 'mong us of mortal calling,
Pride saves man oft, and woman too, from falling.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *House.*

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA.

Mrs. Sul. Ha! ha! ha! my dear sister, let me embrace thee: now we are friends indeed; for I shall have a secret of yours, as a pledge for mine.

Dor. But do you think that I am so weak as to fall in love with a fellow at first sight?

Mrs. Sul. Pshaw! now you spoil all; why should not we be as free in our friendships as the men? I warrant you, the gentleman has got to his confidant already, has avowed his passion, toasted your health, and called you ten thousand angels.

Dor. Your hand, sister, I an't well.

Mrs. Sul. So—come, child, up with it—hem a little—so—now, tell me, don't you like the gentleman that we saw at church just now?

Dor. The man's well enough.

Mrs. Sul. Well enough! Is he not a demigod, a Narcissus, a star, the man i'the moon?

Dor. O, sister, I'm extremely ill.

Mrs. Sul. Come, unbosom yourself—the man is perfectly a pretty fellow; I saw him when he first came into church.

Dor. I saw him too, sister, and with an air that shone, methought, like rays about his person.

Mrs. Sul. Well said, up with it.

Dor. No forward coquette behaviour, no airs to set himself off, no studied looks nor artful posture,—but nature did it all.

Mrs. Sul. Better and better——One touch more; come—

Dor. But, then his looks—Did you observe his eyes?

Mrs. Sul. Yes, yes, I did—his eyes; well, what of his eyes?

Dor. Sprightly, but not wandering; they seemed to view, but never gazed on any thing but me—and then his looks so humble were, and yet so noble, that they aimed to tell me, that he could with pride die at my feet, though he scorned slavery any where else.

Mrs. Sul. The physic works purely—How d'ye find yourself now, my dear?

Dor. Hem! much better, my dear.—O, here comes our Mercury.—

Enter SCRUB.

Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

Scrub. Madam, I have brought you a whole packet of news.

Dor. Open it quickly; come.

Scrub. In the first place, I inquired who the gentleman was? They told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked, what the gentleman was? They answered and said, that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I inquired, what countryman he was? They replied, 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded, whence he came? Their answer was, they could not tell. And, fifthly, I asked, whither he went? And they replied, they knew nothing of the matter.—And this is all I could learn.

Mrs. Sul. But what do the people say? can't they guess!

Scrub. Why, some think he's a spy; some guess he's a mountebank; some say one thing, some another;—but, for my

own part, I believe he's a jesuit.

Dor. A jesuit! Why a jesuit?

Scrub. Because he keeps his horses always ready saddled, and his footman talks French!

Mrs. Sul. His footman!

Scrub. Ay; he and the Count's footman were jabbering French, like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond: and, I believe, they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.

Dor. What sort of livery has the footman?

Scrub. Livery! lord, madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizened with lace: and then he has a silver-headed cane dangling at his knuckles—he carries his hands in his pockets, and walks just so—[*Walks in a French Air.*] and has fine long hair, tied up in a bag.—Lord, madam, he's clear another sort of man than I.

Mrs. Sul. That may easily be—But what shall we do now, sister?

Dor. I have it—This fellow has a world of simplicity, and some cunning, the first hides the latter by abundance—*Scrub.*

Scrub. Madam.

Dor. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

Scrub. Yes, madam, it would be a satisfaction, no doubt.

Dor. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale, because you are butler to-day.

Scrub. Yes, madam, I am butler every Sunday.

Mrs. Sul. O brave sister! o'my conscience, you understand the mathematics already—'Tis the best plot in the world;—your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be got to the alehouse, with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own—so we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves. In the country, you know, any stranger is company, and we are glad to take up with the butler in a country dance, and happy if he'll do us the favour.

Scrub. Oh, madam! you wrong me: I never refused your ladyship the favour in my life.

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. Ladies, dinner's upon table.

Dor. *Scrub,* we'll excuse your waiting—Go where we ordered you.

Scrub. I shall.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Inn.

Enter AIMWELL and ARCHER.

Arch. Well, Tom, I find you are a marksman.

Aim. A marksman! who so blind could be as not discern a swan among the ravens?

Arch. Well, but harkye, Aimwell——

Aim. Aimwell! call me Oroondates, Cesario, Amadis, all that romance can in a lover paint, and then I'll answer. O, Archer, I read her thousands in her looks! she looked like Ceres in her harvest; corn, wine, and oil, milk and honey; gardens, groves, and purling streams, played on her plenteous face.

Arch. Her face!—her pocket, you mean. The corn, wine, and oil, lies there. In short, she has twenty thousand pounds, that's the English on't.

Aim. Her eyes——

Arch. Are demicannons, to be sure; so I won't stand their battery. [*Going.*

Aim. Pray excuse me; my passion must have vent.

Arch. Passion! what a plague, d'ye think these romantic airs will do your business? Were my temper as extravagant as yours, my adventures have something more romantic by half.

Aim. Your adventures!

Arch. Yes——

The nymph, that with her twice ten hundred pounds,
With brazen engine hot, and coif clear starch'd,
Can fire the guest in warming of the bed——

There's a touch of sublime Milton for you, and the subject, but an innkeeper's daughter. I can play with a girl, as an angler does with his fish; he keeps it at the end of his line, runs it up the stream, and down the stream, till at last, he brings it to hand, tickles the trout, and so whips it into his basket.

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. Mr. Martin, as the saying is—yonder's an honest fellow below, my Lady Bountiful's butler, who begs the honour, that you would go home with him, and see his cellar.

Arch. Do my *baisse mains* to the gentleman, and tell him, I will do myself the honour to wait on him immediately, as the saying is.

Bon. I shall do your worship's commands, as the saying is.

[*Exit, bowing obsequiously.*

Aim. What do I hear? soft Orpheus play, and fair Toftida sing.

Arch. Pshaw! damn your raptures; I tell you, here's a pump going to be put into the vessel, and the ship will get into harbour, my life on't. You say, there's another lady very handsome there?

Aim. Yes, faith.

Arch. I'm in love with her already.

Aim. Can't you give me a bill upon Cherry in the mean time.

Arch. No, no, friend; all her corn, wine, and oil, is ingrossed to my market—And, once more, I warn you, to keep your anchorage clear of mine; for if you fall foul on me, by this light, you shall go to the bottom.—What! make prize of my little frigate, while I am upon the cruize for you! *[Exit.*

Enter BONIFACE.

Aim. Well, well, I won't—Landlord, have you any tolerable company in the house? I don't care for dining alone.

Bon. Yes, sir, there's a captain below, as the saying is, that arrived about an hour ago.

Aim. Gentlemen of his coat are welcome every where;—will you make him a compliment from me, and tell him, I should be glad of his company.

Bon. Who shall I tell him, sir, would——

Aim. Ha! that stroke was well thrown in——I'm only a traveller, like himself, and would be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. I obey your commands, as the saying is. *[Exit.*

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. 'Sdeath! I had forgot—what title will you give yourself?

Aim. My brother's, to be sure: he would never give me any thing else, so I'll make bold with his honour this bout. You know the rest of your cue.

Arch. Ay, ay. *[Exit.*

Enter GIBBET.

Gib. Sir, I'm yours.

Aim. 'Tis more than I deserve, sir; for I don't know you.

Gib. I don't wonder at that, sir, for you never saw me before——I hope. *[Aside.*

Aim. And pray, sir, how came I by the honour of seeing you now?

Gib. Sir, I scorn to intrude upon any gentleman—but my landlord—

Aim. O, sir, I ask your pardon; you are the captain he told me of?

Gib. At your service, sir.

Aim. What regiment, may I be so bold?

Gib. A marching regiment, sir; an old corps.

Aim. Very old, if your coat be regimental. *[Aside.]* You have served abroad, sir?

Gib. Yes, sir, in the plantations; 'twas my lot to be sent into the worst service; I would have quitted it indeed, but a

man of honour, you know——Besides, 'twas for the good of my country, that I should be abroad——Any thing for the good of one's country.—I'm a Roman for that.

Aim. One of the first, I'll lay my life. [*Aside.*] You found the West Indies very hot, sir?

Gib. Ay, sir, too hot for me.

Aim. Pray sir, han't I seen your face at Will's coffeehouse?

Gib. Yes, sir, and at White's too.

Aim. And where is your company now, captain?

Gib. They a'nt come yet.

Aim. Why, d'ye expect them here?

Gib. They'll be here to-night, sir.

Aim. Which way do they march?

Gib. Across the country.—The devil's in't, if I han't said enough to encourage him to declare—but I'm afraid he's not right—I must tack about. [*Aside.*]

Aim. Is your company to quarter at Litchfield?

Gib. In this house, sir.

Aim. What! all?

Gib. My company's but thin—Ha! ha! ha! we are but three;—ha! ha! ha!

Aim. You are merry, sir.

Gib. Ay, sir, you must excuse me, sir, I understand the world, especially the art of travelling: I don't care, sir, for answering questions directly upon the road—for I generally ride with a charge about me.

Aim. Three or four, I believe. [*Aside.*]

Gib. I am credibly informed, that there are highwaymen upon this quarter—not, sir, that I could suspect a gentleman of your figure—But, truly, sir, I have got such a way of evasion upon the road, that I don't care for speaking truth to any man.

Aim. Your caution may be necessary—Then, I presume, you are no captain.

Gib. Not I, sir; captain is a good travelling name, and so I take it. It stops a great many foolish inquiries, that are generally made about gentlemen that travel;—it gives a man an air of something, and makes the drawers obedient.—And, thus far, I am a captain, and no farther.

Aim. And, pray, sir, what is your true profession?

Gib. O, sir, you must excuse me—upon my word, sir, I don't think it safe to tell ye.

Aim. Ha! ha! ha! upon my word, I commend you.—

Enter BONIFACE.

Well, Mr. Boniface, what's the news?

