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A Bold Stroke for a Wife^a

by Susanna Centlivre (1669?-1723)

edited by Nancy Copeland

Susanna Centlivre was one of the most important comic playwrights of the first part of the eighteenth century. She was also the most successful female dramatist between 1660 and 1800, in terms of the number of her plays that were produced and the number of years some of them, including *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, remained in the repertoire. *A Bold Stroke* typifies her comic style in its combination of an intricate love intrigue, humours comedy (in the characterization of the guardians), and the outrageous situations and physical comedy of farce. In its emphasis on action and situation rather than wit, its mild satire, and the honest, straightforward relationship of its lovers, it exemplifies the kind of play that Shirley Strum Kenny terms "humane comedy."

First performed on 3 February 1718 at Lincoln's Inn Fields, *A Bold Stroke* was well suited to the resources of the company, which featured established comic performers such as William Bullock (Tradelove) and George Pack (Prim). Fainwell was a vehicle for Christopher Bullock, son of William, who was also co-manager of the theater during this season, while his wife, Jane, played Anne Lovely. Some of the play's features recall the harlequinades that were a mainstay of the company's repertoire. Such entertainments, not yet called pantomimes, are particularly evoked by the play's fairy-tale plot; by the centrality of transformation; and by some of the more extravagant farce, notably the scene in act three in which Fainwell convinces Periwinkle that he can make himself invisible by sinking through the stage's trapdoor.

The play portrays the mercantile culture of early-Georgian London, most explicitly in the scene inside Jonathan's Coffee-house (IV.i), but also through its

characters. The guardians represent a range of propertied urban types, and Fainwell's plotting is well suited to his capitalist milieu. Like a tradesman who suits his manner to his customers, Fainwell adopts characters that flatter the prejudices of each of the guardians to get the better of them in a bargain for Anne Lovely, a bargain which is confirmed by a written contract. Anne's position within these transactions is that of a commodity, coveted by Fainwell and traded by her guardians. Her largely passive role is characteristic of the developing position of the genteel middle-class woman within capitalism, and she struggles against the Prims to exercise her right to be an idle consumer of luxury goods. The guardians too, despite their differences, all participate in the pervasive commercial culture, either as producers or consumers.

Centlivre was unequivocally Whig in her politics, and *A Bold Stroke* is permeated by Whig principles. The play constructs an implicit, Whiggish argument that the propertied interests represented by the guardians, both "trading" and "landed," should cooperate with one another and unite behind the army through supporting Colonel Fainwell, one of Centlivre's many soldier heroes. The concept of liberty, fundamental to Whig ideology, connects Centlivre's political views to her feminism: Anne Lovely, for example, speaks of the "tyranny" of her guardians in the language of political liberty.

The play was successful from its first production and became one of Centlivre's most-performed plays. Thanks to the opportunities Fainwell offers to the virtuosic comic actor, the play continued to be frequently performed throughout the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MEN

Sir Philip Modelove, an old beau.
 Periwinkle, a kind of a silly virtuoso.¹
 Tradelove, a changebroker.²
 Obadiah Prim, a Quaker.
 Colonel Fainwell, in love with Mrs.* Lovely.
 Freeman, his friend, a merchant.
 Simon Pure, a Quaking preacher.
 Mr. Sackbut,³ a tavern-keeper.

WOMEN

Mrs. Lovely, a fortune of thirty thousand pound.
 Mrs. Prim, wife to Prim the hosier.⁴
 Betty, servant to Mrs. Lovely.
 Footmen, drawers, etc.

A Bold Stroke for a Wife.

*Omnia vincit amor.*⁵

Act I, scene i. A tavern.

Colonel Fainwell and Freeman over a bottle.

FREEMAN.

Come, Colonel, His Majesty's health. You are as melancholy as if you were in love; I wish some of the beauties at Bath⁶ ha'n't snapped your heart.

COLONEL.

Why, faith, Freeman, there is something in't; I have seen a lady at Bath who has kindled such a flame in me that all the waters there can't quench.