Bon. There's another gentleman below, as the saying is, that, hearing you were but two, would be glad to make the third man, if you'd give him leave.

Aim. What is he?

Bon. A clergyman, as the saying is.

Aim. A clergyman!—is he really a clergyman? or is it only his travelling name, as my friend the captain has it.

Bon. O, sir, he's a priest, and chaplain to the French officers in town.

Aim. Is he a Frenchman?

Bon. Yes, sir; born at Brussels.

Gib. A Frenchman, and a priest! I won't be seen in his company, sir;—I have a value for my reputation, sir.

Aim. Nay, but, captain, since we are by ourselves—Can he speak English, landlord?

Bon. Very well, sir; you may know him, as the saying is, to be a foreigner by his accent, and that's all.

Aim. Then he has been in England before?

Bon. Never, sir, but he's a master of languages, as the saying is—he talks Latin; it does me good to hear him talk Latin.

Aim. Then you understand Latin, Mr. Boniface?

Bon. Not I, sir, as the saying is;—but he talks it so very fast, that I'm sure it must be good.

Aim. Pray desire him to walk up.

Bon. Here he is, as the saying is.

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Save you, gentlemens bote.

Aim. A Frenchman!—Sir, your most humble servant.

Foig. Och, dear joy, I am your most faithful shervant; and yours alsho.

Gib. Doctor, you talk very good English, but you have a mighty twang of the foreigner.

Foig. My English is very well for the vords; but ve foreigners, you know, cannot bring our tongues about the pronunciation so soon.

Aim. A foreigner! A downright teague, by this light. [*Aside.*] Were you born in France, doctor?

Foig. I was educated in France, but I was borned at Brussels; I am a subject of the King of Spain, joy.

Gib. What King of Spain, sir? speak.

Foig. Upon my shoul, joy, I cannot tell you as yet.

Aim. Nay, captain, that was too hard upon the doctor; he's a stranger.

Foig. O, let him alone, dear joy, I am of a nation that is not easily put out of countenance.

Aim. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the dispute—Here, landlord, is dinner ready?

Bon. Upon the table, as the saying is.

Aim. Gentlemen—pray—that door—

Foig. No, no, fait, the captain must lead.

Aim. No, doctor, the church is our guide.

Gib. Ay, ay, so it is.

[*Exeunt, FOIGARD foremost.*]

SCENE III.

A Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

Enter ARCHER and SCRUB, singing, and hugging one another; SCRUB with a Tankard in his Hand—GIPSEY listening at a Distance.

Scrub. *Tal, all, dal*—Come, my dear boy, let us have that song once more.

Arch. No, no, we shall disturb the family—But will you be sure to keep the secret?

Scrub. Pho! upon my honour, as I'm a gentleman.

Arch. 'Tis enough—You must know then, that my master is the Lord Viscount Aimwell: he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously, that he thinks fit to withdraw, till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not. He never was in this part of England before, so he chose to retire to this place, that's all.

Gip. And, that's enough for me.

[*Exit.*]

Scrub. And where were you, when your master fought?

Arch. We never know of our master's quarrels.

Scrub. No! if our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do, is to tell their wives; the wife tells the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour, you shall have the whole country up in arms.

Arch. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for.—But, if you should chance to talk now of this business—

Scrub. Talk! Ah, sir, had I not learned the knack of holding my tongue, I had never lived so long in a great family.

Arch. Ay, ay, to be sure, there are secrets in all families.

Scrub. Secrets, O lud!—But I'll say no more—Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard:—Here—

Arch. With all my heart; who knows but you and I may come to be better acquainted, eh?—Here's your ladies' health—You have three, I think, and to be sure there must be secrets among them?

Scrub. Secrets! ah, friend, friend! I wish I had a friend.

Arch. Am not I your friend? Come, you and I will be sworn brothers.

Scrub. Shall we?

Arch. From this minute—Give me a kiss—and now, brother Scrub—

Scrub. And now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret, that will make your hair stand on end.—You must know, that I am consumedly in love.

Arch. That's a terrible secret, that's the truth on't.

Scrub. That jade, Gipse, that was with us just now in the cellar, is the arrantest whore that ever wore a petticoat, and I'm dying for love of her.

Arch. Ha! ha! ha!—are you in love with her person or her virtue, brother Scrub?

Scrub. I should like virtue best, because it is more durable than beauty; for virtue holds good with some women long and many a day after they have lost it.

Arch. In the country, I grant ye, where no woman's virtue is lost, till a bastard be found.

Scrub. Ay, could I bring her to a bastard, I should have her all to myself; but I dare not put it upon that lay, for fear of being sent for a soldier.—Pray, brother, how do you gentlemen in London like that same pressing act?

Arch. Very ill, brother Scrub;—'Tis the worst that ever was made for us;—formerly I remembered the good days when we could dun our masters for our wages, and if they refused to pay us, we could have a warrant to carry them before a justice: but now if we talk of eating, they have a warrant for us and carry us before three justices.

Scrub. And to be sure we go, if we talk of eating; for the justices won't give their own servants a bad example. Now this is my misfortune—I dare not speak in the house, while that jade, Gipse, dings about like a fury—once I had the better end of the staff.

Arch. And how comes the change now?

Scrub. Why, the mother of all this mischief is a priest.

Arch. A priest!

Scrub. Ay, a damn'd son of a whore of Babylon, that came over hither to say grace to the French officers, and eat up our provisions—There's not a day goes over his head without a dinner or supper in this house.

Arch. How came he so familiar in the family?

Scrub. Because he speaks English as if he had lived here all his life, and tells lies as if he had been a traveller from his cradle.

Arch. And this priest, I'm afraid, has converted the affection of your Gipse.

Scrub. Converted! ay, and perverted, my dear friend—for, I'm afraid he has made her a whore, and a papist—but this is not all; there's the French count and Mrs. Sullen, they're in the confederacy, and for some private ends of their own

too, to be sure.

Arch. A very hopeful family yours, brother Scrub; I suppose the maiden lady has her lover too?

Scrub. Not that I know—She's the best of them, that's the truth on't: but they take care to prevent my curiosity, by giving me so much business, that I'm a perfect slave—What d'ye think is my place in this family?

Arch. Butler, I suppose.

Scrub. Ah, lord help you—I'll tell you—Of a Monday I drive the coach, of a Tuesday I drive the plough, on Wednesday I follow the hounds, a Thursday I dun the tenants, on Friday I go to market, on Saturday I draw warrants, and a Sunday I draw beer.

Arch. Ha! ha! ha! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother—but what ladies are those?

Scrub. Ours, ours; that upon the right hand is Mrs. Sullen, and the other Mrs. Dorinda—don't mind them, sit still, man——

Enter MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA.

Mrs. Sul. I have heard my brother talk of Lord Aimwell, but they say that his brother is the finer gentleman.

Dor. That's impossible, sister.

Mrs. Sul. He's vastly rich, and very close, they say.

Dor. No matter for that; if I can creep into his heart, I'll open his breast, I warrant him: I have heard say, that people may be guessed at by the behaviour of their servants; I could wish we might talk to that fellow.

Mrs. Sul. So do I; for I think he's a very pretty fellow; come this way, I'll throw out a lure for him presently.

[They walk towards the opposite Side of the Stage; MRS. SULLEN drops her Fan, ARCHER runs, takes it up, and gives it to her.]

Arch. Corn, wine, and oil, indeed—but, I think the wife has the greatest plenty of flesh and blood; she should be my choice—Ay, ay, say you so—madam—your ladyship's fan.

Mrs. Sul. O, sir, I thank you—What a handsome bow the fellow made!

Dor. Bow! why I have known several footmen come down from London, set up here for dancing masters, and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

Arch. [*Aside.*] That project, for aught I know, had been better than ours——Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me?

Scrub. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant, that you saw at church to-day: I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might show me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

Dor. And I hope you have made much of him.

Arch. Oh, yes, madam, but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

Mrs. Sul. What, then you don't usually drink ale?

Arch. No, madam, my constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water; 'tis prescribed me by the physician, for a remedy against the spleen—

Scrub. O la! O la!—A footman have the spleen!

Mrs. Sul. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality.

Arch. Madam, like all other fashions, it wears out, and so descends to their servants; though in a great many of us, I believe it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

Dor. How affectedly the fellow talks—How long, pray, have you served your present master?

Arch. Not long; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

Mrs. Sul. And pray, which service do you like best?

Arch. Madam, the ladies pay best; the honour of serving them is sufficient wages; there is a charm in their looks, that delivers a pleasure with their commands, and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

Mrs. Sul. That flight was above the pitch of a livery; and, sir, would not you be satisfied to serve a lady again?

Arch. As groom of the chambers, madam, but not as a footman.

Mrs. Sul. I suppose you served as footman before?

Arch. For that reason I would not serve in that post again; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London: my Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I served, called me up one morning, and told me, Martin, go to my Lady Allnight, with my humble service; tell her, I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday, and left word with Mrs. Rebecca, that the preliminaries of the affair she knows of, are stopped till we know the concurrence of the person that I know of; for which there are circumstances wanting which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that in the mean time there is a person about her ladyship, that, from several hints and surmises, was accessary at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things, that to her knowledge are of more importance—

Mrs. Sul.

Dor. } Ha! ha! where are you going, sir?

Arch. Why, I han't half done—The whole howd'ye was about half an hour long; so I happened to misplace two syllables, and, was turned off, and rendered incapable—

Dor. The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw.—But, friend, if your master be married,——I presume you still serve a lady.

Arch. No, madam, I take care never to come into a married family; the commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary, that 'tis impossible to please both.

Dor. There's a main point gained—My lord is not married, I find.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Sul. But I wonder, friend, that in so many good services, you had not a better provision made for you.

Arch. I don't know how, madam—I am very well as I am—

Mrs. Sul. Something for a pair of gloves.

[Offering him Money.]

Arch. I humbly beg leave to be excused; my master, madam, pays me, nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honour, and disobeying his commands.

Scrub. Brother Martin, brother Martin.

Arch. What do you say, brother Scrub?

Scrub. Take the money, and give it to me.

[Exeunt ARCHER and SCRUB.]

Dor. This is surprising: did you ever see so pretty a well-bred fellow?

Mrs. Sul. The devil take him, for wearing that livery.

Dor. I fancy, sister, he may be some gentleman, a friend of my lord's, that his lordship has pitched upon for his courage, fidelity, and discretion, to bear him company in this dress, and who, ten to one, was his second.

Mrs. Sul. It is so, it must be so, and it shall be so—for I like him.

Dor. What! better than the count?

Mrs. Sul. The count happened to be the most agreeable man upon the place; and so I chose him to serve me in my design upon my husband——But I should like this fellow better in a design upon myself.

Dor. But now, sister, for an interview with this lord and this gentleman; how shall we bring that about?

Mrs. Sul. Patience! you country ladies give no quarter.—Lookye, Dorinda, if my Lord Aimwell loves you or deserves you, he'll find a way to see you, and there we must leave it——My business comes now upon the tapis,——Have you prepared your brother?

Dor. Yes, yes.

Mrs. Sul. And how did he relish it?

Dor. He said little, mumbled something to himself, and promised to be guided by me: but here he comes.—

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. What singing was that I heard just now?

Mrs. Sul. The singing in your head, my dear, you complained of it all day.

Sul. You're impertinent.

Mrs. Sul. I was ever so, since I became one flesh with you.

Sul. One flesh! rather two carcasses joined unnaturally together.

Mrs. Sul. Or rather a living soul coupled to a dead body.

Dor. So, this is fine encouragement for me!

Sul. Yes, my wife shows you what you must do!

Mrs. Sul. And my husband shows you what you must suffer.

Sul. 'Sdeath, why can't you be silent?

Mrs. Sul. 'Sdeath, why can't you talk?

Sul. Do you talk to any purpose?

Mrs. Sul. Do you think to any purpose?

Sul. Sister, harkye—[*Whispers.*] I shan't be home till it be late.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. What did he whisper to ye?

Dor. That he would go round the back way, come into the closet, and listen, as I directed him.—But let me beg once more, dear sister, to drop this project; for, as I told you before, instead of awaking him to kindness, you may provoke him to rage; and then who knows how far his brutality may carry him?

Mrs. Sul. I'm provided to receive him, I warrant you; away!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

*Enter LADY BOUNTIFUL and MRS. SULLEN, DORINDA
meeting them*

Dor. News, dear sister, news, news!

Enter ARCHER, running.

Arch. Where, where is my Lady Bountiful?—Pray which is the old lady of you three?

Lady B. I am.

Arch. O madam, the fame of your ladyship's charity, goodness, benevolence, skill, and ability, have drawn me hither, to implore your ladyship's help in behalf of my unfortunate master, who is at this moment breathing his last.

Lady B. Your master! where is he?

Arch. At your gate, madam: drawn by the appearance of your handsome house, to view it nearer, and walking up the avenue, within five paces of the courtyard, he was taken ill of a sudden, with a sort of I know not what: but down he fell, and there he lies.

Lady B. Here, Scrub, Gipse.

Enter SCRUB and GIPSEY.

All run, get my easy-chair down stairs, put the gentleman in it, and bring him in quickly, quickly.

Arch. Heaven will reward your ladyship for this charitable act.

Lady B. Is your master used to these fits?

Arch. O yes, madam, frequently—I have known him have five or six of a night.

Lady B. What's his name?

Arch. Lord, madam, he's dying; a minute's care or neglect may save or destroy his life.

Lady B. Ah, poor gentleman! come, friend, show me the way; I'll see him brought in myself.

[Exit with ARCHER.]

Dor. Oh, sister, my heart flutters about strangely; I can hardly forbear running to his assistance.

Mrs. Sul. And I'll lay my life he deserves your assistance more than he wants it: did not I tell you that my lord would find a way to come at you? Love's his distemper, and you must be the physician; put on all your charms, summon all your fire into your eyes, plant the whole artillery of your looks against his breast, and down with him.

Dor. O, sister, I'm but a young gunner, I shall be afraid to shoot, for fear the piece should recoil, and hurt myself.

Mrs. Sul. Never fear, you shall see me shoot before you, if you will.

Dor. No, no, dear sister, you have missed your mark so unfortunately, that I shan't care for being instructed by you.

*Enter AIMWELL, in a Chair, carried by ARCHER and
SCRUB; LADY BOUNTIFUL, GIPSEY. AIMWELL
counterfeiting a Swoon.*

Lady B. Here, here, let's see—the hartshorn drops—Gipsey, a glass of fair water, his fit's very strong.—Bless me, how his hands are clenched!

Arch. For shame, ladies, what d'ye do? why don't you help us?—Pray, madam, *[To DORINDA.]* take his hand, and open it, if you can, whilst I hold his head.

[DORINDA takes his Hand.]

Dor. Poor gentleman—Oh—he has got my hand within his, and squeezes it unmercifully——

Lady B. 'Tis the violence of his convulsion, child.

Arch. Oh, madam, he's perfectly possessed in these cases—he'll bite you, if you don't have a care.

Dor. Oh, my hand, my hand!

Lady B. What's the matter with the foolish girl? I have got this hand open you see with a great deal of ease.

Arch. Ay, but, madam, your daughter's hand is somewhat warmer than your ladyship's, and the heat of it draws the force of the spirits that way.

Mrs. Sul. I find, friend, you are very learned in these sort of fits.

Arch. 'Tis no wonder, madam, for I'm often troubled with them myself; I find myself extremely ill at this minute.

[*Looking hard at* MRS. SULLEN.

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] I fancy I could find a way to cure you.

Lady B. His fit holds him very long.

Arch. Longer than usual, madam.—

Lady B. Where did his illness take him first, pray!

Arch. To-day, at church, madam.

Lady B. In what manner was he taken?

Arch. Very strangely, my lady. He was of a sudden touched with something in his eyes, which at the first he only felt, but could not tell whether 'twas pain or pleasure.

Lady B. Wind, nothing but wind.—Your master should never go without a bottle to smell to—Oh!—he recovers—the lavender water—some feathers to burn under his nose—Hungary water to rub his temples—Oh, he comes to himself. Hem a little, sir, hem—Gipsey, bring the cordial water.

[*AIMWELL seems to awake in amaze.*

Dor. How do you, sir?

Aim. Where am I? [*Rising.*
Sure I have passed the gulf of silent death,
And now am landed on the Elysian shore.
Behold the goddess of those happy plains,
Fair Proserpine—let me adore thy bright divinity.

[*Kneels to* DORINDA, *and kisses her Hand.*

Mrs. Sul. So, so, so; I knew where the fit would end.

Aim. Eurydice, perhaps—
How could thy Orpheus keep his word,
And not look back upon thee;
No treasure but thyself could sure have brib'd him
To look one minute off thee.

Lady B. Delirious, poor gentleman.

Arch. Very delirious, madam, very delirious.

Aim. Martin's voice, I think.

Arch. Yes, my lord—How does your lordship?

Lady B. Lord! did you mind that, girls?

Aim. Where am I?

Arch. In very good hands, sir—You were taken just now with one of your old fits, under the trees, just by this good lady's house; her ladyship had you taken in, and has miraculously brought you to yourself, as you see——

Aim. I am so confounded with shame, madam, that I can now only beg pardon——And refer my acknowledgments for your ladyship's care till an opportunity offers of making some amends—I dare be no longer troublesome—Martin, give two guineas to the servants. [*Going.*]

Dor. Sir, you may catch cold by going so soon into the air; you don't look, sir, as if you were perfectly recovered.

[*ARCHER talks to LADY BOUNTIFUL in dumb Show.*]

Aim. That I shall never be, madam: my present illness is so rooted, that I must expect to carry it to my grave.

Lady B. Come, sir, your servant has been telling me that you are apt to relapse, if you go into the air—Your good manners shan't get the better of ours—You shall sit down again, sir:—Come, sir, we don't mind ceremonies in the country—Here, Gipse, bring the cordial water.—Here, sir, my service t'ye——You shall taste my water; 'tis a cordial, I can assure you, and of my own making.

Scrub. Yes, my lady makes very good water.

Lady B. Drink it off, sir: [*AIMWELL drinks.*] And how d'ye find yourself now, sir?

Aim. Somewhat better——though very faint still.

Lady B. Ay, ay, people are always faint after these fits. Come, girls, you shall show the gentleman the house; 'tis but an old family building, sir; but you had better walk about, and cool by degrees, than venture immediately into the air——You'll find some tolerable pictures—Dorinda, show the gentleman the way. I must go to the poor woman below. [*Exit.*]

Dor. This way, sir.

Aim. Ladies, shall I beg leave for my servant to wait on you, for he understands pictures very well.

Mrs. Sul. Sir, we understand originals, as well as he does pictures, so he may come along.

[*Exeunt DORINDA and AIMWELL, MRS. SULLEN
and ARCHER—SCRUB sits down.*]

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. 'Save you, master Scrub.

Scrub. Sir, I won't be saved your way——I hate a priest, I abhor the French, and I defy the devil—Sir, I'm a bold Briton, and will spill the last drop of my blood to keep out popery and slavery.

Foig. Master Scrub, you would put me down in politics, and so I would be speaking with Mrs. Gipse.

Scrub. Good Mr. Priest, you can't speak with her; she's sick, sir; she's gone abroad, sir; she's—dead two months ago, sir.

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. How now, impudence! How dare you talk so saucily to the doctor? Pray, sir, don't take it ill; for the common people of England are not so civil to strangers, as——

Scrub. You lie, you lie:—'tis the common people, such as you are, that are civilest to strangers.