¹ virtuoso] a collector of antiquities and natural curiosities

² changebroker] an exchange broker, a middleman in the exchange of bills of credit

³ Sackbut] a compound: sack; white wine imported from Spain or the Canary Islands; butt, a wine cask

⁴ hosier] a dealer in stockings and knitted underclothes

⁵ *Omnia ... amor.*] Virgil, *Eclogues* X: Love conquers all (Lat.).

⁶ Bath] In the eighteenth century Bath, with its medicinal springs and baths, became a fashionable summer resort for the titled and the wealthy.

FREEMAN.

Women, like some poisonous animals, carry their antidote about 'em. Is she not to be had, Colonel?

COLONEL.

That's a difficult question to answer; however, I resolve to try. Perhaps you may be able to serve me; you merchants know one another. The lady told me herself she was under the charge of four persons.

FREEMAN.

Odso! 'Tis Mrs. Anne Lovely.

COLONEL.

The same. Do you know her?

FREEMAN.

Know her! Aye—Faith, Colonel, your condition is more desperate than you imagine; why she is the talk and pity of the whole town; and it is the opinion of the learned that she must die a maid.

COLONEL.

Say you so? That's somewhat odd, in this charitable city. She's a woman, I hope.

FREEMAN.

For aught I know; but it had been as well for her, had nature made her any other part of the creation. The man which keeps this house served her father; he is a very honest fellow and may be of use to you; we'll send for him to take a glass with us; he'll give you the whole history, and 'tis worth your hearing.

COLONEL.

But may one trust him?

FREEMAN.

With your life; I have obligations enough upon him to make him do anything; I serve him with wine. (*Knocks.*)

COLONEL.

Nay, I know him pretty well myself; I once used to frequent a club that was kept here.

Enter drawer.

DRAWER.

Gentlemen, d'you call?

FREEMAN.

Aye, send up your master.

DRAWER.

Yes, sir. (*Exit.*)

COLONEL.
Do you know any of this lady's guardians,
Freeman?

FREEMAN.
Yes, I know two of them very well.

COLONEL.
What are they?

Enter Sackbut.

FREEMAN.
Here comes one will give you an account of them
all.—Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass
with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the
bottle, that as long as the master is in company
one may be sure of good wine.

SACKBUT.
Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as you
send in.—Colonel, your most humble servant; you
are welcome to town.

COLONEL.
I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

SACKBUT.
I am as glad to see you as I should a hundred tun
of French claret custom-free. My service to you,
sir. (*Drinks.*) You don't look so mery as you used
to do. Are you not well, Colonel?

FREEMAN.
He has got a woman in his head, landlord, can you
help him?

SACKBUT.
If 'tis in my power, I shan't scruple to serve my
friend.

COLONEL.
'Tis one requisite of your calling.

SACKBUT.
Aye, at t'other end of the town,⁷ where you officers
use, women are good forcers of trade; a well-
customed house, a handsome bar-keeper, with
clean, obliging drawers, soon gets the master an
estate; but our citizens* seldom do anything but

cheat within the walls. But as to the lady, Colonel:
Point you at particulars, or have you a good
champagne⁸ stomach? Are you in full pay or
reduced, Colonel?

COLONEL.
Reduced, reduced, landlord.

FREEMAN.
To the miserable condition of a lover!

SACKBUT.
Pish! That's preferable to half pay; a woman's
resolution may break before the peace;⁹ push her
home, Colonel, there's no parleying with that sex.

COLONEL.
Were the lady her own mistress, I have some
reasons to believe I should soon command in chief.

FREEMAN.
You know Mrs. Lovely, Mr. Sackbut.

SACKBUT.
Know her! Aye, poor Nancy;¹⁰ I have carried her to
school many a frosty morning. Alas! If she's the
woman, I pity you, Colonel. Her father, my old
master, was the most whimsical, out-of-the-way
tempered man I ever heard of, as you will guess by
his last will and testament. This was his only child:
I have heard him wish her dead a thousand times.

COLONEL.
Why so?

SACKBUT.
He hated posterity, you must know, and wished
the world were to expire with himself. He used to
swear if she had been a boy, he would have
qualified him for the opera.¹¹

FREEMAN.
'Tis a very unnatural resolution in a father.