Gip. Sirrah, I have a good mind to—Get you out, I say!

Scrub. I won't!

Gip. You won't, sauce-box!—Pray, doctor, what is the captain's name that came to your inn last night?

Scrub. The captain! ah, the devil, there she hampers me again;—the captain has me on one side, and the priest on t'other:—So between the gown and the sword, I have a fine time on't.

Gip. What, sirrah, won't you march?

Scrub. No, my dear, I won't march—but I'll walk:—And I'll make bold to listen a little too.

[*Goes behind the Side Scene, and listens.*]

Gip. Indeed, doctor, the count has been barbarously treated, that's the truth on't.

Foig. Ah, Mrs. Gipsy, upon my shoul, now, gra, his complainings would mollify the marrow in your bones, and move the bowels of your commiseration; he weeps, and he dances, and he fistles, and he swears, and he laughs, and he stamps, and he sings: in conclusion, joy, he's afflicted, *à la François*, and a stranger, would not know whider to cry or to laugh with him.

Gip. What would you have me do, doctor?

Foig. Nothing, joy, but only hide the count in Mrs. Sullen's closet, when it is dark.

Gip. Nothing! Is that nothing? it would be both a sin and a shame, doctor.

Foig. Here is twenty Louis d'ors, joy, for your shame; and I will give you an absolution for the shin.

Gip. But won't that money look like a bribe?

Foig. Dat is according as you shall take it—If you receive the money before hand, 'twill be *logicè*, a bribe; but if you stay till afterwards, 'twill be only a gratification.

Gip. Well, doctor, I'll take it *logicè*—But what must I do with my conscience, sir?

Foig. Leave dat wid me, joy; I am your priest, gra; and your conscience is under my hands.

Gip. But should I put the count into the closet—

Foig. Vell, is dere any shin for a man's being in a closhet? one may go to prayers in a closhet.

Gip. But if the lady should come into her chamber and go to bed?

Foig. Vel, and is dere any shin in going to bed, joy?

Gip. Ah, but if the parties should meet, doctor?

Foig. Vel den—the parties must be responsible.—Do you begone after putting the count in the closhet; and leave the shins wid themselves—I will come with the count to instruct you in your chamber.

Gip. Well, doctor, your religion is so pure, that I'm resolved to die a martyr to't—Here's the key of the garden door; come in the back way, when 'tis late—I'll be ready to receive you; but don't so much as whisper, only take hold of my hand; I'll lead you, and do you lead the count, and follow me. [Exeunt.]

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. What witchcraft now have these two imps of the devil been a-hatching here?—There's twenty Louis d'ors! I heard that, and saw the purse: but I must give room to my betters. *[Exit.*

Enter AIMWELL, leading DORINDA, and making love in dumb Show; MRS. SULLEN, and ARCHER.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, *[To ARCHER.]* how d'ye like that piece?

Arch. O, 'tis Leda—You find, madam, how Jupiter came disguised to make love—

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, what head is that in the corner, there?

Arch. O, madam, 'tis poor Ovid in his exile.

Mrs. Sul. What was he banished for?

Arch. His ambitious love, madam. *[Bowing.]* His misfortune touches me.

Mrs. Sul. Was he successful in his amours?

Arch. There he has left us in the dark—He was too much a gentleman to tell.

Mrs. Sul. If he were secret, I pity him.

Arch. And if he were successful I envy him.

Mrs. Sul. How d'ye like that Venus over the chimney?

Arch. Venus! I protest, madam, I took it for your picture: but now I look again, 'tis not handsome enough.

Mrs. Sul. Oh, what a charm is flattery! if you would see my picture, there it is, over that cabinet—How d'ye like it?

Arch. I must admire any thing, madam, that has the least resemblance of you—But methinks, madam,—*[He looks at the Picture and MRS. SULLEN Three or Four Times, by Turns.]* Pray, madam, who drew it?

Mrs. Sul. A famous hand, sir.

[Exeunt AIMWELL and DORINDA.]

Arch. A famous hand, madam! Your eyes, indeed, are featured there; but where's the sparkling moisture, shining fluid, in which they swim? The picture, indeed, has your dimples, but where's the swarm of killing Cupids, that should ambush there? The lips too are figured out; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness that tempts the taste in the original?

Mrs. Sul. Had it been my lot to have matched with such a man! *[Aside.]*

Arch. Your breasts too; presumptuous man! what! paint heaven! Apropos, madam, in the very next picture is Salmoneus, that was struck dead with lightning, for offering to imitate Jove's thunder; I hope you served the painter so, madam.

Mrs. Sul. Had my eyes the power of thunder, they should employ their lightning better.

Arch. There's the finest bed in that room, madam; I suppose 'tis your ladyship's bedchamber?

Mrs. Sul. And what then, sir?

Arch. I think the quilt is the richest that ever I saw—I can't at this distance, madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery: will you give me leave, madam?

Mrs. Sul. The devil take his impudence—Sure, if I gave him an opportunity, he durst not offer it—I have a great mind to try.—[*Going.—Returns.*] 'Sdeath, what am I doing?—And alone too;—Sister, sister! [Exit.]

Arch. I'll follow her close—
For where a Frenchman durst attempt to storm,
A Briton, sure may well the work perform.

[*Going.*]

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Martin, brother Martin!

Arch. O brother Scrub, I beg your pardon, I was not a-going: here's a guinea my master ordered you.

Scrub. A guinea! hi, hi, hi, a guinea! eh—by this light it is a guinea; but I suppose you expect one and twenty shillings in change.

Arch. Not at all; I have another for Gipsej.

Scrub. A guinea for her! Fire and faggot for the witch.—Sir, give me that guinea, and I'll discover a plot.

Arch. A plot?

Scrub. Ay, sir, a plot, a horrid plot—First, it must be a plot, because there's a woman in't: secondly, it must be a plot, because there's a priest in't: thirdly, it must be a plot, because there's French gold in't: and fourthly, it must be a plot, because I don't know what to make on't.

Arch. Nor any body else, I'm afraid, brother Scrub.

Scrub. Truly I'm afraid so too; for where there's a priest and a woman, there's always a mystery and a riddle—This, I know, that here has been the doctor with a temptation in one hand, and an absolution in the other, and Gipsej has sold herself to the devil; I saw the price paid down, my eyes shall take their oath on't.

Arch. And is all this bustle about Gipsej?

Scrub. That's not all; I could hear but a word here and there; but I remember they mentioned a count, a closet, a back door, and a key.

Arch. The count! did you hear nothing of Mrs. Sullen?

Scrub. I did hear some word that sounded that way: but whether it was Sullen or Dorinda I could not distinguish.

Arch. You have told this matter to nobody, brother?

Scrub. Told! no, sir, I thank you for that; I'm resolved never to speak one word, *pro* nor *con*, till we have a peace.

Arch. You are i'the right, brother Scrub; here's a treaty a-foot between the count and the lady.—The priest and the chambermaid are plenipotentiaries—It shall go hard, but I'll find a way to be included in the treaty. Where's the doctor now?

Scrub. He and Gipsej are this moment devouring my lady's marmalade in the closet.

Aim. [*From without.*] Martin, Martin!

Arch. I come, sir, I come.

Scrub. But you forget the other guinea, brother Martin.

Arch. Here, I give it with all my heart.

[*Exit ARCHER.*]

Scrub. And I take it with all my soul. I'cod, I'll spoil your plotting, Mrs. Gipse; and if you should set the captain upon me, these two guineas will buy me off.

[*Exit SCRUB.*]

Enter MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA, meeting.

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister.

Dor. And well, sister.

Mrs. Sul. What's become of my lord?

Dor. What's become of his servant?

Mrs. Sul. Servant! he's a prettier fellow and a finer gentleman by fifty degrees than his master.

Dor. O' my conscience, I fancy you could beg that fellow at the gallows' foot.

Mrs. Sul. O' my conscience, I could, provided I could put a friend of yours in his room.

Dor. You desired me, sister, to leave you, when you transgressed the bounds of honour.

Mrs. Sul. Thou dear censorious country girl—What dost mean? You can't think of the man without the bedfellow, I find.

Dor. I don't find any thing unnatural in that thought.

Mrs. Sul. How a little love and conversation improve a woman! Why, child, you begin to live—you never spoke before.

Dor. Because I was never spoke to before: my lord has told me, that I have more wit and beauty than any of my sex; and truly I begin to think the man is sincere.

Mrs. Sul. You are in the right, Dorinda; pride is the life of a woman, and flattery is our daily bread—But I'll lay you a guinea that I had finer things said to me than you had.

Dor. Done—What did your fellow say to ye?

Mrs. Sul. My fellow took the picture of Venus for mine.

Dor. But my lover took me for Venus herself.

Mrs. Sul. Common cant! had my spark called me a Venus directly, I should have believed him a footman in good earnest.

Dor. But my lover was upon his knees to me.

Mrs. Sul. And mine was upon his tiptoes to me.

Dor. Mine vowed to die for me.

Mrs. Sul. Mine swore to die with me.

Dor. Mine kissed my hand ten thousand times.

Mrs. Sul. Mine has all that pleasure to come.

Dor. Mine spoke the softest moving things.

Mrs. Sul. Ay, ay, mine had his moving things too.

Dor. Mine offered marriage.

Mrs. Sul. O lard! d'ye call that a moving thing?

Dor. The sharpest arrow in his quiver, my dear sister; Why, my twenty thousand pounds may lie brooding here this seven years, and hatch nothing at last but some illnated clown, like yours;—Whereas, if I marry my Lord Aimwell, there will be title, place, and precedence, the park, the play, and the drawing-room, splendour, equipage, noise, and flambeaux—Hey, my Lady Aimwell's servants there—lights, lights to the stairs—My Lady Aimwell's coach, put forward—stand by, make room for her ladyship—Are not these things moving? What! melancholy of a sudden?