SACKBUT.
He died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he
left to this daughter, provided she married with the

⁸ champagne] probably in two senses: an open field and a military campaign

⁹ the peace] the Peace of Utrecht (1713) led to officers being reduced to half pay; it was unpopular with many Whigs, including Centivyre.

¹⁰ Nancy] diminutive of Anne

¹¹ qualified ... opera] castrated him, as were the *castrati* who sang male soprano roles in Italian opera

⁷ t'other ... town] the West End, the fashionable part of London, which Sackbut contrasts with the City.* Women in West End establishments would draw in customers with the prospect of sex, to the profit of the tavern owners; city cheaters were not, according to Sackbut, so enterprising.

consent of her guardians. But that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men as opposite to each other as light and darkness. Each has his quarterly rule, and three months in a year she is obliged to be subject to each of their humours; and they are pretty different, I assure you. She is just come from Bath.

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

'Twas there I saw her.

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

Aye, sir, the last quarter was her beau-guardian's. She appears in all public places during his reign.

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

She visted a lady who boarded in the same house with me: I liked her person,* and found an opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions, I must not think of her, for that she was condemned to the caprice of four persons who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

'Tis most true, sir; I'll give you a short description of the men and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of a virtuoso, a silly, half-witted fellow, but positive and surly; fond of nothing but what is antique and foreign, and wears his clothes of the fashion of the last century; dotes upon travelers and believes Sir John Mandeville¹² more than the Bible.

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

That must be a rare old fellow!

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

Another is a changebroker; a fellow that will out-lie the devil for the advantage of stock and cheat his father that got him in a bargain. He is a great stickler for trade and hates everything that wears a sword.

FREEMAN. How is it possible she should do so?

He is a great admirer of the Dutch management¹³

¹² Sir John Mandeville] (fl. 1356) the ostensible author of a collection of travelers' tales; who by the eighteenth century was regarded as a great liar

¹³ Dutch management] The Dutch provided the English with models for advanced trade and financial practices, including the national debt and the stock market.

and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

The third is an old beau that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his heels; he admires nothing but new fashions, and those must be French; loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birthday.*

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

These are pretty opposite to one another, truly! And the fourth, what is he, landlord?

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

A very rigid Quaker, whose quarter begun this day. I saw Mrs. Lovely go in not above two hours ago.

Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, Colonel, is not the poor lady to be pitied?

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

Aye, and rescued too, landlord.

FREEMAN. How is it possible she should do so?

In my opinion, that's impossible.

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

There is nothing impossible to a lover. What would not a man attempt for a fine woman and thirty thousand pounds? Besides, my honor is at stake; I promised to deliver her—and she bade me win her and take her.

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

That's fair, faith.

FREEMAN. How is it possible she should do so?

If it depended upon knight-errantry, I should not doubt your setting free the damsel; but to have avarice, impertinence, hypocrisy, and pride at once to deal with, requires more cunning than generally attends a man of honor.

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

My fancy tells me I shall come off with glory; I resolve to try, however.—Do you know all the guardians, Mr. Sackbut?

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

Very well, sir, they all use my house.

COLONEL. How is it possible she should do so?

And will you assist me, if occasion be?

SACKBUT. How is it possible she should do so?

In everything I can, Colonel.

FREEMAN.
I'll answer for him; and whatever I can serve you in, you may depend on. I know Mr. Periwinkle and Mr. Tradelove; the latter has a very great opinion of my interest abroad. I happened to have a letter from a correspondent two hours before the news arrived of the French king's death;¹⁴ I communicated it to him; upon which he bought up all the stock he could, and what with that and some wagers he laid, he told me, he had got to the tune of five hundred pounds; so that I am much in his good graces.

COLONEL.

I don't know but you may be of service to me, Freeman.

FREEMAN.
If I can, command me, Colonel.

COLONEL.
Is it not possible to find a suit of clothes ready-made at some of these sale shops,¹⁵ fit to rig out a beau, think you, Mr. Sackbut?

SACKBUT.
Oh, hang 'em. No, Colonel, they keep nothing ready-made that a gentleman would be seen in. But I can fit you with a suit of clothes; if you'd make a figure—velvet and gold brocade—they were pawned to me by a French Count, who had been stripped at play and wanted money to carry him home; he promised to send for them, but I have heard nothing from him.