Mrs. Sul. Happy, happy sister! your angel has been watchful for your happiness, whilst mine has slept, regardless of his charge—Long smiling years of circling joys for you, but not one hour for me! [Weeps.]

Dor. Come, my dear, we'll talk of something else.

Mrs. Sul. O, Dorinda, I own myself a woman, full of my sex, a gentle, generous soul—easy and yielding to soft desires; a spacious heart, where love and all his train might lodge; and must the fair apartment of my breast be made a stable for a brute to lie in?

Dor. Meaning your husband, I suppose.

Mrs. Sul. Husband!—Even husband is too soft a name for him.—But, come, I expect my brother here to-night or to-morrow; he was abroad when my father married me: perhaps he'll find a way to make me easy.

Dor. Will you promise not to make yourself uneasy in the mean time with my lord's friend?

Mrs. Sul. You mistake me, sister—It happens with us as among the men, the greatest talkers are the greatest cowards; and there's a reason for it; those spirits evaporate in prattle, which might do more mischief if they took another course—Though, to confess the truth, I do love that fellow;—and if I met him dressed as he should be,——Lookye, sister, I have no supernatural gifts;——I can't swear I could resist the temptation——though I can safely promise to avoid it; and that's as much as the best of us can do. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

The Inn.

Enter AIMWELL and ARCHER laughing.

Arch. And the awkward kindness of the good motherly old gentlewoman——

Aim. And the coming easiness of the young one—'Sdeath, 'tis pity to deceive her.

Arch. Nay, if you adhere to those principles, stop where you are.

Aim. I can't stop; for I love her to distraction.

Arch. 'Sdeath, if you love her a hair's breadth beyond discretion, you must go no farther.

Aim. Well, well, any thing to deliver us from sauntering away our idle evenings at White's, Tom's, or Will's—But now——

Arch. Ay, now is the time to prevent all this—Strike while the iron is hot—The priest is the luckiest part of our adventure; he shall marry you, and pimp for me. But here comes the doctor; I shall be ready. *[Exit.*

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Shave you, noble friend.

Aim. O sir, your servant; Pray, doctor, may I crave your name?

Foig. Fat naam is upon me? My naam is Foigard, joy.

Aim. Foigard! a very good name for a clergyman; Pray, Doctor Foigard, were you ever in Ireland?

Foig. Ireland! No, joy:—Fat sort of plaace is dat shame Ireland? Dey say de people are catched dere when dey are young.

Aim. And some of them here, when they are old;—as for example—*[Takes FOIGARD by the Shoulder.]* Sir, I arrest you as a traitor against the government; you are a subject of England, and this morning showed me a commission, by which you served as chaplain in the French army: This is death by our law, and your reverence must hang for't.

Foig. Upon my shoul, noble friend, dis is strange news you tell me, Fader Foigard a subject of England—de son of a Burgomaster of Brussels a subject of England, Ubooboo—

Aim. The son of a bog trotter in Ireland: sir, your tongue will condemn you before any bench in the kingdom.

Foig. And is my tongue all your evidensh, joy?

Aim. That's enough.

Foig. No, no, joy, for I will never spaake de English no more.

Aim. Sir, I have other evidence.—Here, Martin, you know this fellow.

Enter ARCHER.

Aim. *[In a Brogue.]* Shave you, my dear cussen, how does your health?

Foig. Ah! upon my shoul dere is my countryman and his brogue will hang mine. *[Aside.]* *Mynhere, ick wet neat wat hey zacht, ick univirston ewe, neat, sacrament.*

Aim. Altering your language won't do, sir, this fellow knows your person, and will swear to your face.

Foig. Faash! fey, is dere brogue upon my faash too?

Arch. Upon my shalvation dere ish, joy,——But, Cussen Mackshane, vill you not put a remembrance upon me?

Foig. Mackshane! by St. Patrick, dat is my naam shure enough. [*Aside.*

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have it.

Foig. The devil hang you, joy——By fat acquaintance are you my cussen?

Arch. O, de devil hang your shelf, joy; you know we were little boys togeder upon de school, and your foster moder's son was married upon my nurse's chister, joy, and so we are Irish cussens.

Foig. De devil taake de relation! Vel, joy, and fat school was it?

Arch. I think it vas—aay—'Twas Tipperary.

Foig. Now, upon my shoul, joy, it was Kilkenny.

Aim. That's enough for us—self confession—Come, sir, we must deliver you into the hands of the next magistrate.

Arch. He sends you to gaol, you are tried next assizes, and away you go swing into purgatory.

Foig. And is it sho wid you cussen?

Arch. It will be sho wid you, cussen, if you don't immediately confess the secret between you and Mrs. Gipsey—Lookye, sir, the gallows or the secret, take your choice.

Foig. The gallows! upon my shoul I hate that shame gallows, for it is a diseash dat is fatal to our family.—Vel den, there is nothing, shentlemens, but Mrs. Sullen would spaak wid the count in her chamber at midnight, and dere is no harm, joy, for I am to conduct the count to the plaash myself.

Arch. As I guessed.——Have you communicated the matter to the count?

Foig. I have not sheen him since.

Arch. Right again; why then, doctor;—you shall conduct me to the lady instead of the count.

Foig. Fat, my cussen to the lady! upon my shoul, gra, dat's too much upon the brogue.

Arch. Come, come, doctor, consider we have got a rope about your neck, and if you offer to squeak, we'll stop your windpipe, most certainly; we shall have another job for you in a day or two, I hope.

Aim. Here's company coming this way; let's into my chamber, and there concert our affairs further.

Arch. Come, my dear cussen, come along.

Foig. Arra, the devil taake our relashion. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BONIFACE, HOUNSLOW, *and* BAGSHOT, *at one*
Door, GIBBET at the opposite.

Gib. Well, gentlemen, 'tis a fine night for our enterprize.

Houns. Dark as hell.

Bag. And blows like the devil: our landlord here has shown us the window where we must break in, and tells us the plate stands in the wainscot cupboard in the parlour.

Bon. Ay, ay, Mr. Bagshot, as the saying is, knives and forks, cups and cans, tumblers and tankards.—There's one tankard, as the saying is, that's near upon as big as me: it was a present to the 'squire from his godmother, and smells of nutmeg and toast, like an East India ship.

Houns. Then you say we must divide at the stair-head.

Bon. Yes, Mr. Hounslow, as the saying is—at one end of the gallery lies my Lady Bountiful and her daughter, and at the other, Mrs. Sullen—as for the 'squire.—

Gib. He's safe enough; I have fairly entered him, and he's more than half seas over already—But such a parcel of scoundrels are got about him there, that, egad, I was ashamed to be seen in their company.

Bon. 'Tis now twelve, as the saying is—gentlemen, you must set out at one.

Gib. Hounslow, do you and Bagshot see our arms fixed, and I'll come to you presently.

Houns. and Bag. We will.

[*Exeunt* HOUNSLOW and BAGSHOT.]

Gib. Well, my dear Bonny, you assure me that Scrub is a coward.

Bon. A chicken, as the saying is—you'll have no creature to deal with but the ladies.

Gib. And I can assure you, friend, there's a great deal of address and good manners in robbing a lady: I am the most a gentleman that way that ever travelled the road.—But, my dear Bonny, this prize will be a galleon, a Vigo business—I warrant you, we shall bring off three or four thousand pounds.

Bon. In plate, jewels, and money, as the saying is, you may.

Gib. Why, then, Tyburn, I defy thee: I'll get up to town, sell off my horse and arms, buy myself some pretty employment in the law, and be as snug and as honest as e'er a long gown of them all.

Bon. And what think you, then, of my daughter Cherry for a wife?

Gib. Lookye, my dear Bonny, *Cherry is the goddess I adore*, as the song goes; but it is a maxim, that man and wife should never have it in their power to hang one another; for, if they should, the Lord have mercy upon them both.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The Inn.

Knocking without.

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. Coming, coming—a coach and six foaming horses at this time o'night! some great man, as the saying is, for he scorns to travel with other people.

Enter SIR CHARLES FREEMAN.

Sir C. What, fellow! a public house, and abed when other people sleep?

Bon. Sir, I an't abed, as the saying is.

Sir C. I see that, as the saying is! Is Mr. Sullen's family abed, think ye?

Bon. All but the 'squire himself, sir, as the saying is; he's in the house.

Sir C. What company has he?

Bon. Why, sir, there's the constable, Mr. Gage, the exciseman, the hunch-backed barber, and two or three other gentlemen.

Sir C. I find my sister's letters gave me the true picture of her spouse.

Enter SULLEN, drunk.

Bon. Sir, here's the 'squire.

Sul. The puppies left me asleep——sir.

Sir C. Well, sir.

Sul. Sir, I am an unfortunate man—I have three thousand pounds a year, and I can't get a man to drink a cup of ale with me.

Sir C. That's very hard.

Sul. Ay, sir,—and unless you have pity upon me, and smoke one pipe with me, I must e'en go home to my wife, and I had rather go to the devil by half.

Sir C. But I presume, sir, you won't see your wife to-night, she'll be gone to bed——you don't use to lie with your wife in that pickle.

Sul. What! not lie with my wife! Why, sir, do you take me for an atheist, or a rake?

Sir C. If you hate her, sir, I think you had better lie from her.

Sul. I think so too, friend——but I am a justice of peace, and must do nothing against the law.

Sir C. Law! as I take it, Mr. Justice, nobody observes law for law's sake, only for the good of those for whom it was made.

Sul. But if the law orders me to send you to gaol, you must lie there, my friend.

Sir C. Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

Sul. A crime! oons, an't I married?

Sir C. Nay, sir, if you call marriage a crime, you must disown it for a law.

Sul. Eh!—I must be acquainted with you, sir,—but, sir, I should be very glad to know the truth of this matter.

Sir C. Truth, sir, is a profound sea, and few there be that dare wade deep enough to find out the bottom on't. Besides, sir, I am afraid the line of your understanding mayn't be long enough.

Sul. Lookye, sir, I have nothing to say to your sea of truth; but if a good parcel of land can entitle a man to a little truth, I have as much as any he in the county.

Bon. I never heard your worship, as the saying is, talk so much before.

Sul. Because I never met with a man that I liked before.

Bon. Pray, sir, as the saying is, let me ask you one question: are not man and wife one flesh?

Sir C. You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because you are nothing else—but rational creatures have minds that must be united.

Sul. Minds!

Sir C. Ay, minds, sir; don't you think that the mind takes place of the body?

Sul. In some people.

Sir C. Then the interest of the master must be consulted before that of his servant.

Sul. Sir, you shall dine with me to-morrow——Oons, I always thought that we were naturally one.

Sir C. Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they love one another, kiss one another, help one another in all the actions of life; but I could not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

Sul. Then 'tis plain that we are two.

Sir C. Why don't you part with her, sir?

Sul. Will you take her, sir?

Sir C. With all my heart.

Sul. You shall have her to-morrow morning, and a venison pasty into the bargain.

Sir C. You'll let me have her fortune too?

Sul. Fortune! why, sir, I have no quarrel to her fortune——I only hate the woman, sir, and none but the woman shall go.

Sir C. But her fortune, sir——

Sul. Can you play at whist, sir?

Sir C. No, truly, sir.

Sul. Not at all-fours?

Sir C. Neither.

Sul. Oons! where was this man bred? [*Aside.*] Burn me, sir, I can't go home; 'tis but two o'clock.

Sir C. For half an hour, sir, if you please—but you must consider 'tis late.

Sul. Late! that is the reason I can't go to bed—Come, sir——

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter CHERRY; she runs across the Stage, and knocks
at AIMWELL'S Chamber Door.*

Enter AIMWELL.

Aim. What's the matter? you tremble, child; you are frightened!

Cher. No wonder, sir—but, in short, sir, this very minute a gang of rogues are gone to rob my Lady Bountiful's house.

Aim. How!

Cher. I dogged them to the very door, and left them breaking in.

Aim. Have you alarmed any body else with the news?

Cher. No, no, sir; I wanted to have discovered the whole plot, and twenty other things, to your man, Martin; but I have searched the whole house, and can't find him; where is he?

Aim. No matter, child; will you guide me immediately to the house?

Cher. With all my heart, sir: my Lady Bountiful is my godmother, and I love Mrs. Dorinda so well——

Aim. Dorinda! the name inspires me! the glory and the danger shall be all my own——Come, my life, let me but get my sword. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Bedchamber in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S House.

*MRS. SULLEN and DORINDA discovered; a Table
and Lights.*

Dor. 'Tis very late, sister; no news of your spouse yet?

Mrs. Sul. No; I'm condemned to be alone till towards four, and then, perhaps, I may be executed with his company.

Dor. Well, my dear, I'll leave you to your rest; you'll go directly to bed, I suppose.

Mrs. Sul. I don't know what to do; heigho!

Dor. That's a desiring sigh, sister.

Mrs. Sul. This is a languishing hour, sister.

Dor. And might prove a critical minute, if the pretty fellow were here.

Mrs. Sul. Here? what, in my bedchamber, at two o'clock i'th' morning, I undressed, the family asleep, my hated husband abroad, and my lovely fellow at my feet!—O, gad, sister!

Dor. Thoughts are free, sister, and them I allow you—So, my dear, good night. [Exit.]

Mrs. Sul. A good rest to my dear Dorinda—Thoughts free! are they so? why, then, suppose him here, dressed like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom, [*ARCHER steals out of the Closet.*] with tongue enchanting, eyes bewitching, knees imploring [*Turns a little on one Side, and sees ARCHER in the Posture she describes.*]—Ah! [*Shrieks, and runs to the other Side of the Stage.*]. Have my thoughts raised a spirit? What are you, sir? a man, or a devil?

Arch. A man, a man, madam. [Rising.]

Mrs. Sul. How shall I be sure of it?

Arch. Madam, I'll give you demonstration this minute.

[Takes her Hand.]

Mrs. Sul. What, sir! do you intend to be rude?

Arch. Yes, madam, if you please.

Mrs. Sul. In the name of wonder, whence came ye?

Arch. From the skies, madam—I'm a Jupiter in love, and you shall be my Alcmena.

Mrs. Sul. How came you in?

Arch. I flew in at the window, madam; your cousin Cupid lent me his wings, and your sister Venus opened the casement.

Mrs. Sul. I'm struck dumb with admiration.

Arch. And I with wonder. [Looks passionately at her.]

Mrs. Sul. What will become of me?

Arch. How beautiful she looks!—the teeming jolly spring smiles in her blooming face, and when she was conceived, her mother smelt to roses, looked on lilies—

Lilies unfold their white, their fragrant charms,
When the warm sun thus darts into their arms.

[Runs to her.]

Mrs. Sul. Ah! [Shrieks.]

Arch. Oons, madam, what do you mean? you'll raise the house.

Mrs. Sul. Sir, I'll wake the dead, before I bear this. What! approach me with the freedoms of a keeper! I'm glad on't; your impudence has cured me.

Arch. If this be impudence, [*Kneels.*] I leave to your partial self; no panting pilgrim, after a tedious, painful, voyage, e'er bowed before his saint with more devotion.

Mrs. Sul. Now, now, I'm ruined if he kneels. [*Aside.*] Rise, thou prostrate engineer; not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart. Rise, and know that I am a woman, without my sex; I can love to all the tenderness of wishes, sighs, and tears—But go no farther—Still, to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness even for——But——

Arch. For me!

[*Going to lay hold on her.*

Mrs. Sul. Hold, sir; build not upon that—for my most mortal hatred follows, if you disobey what I command you now—leave me this minute—If he denies, I'm lost. [*Aside.*

Arch. Then you'll promise——

Mrs. Sul. Any thing another time.

Arch. When shall I come?

Mrs. Sul. To-morrow—when you will.

Arch. Your lips must seal the promise.

Mrs. Sul. Pshaw!

Arch. They must, they must. [*Kisses her.*] Raptures and paradise! and why not now, my angel? The time, the place, silence, and secrecy, all conspire—And the now conscious stars have pre-ordained this moment for my happiness.

[*Takes her in his Arms.*

Mrs. Sul. You will not, cannot, sure.

Arch. If the sun rides fast, and disappoints not mortals of to-morrow's dawn, this night shall crown my joys.

Mrs. Sul. My sex's pride assist me.

Arch. My sex's strength help me.

Mrs. Sul. You shall kill me first.

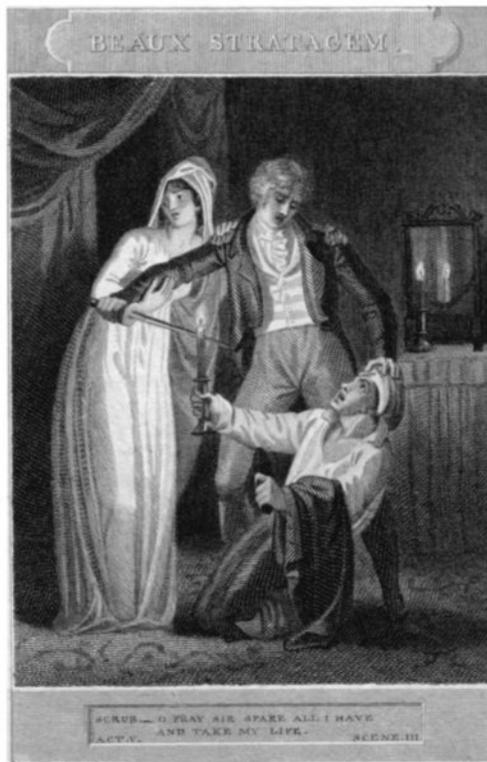
Arch. I'll die with you.

[*Carrying her off.*

Mrs. Sul. Thieves! thieves! murder!——

Enter SCRUB, in his Breeches, and one Shoe.

Scrub. Thieves! thieves! murder! popery!



**SCRUB—O PRAY SIR SPARE ALL I HAVE
AND TAKE MY LIFE.
ACT V SCENE III
Click to [ENLARGE](#)**

Arch. Ha!

[Draws, and offers to stab SCRUB.]

Scrub. *[Kneeling.]* O pray, sir, spare all I have, and take my life.

Mrs. Sul. *[Holding ARCHER'S Hand.]* What does the fellow mean?

Scrub. O, madam, down upon your knees, your marrowbones—he's one of them.

Arch. Of whom?

Scrub. One of the rogues—I beg your pardon, one of the honest gentlemen, that just now are broke into the house.

Arch. How!

Mrs. Sul. I hope you did not come to rob me?

Arch. Indeed I did, madam, but I would have taken nothing but what you might very well have spared; but your crying, Thieves, has waked this dreaming fool, and so he takes them for granted.

Scrub. Granted! 'tis granted, sir; take all we have.

Mrs. Sul. The fellow looks as if he were broke out of Bedlam.

Scrub. Oons, madam, they're broke into the house with fire and sword; I saw them, heard them, they'll be here this minute.

Arch. What! thieves!

Scrub. Under favour, sir, I think so.

Mrs. Sul. What shall we do, sir?

Arch. Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

Mrs. Sul. Will you leave me?

Arch. Leave you! lord, madam, did not you command me to begone just now, upon pain of your immortal hatred.

Mrs. Sul. Nay, but pray, sir——

[Takes hold of him.

Arch. Ha! ha! ha! now comes my turn to be ravished—You see now, madam, you must use men one way or other; but take this by the way, good madam, that none but a fool will give you the benefit of his courage, unless you'll take his love along with it—How are they armed, friend?