FREEMAN.
He has not fed upon frogs long enough yet to recover his loss! Ha, ha, ha!

COLONEL.
Ha, ha. Well, those clothes will do, Mr. Sackbut—though we must have three or four fellows in tawdry liveries; those can be procured, I hope.

FREEMAN.
Egad, I have a brother come from the West Indies that can match you; and, for expedition sake, you

shall have his servants; there's a black, a tawny-moor,¹⁶ and a Frenchman; they don't speak one word of English, so can make no mistake.
COLONEL.
Excellent. Egad, I shall look like an Indian prince. First I'll attack my beau-guardian. Where lives he?

SACKBUT.
Faith, somewhere about St. James's,* though to say in what street, I cannot; but any chairman* will tell you where Sir Philip Modelove lives.

FREEMAN.
Oh! You'll find him in the Park* at eleven every day; at least I never passed through at that hour without seeing him there. But what do you intend?

COLONEL.
To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

FREEMAN.
And what then?

COLONEL.
Nay, that I can't tell, but I shall take my measures accordingly.

SACKBUT.
Well, 'tis a mad undertaking, in my mind; but here's to your success, Colonel. *(Drinks.)*

COLONEL.
'Tis something out of the way, I confess; but Fortune may chance to smile, and I succeeds. Come, landlord, let me see those clothes. Freeman, I shall expect you'll leave word with Mr. Sackbut where one may find you upon occasion; and send my equipage of India immediately, do you hear?

FREEMAN.
Immediately. *(Exit.)*

COLONEL.
Bold was the man who ventured first to sea,
But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were:
The path of love's a dark and dangerous way,
Without a landmark, or one friendly star,
And he that runs the risk, deserves the fair. *(Exit.)*

¹⁴ French king's death] Louis XIV died September 1, 1715; this prevented France from carrying out plans to support the Jacobite rebellion in England and was therefore good for trade.

¹⁵ sale shops] shops specializing in inferior, ready-made clothing

¹⁶ tawny-moor] brown-skinned foreigner, originally referring to North Africans

Scene ii. Prim's House.
Enter Mrs. Lovely and her maid Betty.

BETTY. Bless me, madam! Why do you fret and tease yourself so? This is giving them the advantage with a witness.

MRS. LOVELY. Must I be condemned all my life to the preposterous humours of other people and pointed at by every boy in town? Oh! I could tear my flesh and curse the hour I was born. Is it not monstrously ridiculous that they should desire to impose their Quaking dress¹⁷ upon me at these years? When I was a child, no matter what they made me wear; but now—

BETTY. I would resolve against it, madam; I'd see 'em hanged before I'd put on the pinched¹⁸ cap again.

MRS. LOVELY. Then I must never expect one moment's ease; she has rung such a peal in my ears already that I shan't have the right use of them this month. What can I do?

BETTY. What can you not do, if you will but give your mind to it? Marry, madam.

MRS. LOVELY. What! and have my fortune go to build churches and hospitals?

BETTY. Why, let it go. If the Colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a fortune, madam; and I assure you, a colonel's lady is no despicable thing; a colonel's post will maintain you like a gentlewoman, madam.

MRS. LOVELY. So you would advise me to give up my own fortune and throw myself upon the colonel's?

BETTY. I would advise you to make yourself easy, madam.

MRS. LOVELY. That's not the way, I am sure. No, no, girl, there are certain ingredients to be mingled with

matrimony without which I may as well change for the worse as for the better. When the woman has fortune enough to make the man happy, if he has either honor or good manners, he'll make her easy. Love makes but a slovenly figure in that house where poverty keeps the door.

BETTY. And so you resolve to die a maid, do you, madam?

MRS. LOVELY. Or have it in my power to make the man I love master of my fortune?

BETTY. Then you don't like the colonel so well as I thought you did, madam, or you would not take such a resolution.

MRS. LOVELY. It is because I do like him, Betty, that I take such a resolution.

BETTY. Why, do you expect, madam, the colonel can work miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the consent of all your guardians?

MRS. LOVELY. Or he must not marry me at all, and so I told him; and he did not seem displeas'd with the news. He promised to set me free, and I, on that condition, promised to make him master of that freedom.

BETTY. Well! I have read of enchanted castles, ladies delivered from the chains of magic, giants killed, and monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surpris'd if the colonel should conjure you out of the power of your guardians. If he does, I am sure he deserves your fortune.

MRS. LOVELY. And shall have it, girl, if it were ten times as much. For I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do like the colonel above all men I ever saw. There's something so *jantée*¹⁹ in a soldier, a kind of a *je ne sais quoi* air that makes 'em more agreeable than the rest of mankind. They command regard, as who should say, "We are your defenders, we preserve your beauties from the insults of rude, unpolished foes," and ought to be preferred before

¹⁷ Quaking dress] the very plain, old-fashioned, and concealing style of dress worn by Quaker women

¹⁸ pinched] pleated

¹⁹ *jantée*] dashing (Fr.)

those lazy, indolent mortals, who, by dropping into their father's estate, set up their coaches and think to rattle themselves into our affections.

BETTY.

Nay, madam, I confess that the army has engrossed all the prettiest fellows. A laced coat and feather have irresistible charms.

MRS. LOVELY.

But the colonel has all the beauties of the mind, as well as person. Oh all ye powers that favor happy lovers, grant he may be mine! Thou God of Love, if thou be'st ought but name, assist my Fainwell.

Point all thy darts to aid my love's design, And make his plots as prevalent as thine.

Act II, scene i. The park.

Enter Colonel finely dressed, three footmen after him.

COLONEL.

So, now if I can but meet this beau. Egad, methinks I cut a smart figure, and have as much of the rawdry air as any Italian count or French marquis of 'em all. Sure I shall know this knight again.—Hah! Yonder he sits, making love* to a mask,* i'faith. I'll walk up the Mall,* and come down by him. *(Exit.)*

Scene draws and discovers Sir Philip upon a bench with a woman, masked.*

SIR PHILIP.

Well, but, my dear, are you really constant to your keeper*?

WOMAN.

Yes, really, sir.—Hey day! Who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty figure.

SIR PHILIP.

Hah! A stranger, by his equipage keeping so close at his heels. He has the appearance of a man of quality.* Positively French by his dancing air.

WOMAN.

He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.

SIR PHILIP.

He has a mind to make love to thee, child.

Enter Colonel and seats himself upon the bench by Sir Philip.

WOMAN.

It will be to no purpose if he does.

SIR PHILIP.

Are you resolved to be cruel then?

COLONEL.

You must be very cruel, indeed, if you can deny anything to so fine a gentleman, madam. *(Takes out his watch.)*

WOMAN.

I never mind the outside of a man.

COLONEL.

And I'm afraid thou art no judge of the inside.

SIR PHILIP.

I am, positively, of your mind, sir. For creatures of her function seldom penetrate beyond the pocket.

WOMAN. *(Aside.)*

Creatures of your composition have, indeed, generally more in their pockets than in their heads.

SIR PHILIP.

Pray what says your watch? Mine is down. *(Pulling out his watch.)*

COLONEL.

I want* thirty-six minutes of twelve, sir. *(Puts up his watch and takes out his snuffbox.)*

SIR PHILIP.

May I presume, sir?

COLONEL.

Sir, you honor me. *(Presenting the box.)*

SIR PHILIP. *[Aside.]*

He speaks good English, though he must be a foreigner.—This snuff is extremely good and the box prodigious fine; the work is French, I presume, sir.

COLONEL.

I bought it in Paris, sir. I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

SIR PHILIP.

Neat, 'tis exquisitely fine, sir; pray, sir, if I may take the liberty of inquiring—what country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentleman in the universe? France, I presume.

COLONEL.

Then you don't think me an Englishman?

SIR PHILIP.

No, upon my soul don't I.

COLONEL.

I am sorry for't.

SIR PHILIP.

Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman.

Pardon me, sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness. 50

COLONEL.