Scrub. With sword and pistol, sir.

[He gets under the Table.

Arch. Hush!——I see a dark lanthorn coming through the gallery——Madam, be assured I will protect you, or lose my life.

Mrs. Sul. Your life! no, sir, they can rob me of nothing that I value half so much; therefore now, sir, let me entreat you to begone.

Arch. No, madam, I'll consult my own safety, for the sake of yours; I'll work by stratagem: have you courage enough to stand the appearance of them?

Mrs. Sul. Yes, yes; since I have escaped your hands, I can face any thing.

Arch. Come hither, brother Scrub; don't you know me?

Scrub. Eh! my dear brother, let me kiss thee!

[Kisses ARCHER.

Arch. This way——Here——

[ARCHER and SCRUB hide.

*Enter GIBBET, with a dark Lanthorn in one Hand,
and a Pistol in the other.*

Gib. Ay, ay, this is the chamber, and the lady alone.

Mrs. Sul. Who are you, sir? What would you have? D'ye come to rob me?

Gib. Rob you! alack a day, madam, I'm only a younger brother, madam; and so, madam, if you make a noise, I'll shoot you through the head: but don't be afraid, madam. *[Laying his Lanthorn and Pistol upon the Table.]* These rings, madam; don't be concerned, madam; I have a profound respect for you, madam; your keys, madam; don't be frightened, madam; I'm the most of a gentleman. *[Searching her Pockets.]* This necklace, madam; I never was rude to any lady! I have a veneration—for this necklace.

[Here ARCHER, having come round, and seized

the Pistol, takes GIBBET by the Collar, trips up his Heels, and claps the Pistol to his Breast.

Arch. Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege.

Gib. Oh! pray, sir, don't kill me; I an't prepared.

Arch. How many is there of them, Scrub?

Scrub. Five and forty, sir.

Arch. Then I must kill the villain, to have him out of the way.

Gib. Hold! hold! sir; we are but three, upon my honour.

Arch. Scrub, will you undertake to secure him?

Scrub. Not I, sir; kill him, kill him!

Arch. Run to Gipsey's chamber; there you'll find the doctor; bring him hither presently. [*Exit SCRUB, running.*] Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

Gib. Sir, I have no prayer at all; the government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, don't kill him: You fright me as much as him.

Arch. The dog shall die, madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment.—Sirrah, this moment is your last.

Gib. Sir, I'll give you two hundred pounds to spare my life.

Arch. Have you no more, rascal?

Gib. Yes, sir, I can command four hundred; but I must reserve two of them to save my life at the sessions.

Enter SCRUB and FOIGARD.

Arch. Here, doctor: I suppose Scrub and you, between you, may manage him:—Lay hold of him.

[*FOIGARD lays hold of GIBBET.*]

Gib. What! turned over to the priest already—Lookye, doctor, you come before your time; I an't condemned yet, I thank ye.

Foig. Come, my dear joy, I vil secure your body and your shoul too; I will make you a good catholic, and give you an absolution.

Gib. Absolution! Can you procure me a pardon, doctor?

Foig. No, joy.—

Gib. Then you and your absolution may go to the devil.

Arch. Convey him into the cellar, there bind him:—Take the pistol, and if he offers to resist, shoot him through the head,—and come back to us with all the speed you can.

Scrub. Ay, ay; come, doctor, do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him.

[*Exeunt* SCRUB, GIBBET, and FOIGARD.]

Mrs. Sul. But how came the doctor?

Arch. In short, madam——[*Shrieking without.*] 'Sdeath! the rogues are at work with the other ladies:—I'm vexed I parted with the pistol; but I must fly to their assistance—Will you stay here, madam, or venture yourself with me?

Mrs. Sul. Oh, with you, dear sir, with you.

[*Takes him by the Arm, and exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Another Apartment.

Enter HOUNSLOW *and* BAGSHOT, *with Swords drawn,*
dragging in LADY BOUNTIFUL *and* DORINDA.

Houns. Come, come, your jewels, mistress.

Bag. Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman.

Enter AIMWELL.

Aim. Turn this way, villains; I durst engage an army in such a cause.

[*He engages them both.*]

Enter ARCHER *and* MRS. SULLEN.

Arch. Hold! hold! my lord; every man his bird, pray.

[*They engage Man to Man; the Rogues are thrown down, and disarmed.*]

Arch. Shall we kill the rogues?

Aim. No, no; we'll bind them.

Arch. Ay, ay; here, madam, lend me your garter.

[*To* MRS. SULLEN, *who stands by him.*]

Mrs. Sul. The devil's in this fellow; he fights, loves, and banters all in a breath: here's a rope, that the rogues brought with them, I suppose.

Arch. Right, right, the rogue's destiny, a rope to hang himself——Come, my lord,——this is but a scandalous sort of an office, [*Binding the ROGUES together.*] if our adventure should end in this sort of hangmanwork; but I hope there is something in prospect that——

Enter SCRUB.

Well, Scrub, have you secured your Tartar?

Scrub. Yes, sir, I left the priest and him disputing about religion.

Aim. And pray carry these gentlemen to reap the benefit of the controversy.

[*Delivers the PRISONERS to SCRUB,
who leads them out.*

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sister, how came my lord here?

Dor. And pray, how came the gentleman here?

Mrs. Sul. I'll tell you the greatest piece of villainy—

[*They talk in dumb Show.*

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have been more successful in your adventure than the housebreakers.

Arch. No matter for my adventure, yours is the principal—Press her this minute to marry you,—now while she's hurried between the palpitation of her fear, and the joy of her deliverance, now while the tide of her spirits are at high-flood:—throw yourself at her feet, speak some romantic nonsense or other;—confound her senses, bear down her reason, and away with her:—The priest is now in the cellar, and dare not refuse to do the work.

Aim. But how shall I get off without being observed?

Arch. You a lover, and not find a way to get off!—Let me see.

Aim. You bleed, Archer.

Arch. 'Sdeath, I'm glad on't; this wound will do the business—I'll amuse the old lady and Mrs. Sullen about dressing my wound, while you carry off Dorinda.

Lady B. Gentlemen, could we understand how you would be gratified for the services——

Arch. Come, come, my lady, this is no time for compliments; I'm wounded, madam.

Lady B. and Mrs. Sul. How! wounded!

Dor. I hope, sir, you have received no hurt?

Aim. None but what you may cure——

[*Makes love in dumb Show.*

Lady B. Let me see your arm, sir—I must have some powder sugar, to stop the blood——O me! an ugly gash; upon my word, sir, you must go into bed.

Arch. Ay, my lady, a bed would do very well——Madam, [*To MRS. SULLEN.*] will you do me the favour to conduct me to a chamber?

Lady B. Do, do, daughter,——while I get the lint, and the probe, and plaister ready.

[*Runs out one Way; AIMWELL carries off DORINDA another.*

Arch. Come, madam, why don't you obey your mother's commands?

Mrs. Sul. How can you, after what is past, have the confidence to ask me?

Arch. And if you go to that, how can you, after what is past, have the confidence to deny me?—Was not this blood shed in your defence, and my life exposed for your protection?—Lookye, madam, I'm none of your romantic fools, that fight giants and monsters for nothing; my valour is downright Swiss; I am a soldier of fortune, and must be paid.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis ungenerous in you, sir, to upbraid me with your services.

Arch. 'Tis ungenerous in you, madam, not to reward them.

Mrs. Sul. How! at the expense of my honour!

Arch. Honour! Can honour consist with ingratitude? If you would deal like a woman of honour, do like a man of honour: d'ye think I would deny you in such a case?

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. Madam, my lady ordered me to tell you, that your brother is below at the gate.

Mrs. Sul. My brother! Heavens be praised:—Sir, he shall thank you for your services; he has it in his power.

Arch. Who is your brother, madam?

Mrs. Sul. Sir Charles Freeman:—You'll excuse me, sir; I must go and receive him. [Exit.

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman! 'Sdeath and hell!—My old acquaintance. Now, unless Aimwell has made good use of his time, all our fair machine goes souse into the sea, like an Eddystone. [Exit.

SCENE IV.

The Gallery in the same House.

Enter AIMWELL and DORINDA.

Dor. Well, well, my lord, you have conquered:—your late generous action will, I hope, plead for my easy yielding; though, I must own, your lordship had a friend in the fort before.

Aim. The sweets of Hybla dwell upon her tongue—Here, doctor!—

Enter FOIGARD, with a Book.

Foig. Are you prepared bote?

Dor. I'm ready. But first, my lord, one word—I have a frightful example of a hasty marriage in my own family; when I reflect upon't, it shocks me.—Pray, my lord, consider a little—

Aim. Consider! Do you doubt my honour, or my love?

Dor. Neither—I do believe you equally just as brave; and were your whole sex drawn out for me to chuse, I should not cast a look upon the multitude, if you were absent.—But, my lord, I'm a woman; colours, concealments, may hide a thousand faults in me—therefore, know me better first; I hardly dare affirm, I know myself in any thing, except my love.

Aim. Such goodness who could injure! I find myself unequal to the task of villain; she has gained my soul, and made it honest like her own—I cannot hurt her. [*Aside.*] Doctor, retire. [*Exit FOIGARD.*] Madam, behold your lover, and your proselyte, and judge of my passion by my conversion.—I'm all a lie, nor dare I give a fiction to your arms;—I am all a

counterfeit, except my passion.

Dor. Forbid it, Heaven!—A counterfeit!

Aim. I am no lord, but a poor, needy man, come with a mean, a scandalous design, to prey upon your fortune:—But the beauties of your mind and person, have so won me from myself, that, like a trusty servant, I prefer the interest of my mistress to my own.

Dor. Pray, sir, who are you?

Aim. Brother to the man, whose title I usurped, but stranger to his honour or his fortune.