As this mirror shows you, sir. (*Puts up a pocket-glass to Sir Philip's face.*)

WOMAN. [*Aside.*]

Coxcombs, I'm sick to hear 'em praise one another; one seldom gets anything by such animals, not even a dinner, unless one can dine upon soup and celerly. (*Exit.*) 55

SIR PHILIP.

Oh Ged, sir!—Will you leave us, madam? Ha, ha.

COLONEL.

She fears 'twill be only losing time to stay here, ha, ha. I know not how to distinguish you, sir, but your mien and address speak you Right Honorable. 60

SIR PHILIP.

Thus great souls judge of others by themselves. I am only adorned with knighthood, that's all, I assure you, sir; my name is Sir Philip Modelove.

COLONEL.

Of French extraction?

SIR PHILIP.

My father was French. 65

COLONEL.

One may plainly perceive it—there is a certain gaiety peculiar to my nation. (for I will own myself a Frenchman), which distinguishes us everywhere. A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet. 70

SIR PHILIP.

I must own, I had the offer of a barony about five years ago,²¹ but I abhorred the fatigue which must have attended it. I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

COLONEL.

You are perfectly in the right, Sir Philip. A fine 75

person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics; dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

SIR PHILIP.

And love—

COLONEL.

Oh! That's included under the article of pleasure. 80

SIR PHILIP.

*Parbleu, il est un homme d'esprit.*²²—I must embrace you. (*Rises and embraces.*) Your sentiments are so agreeable to mine that we appear to have but one soul, for our ideas and conceptions are the same. 85

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

I should be sorry for that.—You do me too much honor, Sir Philip.

SIR PHILIP.

Your vivacity and *jantée* mien assured me at first sight there was nothing of this foggy island in your composition. May I crave your name, sir? 90

COLONEL.

My name is La Fainwell, sir, at your service.

SIR PHILIP.

The La Fainwells are French, I know; though the name is become very numerous in Great Britain of late years. I was sure you was French the moment I laid my eyes upon you; I could not come into the supposition of your being an Englishman; this island produces few such ornaments. 95

COLONEL.

Pardon me, Sir Philip, this island has two things superior to all nations under the sun.

SIR PHILIP.

Aye! What are they? 100

COLONEL.

The ladies and the laws.

SIR PHILIP.

The laws indeed do claim a preference of other nations, but by my soul there are fine women everywhere. I must own I have felt their power in all countries. 105

COLONEL.

There are some finished beauties, I confess, in France, Italy, Germany, nay, even in Holland; *mais*

²² *Parbleu ... d'esprit*] Good Lord, he is a man of wit. (Fr.)

²⁰ Right Honorable] i.e. a member of the nobility

²¹ offer ... ago] a reference to Queen Anne's creation of twelve new Tory peers in 1712 to ensure that the Treaty of Utrecht would pass the House of Lords

*sont bien rares.*²³ But *les belles Anglaises!*²⁴ Oh, Sir Philip, where find we such women! such symmetry of shape! such elegancy of dress! such regularity of features! such sweetness of temper! such commanding eyes! and such bewitching smiles?

SIR PHILIP.

Ah! *Parbleu, vous êtes attrapé.*²⁵

COLONEL. *Non, je vous assure, chevalier*²⁶—but I declare there is no amusement so agreeable to my *goût*,²⁷—as the conversation* of a fine woman. I could never be prevailed upon to enter into what the vulgar calls the pleasure of the bottle.

SIR PHILIP.

My own taste, *positivement*. A ball or a masquerade is certainly preferable to all the productions of the vineyard.

COLONEL.

Infinitely! I hope the people of quality in England will support that branch of pleasure which was imported with their peace²⁸ and since naturalized by the ingenious Mr. Heidegger.²⁹

SIR PHILIP.

The ladies assure me it will become part of the constitution, upon which I subscribed an hundred guineas. It will be of great service to the public, at least to the Company of Surgeons³⁰ and the City in general.

COLONEL.

Ha, ha, it may help to ennoble the blood of the City.³¹ Are you married, Sir Philip?

²³ *mais ... rares*] but they are very rare (Fr.)

²⁴ *les ... Anglaises*] the English beauties (Fr.)

²⁵ *Parbleu ... attrapé.*] Good Lord; you are caught. (Fr.)

²⁶ *Non ... chevalier*] No, I assure you, knight. (Fr.)

²⁷ *goût*] taste. (Fr.)

²⁸ branch ... peace] The French ambassador to England, the Duc D'Aumont, held some of the earliest masked balls in London in 1713, after the Peace of Utrecht.

²⁹ Mr. Heidegger] John James ("Count") Heidegger (1659?-1749), the manager of the Haymarket Theater, who began presenting public masquerades there in 1717

³⁰ Company of Surgeons] the doctors' guild, the members of which will be paid for cures for venereal disease.

³¹ ennoble ... City] Masquerades were condemned for promoting immorality and the indiscriminate mingling of

SIR PHILIP.

No, nor do I believe I ever shall enter into that honorable state; I have an absolute tender for the whole sex.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

That's more than they have for you I dare swear.

SIR PHILIP.

And I have the honor to be very well with the ladies, I can assure you, sir, and I won't affront a million of fine women to make one happy.

COLONEL.

Nay, marriage is really reducing a man's taste to a kind of half-pleasure, but then it carries the blessing of peace along with it; one goes to sleep without fear and wakes without pain.

SIR PHILIP.

There is something of that in't; a wife is a very good dish for an English stomach; but gross feeding for nicer* palates, ha, ha, ha!

COLONEL.

I find I was very much mistaken—I imagined you had been married to that young lady which I saw in the chariot* with you this morning in Gracechurch Street.³²

SIR PHILIP.

Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a guardian to that lady, you must know; her father, I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old fellows—that upon my soul I'm in pain for the poor girl—she must certainly lead apes,³³ as the saying is, ha, ha.

COLONEL.

That's pity. Sir Philip, if the lady would give me leave, I would endeavor to avert that curse.

SIR PHILIP.

As to the lady, she'd gladly be rid of us at any rate, I believe; but here's the mischief, he who marries

classes (thanks to the leveling anonymity of masquerade costume which fostered sexual liaisons across class boundaries).

³² Gracechurch Street] in the City, running from London Bridge and the Monument to Cornhill; nearby was the oldest Quaker meeting-house in London.

³³ lead apes] proverbial: old maids lead apes in hell as punishment for not marrying while they could.

Miss Lovely, must have the consent of us all four, or not a penny of her portion. For my part, I shall never approve of any but a man of figure, and the rest are not only averse to cleanliness, but have each a peculiar taste to gratify. For my part, I declare, I would prefer you to all men I ever saw—

COLONEL.

And I her to all women—

SIR PHILIP.

I assure you, Mr. Fairwell; I am for marrying her, for I hate the trouble of a guardian, especially among such wretches; but resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them, and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

COLONEL.

I wish I had your leave to try them, Sir Philip.

SIR PHILIP.

With all my soul, sir, I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

COLONEL.

Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

SIR PHILIP.

But do you really like matrimony?

COLONEL.

I believe I could with that lady, sir.

SIR PHILIP.

The only point in which we differ—but you are master of so many qualifications that I can excuse one fault; for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

COLONEL.

I wish you'd give me your consent to marry Mrs. Lovely under your hand, Sir Philip.

SIR PHILIP.

I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James's Coffee-house,³⁴ where we may have pen and ink. Though I can't foresee what advantage my consent will be to you without you could find a way to get the rest of the guardians'. But I'll introduce you, however; she is now at a Quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch

Street. I assure you she has an odd *ragoût* of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters,* which I'll endeavor to give you as we go along.—Hey! Pierre, Jacques, Renault—where are you all, scoundrels? Order the chariot to St. James's Coffee-house.

COLONEL.

*Le noir, le brun, le blanc—mortbleu, où sont ces coquins-là? Allons, monsieur le chevalier.*³⁵

SIR PHILIP.

Ah! Pardonnez moi, monsieur.

COLONEL.

Not one step, upon my soul, Sir Philip.

SIR PHILIP.

The best-bred man in Europe, positively.

Exeunt.

Scene ii. Obadiah Prim's house.

Enter Mrs. Lovely followed by Mrs. Prim.