Dor. Matchless honesty!—Once I was proud, sir, of your wealth and title, but now am prouder that you want it: now I can show, that my love was justly levelled, and had no aim but love.—Doctor, come in.

*Enter FOIGARD, at one Door, GIPSEY at another,
who whispers DORINDA.*

Your pardon, sir; we shan't want you now, sir. You must excuse me—I'll wait on you presently.

[Exit with GIPSEY.

Foig. Upon my shoul, now, dis is foolish.

[Exit.

Aim. Gone! and bid the priest depart—It has an ominous look!

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. Courage, Tom——Shall I wish you joy?

Aim. No.

Arch. Oons, man! what ha' you been doing?

Aim. O Archer, my honesty, I fear, has ruined me.

Arch. How!

Aim. I have discovered myself.

Arch. Discovered! and without my consent?—What! have I embarked my small remains in the same bottom with yours, and you dispose of all without my partnership?

Aim. O, Archer, I own my fault.

Arch. After conviction—'tis then too late for pardon.—You may remember, Mr. Aimwell, that you proposed this folly—As you begun, so end it—Henceforth, I'll hunt my fortune single—so farewell.

Aim. Stay, my dear Archer, but a minute.

Arch. Stay! What, to be despised, exposed, and laughed at?—No, I would sooner change conditions with the worst of the rogues we just now bound, than bear one scornful smile from the proud knight, that once I treated as my equal.

Aim. What knight?

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman, brother to the lady that I had almost——But, no matter for that, 'tis a cursed night's work,

and so I leave you to make the best on't.

Aim. Freeman!—One word, Archer—Still I have hopes; methought, she received my confession with pleasure.

Arch. 'Sdeath! who doubts it?

Aim. She consented after to the match; and still I dare believe she will be just.

Arch. To herself, I warrant her; as you should have been.

Aim. By all my hopes, she comes! and smiling comes.

Enter DORINDA, *gaily.*

Dor. Come, my dear lord, I fly with impatience to your arms.—The minutes of my absence was a tedious year.—Where's this priest?

Enter FOIGARD.

Arch. Oons! a brave girl!

Dor. I suppose, my lord, this gentleman is privy to our affairs?

Arch. Yes, yes, madam, I'm to be your father.

Dor. Come, priest, do your office.

Arch. Make haste, make haste! couple them any way. [*Takes AIMWELL'S Hand.*] Come, madam, I'm to give you——

Dor. My mind's altered—I won't.

Arch. Eh!

Aim. I'm confounded!

Foig. Upon my shoul, and so is myshelf!

Arch. What's the matter now, madam?

Dor. Lookye, sir, one generous action deserves another.—This gentleman's honour obliged him to hide nothing from me; my justice engages me to conceal nothing from him. In short, sir, you are the person that you thought you counterfeited; you are the true Lord Viscount Aimwell, and I wish your lordship joy.—Now, priest, you may begone;—if my lord is now pleased with the match, let his lordship marry me in the face of the world.

Aim. Archer, what does she mean?

Dor. Here's a witness for my truth.

Enter SIR CHARLES, *and* MRS. SULLEN.

Sir C. My dear Lord Aimwell, I wish you joy!

Aim. Of what?

Sir C. Of your honour and estate. Your brother died the day before I left London; and all your friends have writ after you to Brussels: among the rest, I did myself the honour.

Arch. Harkye, sir knight, don't you banter now?

Sir C. 'Tis truth, upon my honour.

Aim. Thanks to the pregnant stars, that formed this accident.

Arch. Thanks to the womb of time, that brought it forth—away with it.

Aim. Thanks to my guardian angel, that led me to the prize.

[*Taking DORINDA'S Hand.*

Arch. And double thanks to the noble Sir Charles Freeman.—My lord, I wish you joy. My lady, I wish you joy.—Egad, Sir Charles, you're the honestest fellow living.—'Sdeath! I'm grown strangely airy upon this matter.—My lord, how d'ye?—A word, my lord: Don't you remember something of a previous agreement, that entitles me to the moiety of this lady's fortune, which, I think, will amount to ten thousand pounds?

Aim. Not a penny, Archer: you would have cut my throat just now, because I would not deceive this lady.

Arch. Ay, and I'll cut your throat still, if you should deceive her now.

Aim. That's what I expect; and to end the dispute, the lady's fortune is twenty thousand pounds, we'll divide stakes; take the twenty thousand pounds, or the lady.

Dor. How! is your lordship so indifferent?

Arch. No, no, no, madam! his lordship knows very well, that I'll take the money; I leave you to his lordship, and so we are both provided for.

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Arra fait, de people do say, you be all robbed, joy.

Aim. The ladies have been in some danger, sir, as you saw.

Foig. Upon my shoul, our inn be rob too.

Aim. Our inn! By whom?

Foig. Upon my shalvation, our landlord has robbed himself, and run away wid da money.

Arch. Robbed himself!

Foig. Ay, fait! and me too, of a hundred pounds.

Arch. Robbed you of a hundred pounds!

Foig. Yes, fait, honey, that I did owe to him.

Aim. Our money's gone, Frank!

Arch. Rot the money! my wench is gone.

Sir C. This good company meets opportunely in favour of a design I have in behalf of my unfortunate sister: I intend to part her from her husband. Gentlemen, will you assist me?

Arch. Assist you!—'Sdeath! who would not?

Foig. Ay, upon my shoul, we'll all ashist.

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. What's all this?—They tell me, spouse, that you had like to have been robbed.

Mrs. Sul. Truly, spouse, I was pretty near it—had not these two gentlemen interposed.

Sul. How came these gentlemen here?

Mrs. Sul. That's his way of returning thanks, you must know.

Foig. Ay, but upon my consience, de question be apropos, for all dat.

Sir C. You promised, last night, sir, that you would deliver your lady to me this morning.

Sul. Humph!

Arch. Humph! what do you mean by humph?—Sir, you shall deliver her——In short, sir, we have saved you and your family, and if you are not civil, we'll unbind the rogues, join with them, and set fire to your house.—What does the man mean? Not part with his wife!

Foig. Arra, not part wid your wife! Upon my shoul, de man dosh not understand common shivility.

Mrs. Sul. Hold, gentlemen, all things here must move by consent: compulsion would spoil us. Let my dear and I talk the matter over, and you shall judge it between us.

Sul. Let me know, first, who are to be our judges.—Pray, sir, who are you?

Sir C. I am Sir Charles Freeman, come to take away your wife.

Sul. And you, good sir?

Aim. Thomas, Viscount Aimwell, come to take away your sister.

Sul. And you, pray, sir?

Arch. Francis Archer, Esq. come——

Sul. To take away my mother, I hope.—Gentlemen, you are heartily welcome: I never met with three more obliging people since I was born.—And now, my dear, if you please, you shall have the first word.

Arch. And the last, for five pounds.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Sul. Spouse.

Sul. Rib.

Mrs. Sul. How long have you been married?

Sul. By the almanack, fourteen months—but, by my account, fourteen years.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis thereabout, by my reckoning.

Foig. Upon my conscience, dere accounts vil agree.

Sir C. What are the bars to your mutual contentment?

Mrs. Sul. In the first place, I can't drink ale with him.

Sul. Nor can I drink tea with her.

Mrs. Sul. I can't hunt with you.

Sul. Nor can I dance with you.

Mrs. Sul. I hate cocking and racing.

Sul. And I abhor ombre and picquet.

Mrs. Sul. Your silence is intolerable.

Sul. Your prating is worse.

Mrs. Sul. Is there, on earth, a thing we can agree in?

Sul. Yes—to part.

Mrs. Sul. With all my heart.

Sul. Your hand.

Mrs. Sul. Here.

Sul. These hands joined us; these shall part us—Away!

Mrs. Sul. East.

Sul. West.

Mrs. Sul. North.

Sul. South: as far as the poles asunder.

Foig. Upon my shoul, a very pretty sheremony!

Sir C. Now, Mr. Sullen, there wants only my sister's fortune to make us easy.

Sul. Sir Charles, you love your sister, and I love her fortune; every one to his fancy.

Arch. Then you won't refund?

Sul. Not a stiver.

Arch. What is her portion?

Sir C. Ten thousand pounds, sir.

Arch. I'll pay it: my lord, I thank him, has enabled me; and, if the lady pleases, she shall go home with me. This night's adventure has proved strangely lucky to us all—For Captain Gibbet, in his walk, has made bold, Mr. Sullen, with

your study and scrutoire, and has taken out all the writings of your estate, all the articles of marriage with your lady, bills, bonds, leases, receipts, to an infinite value; I took them from him, and will deliver them to Sir Charles.

Sul. How! my writings! my head aches consumedly.—Well, gentlemen, you shall have her fortune, but I can't talk. If you have a mind, Sir Charles, to be merry, and celebrate my sister's wedding and my divorce, you may command my house. But my head aches consumedly;—Scrub, bring me a dram.

Foig. And put a sup in the top for myself.

[*Exeunt FOIGARD and SULLEN.*

Arch. 'Twould be hard to guess which of these parties is the better pleased, the couple joined, or the couple parted; the one rejoicing in hopes of an untasted happiness, and the other in their deliverance from an experienced misery.

Both happy in their several states, we find:
Those parted by consent, and those conjoin'd.
Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee;
Consent is law enough to set you free.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

THE END.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

Contemporary spellings have been retained. Hyphenation is inconsistent throughout.

Two changes have been made to the text and can be identified in the body of the text by a grey dotted underline:

In Act 2, at the end of Scene 1, in Mrs. Sullen's penultimate speech, "her" was changed to "here" in the sentence:
The Count is to dine **here** tonight.

In Act 3, Scene 2:
The words "Yes, faith", spoken by a non-existent character called *Alon*, were assigned to Aimwell in keeping with the dialogue sequence.

[The end of *The Beaux' Stratagem* by George Farquhar]