MRS. PRIM.

Then thou³⁶ wilt not obey me; and thou dost really think those fal-lals becometh thee?

MRS. LOVELY.

I do, indeed.

MRS. PRIM.

Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a modest woman than thou dost, Anne.

MRS. LOVELY.

More like a hypocrite, you mean, Mrs. Prim.

MRS. PRIM.

Ah! Anne, Anne, that wicked Philip Modelove will undo thee. Satan so fills thy heart with pride during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumbling block to the upright.

MRS. LOVELY.

Pray, who are they? Are the pinched cap and formal

³⁵ *Le noir* : . . . *chevalier*.] The black, the brown, the white—zounds, where are these rascals? Let us go, sir knight. (Fr.)

³⁶ thou] the use of "thee" and "thou" was one of the Quaker "public testimonies" of conversion; it was intended to reproduce biblical language and to eliminate one of the designations of rank, since inferiors were expected to use "you" to their superiors.

³⁴ St. James's Coffee-house] on St. James's Street, a Whig establishment, patronized by Steele and Addison

hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress; Mrs. Prim?

MRS. PRIM.

It doth not consist in cut hair, spotted face,³⁷ and bare necks. Oh, the wickedness of this generation! The primitive women³⁸ knew not the abomination of hooped petticoats.

MRS. LOVELY.

No, nor the abomination of cant neither. Don't tell me, Mrs. Prim, don't. I know you have as much pride, vanity, self-conceit, and ambition among you, couched under that formal habit and sanctified countenance, as the proudest of us all; but the world begins to see your prudery.

MRS. PRIM.

Prudery! What! Do they invent new words³⁹ as well as new fashions? Ah! Poor, fantastic age, I pity thee. Poor deluded Anne, which dost thou think most resemblest the saint and which the sinner, thy dress or mine? Thy naked bosom allureth the eye of the bystander, encourageth the frailty of human nature, and corrupteth the soul with evil longings.

MRS. LOVELY.

And pray who corrupted your son Tobias with evil longings? Your maid Tabitha wore a handkerchief,⁴⁰ and yet he made the Saint a sinner.

MRS. PRIM.

Well, well, spit thy malice. I confess Sarah did buffet my son Tobias and my servant Tabitha; the evil spirit was at that time too strong and they both became subject to its workings—not from any outward provocation—but from an inward call; he was not tainted with the rottenness of the fashions, nor did his eyes take in the drunkenness of beauty.

³⁷ cut hair, spotted face] hair trimmed to frame the face, rather than being pulled straight back; face fashionably decorated with patches made of silk or velvet

³⁸ primitive women] women of the earliest Christian church

³⁹ Prudery ... new words] prudishness; originally a French word; the first recorded English usage occurs in *The Tatler*, No. 126 (1709).

⁴⁰ handkerchief] scarf draped around the neck to conceal a low neckline

MRS. LOVELY.

No! That's plainly to be seen.

MRS. PRIM.

Tabitha is one of the faithful, he fell not with a stranger:

MRS. LOVELY.

So! Then you hold wenching no crime, provided it be within the pale of your own tribe. You are an excellent casuist, truly.

Enter Obadiah Prim.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Not stripped of thy vanity yet, Anne? Why dost not thou make her put it off, Sarah?

MRS. PRIM.

She will not do it.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Verily, thy naked breasts troubleth my outward man; I pray thee hide 'em, Anne; put on a handkerchief, Anne Lovely.

MRS. LOVELY.

I hate handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold weather, Mr. Prim.

MRS. PRIM.

I have seen thee wear a handkerchief; nay, and a mask to boot, in the middle of July.

MRS. LOVELY.

Aye, to keep the sun from scorching me.

OBADIAH PRIM.

If thou couldst not bear the sunbeams, how dost thou think man should bear thy beams? Those breasts inflame desire; let them be hid, I say.

MRS. LOVELY.

Let me be quiet, I say. Must I be tormented thus forever? Sure no woman's condition ever equalled mine; foppery, folly, avarice, and hypocrisy are by turns my constant companions, and I must vary shapes as often as a player. I cannot think my father meant this tyranny! No; you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I, or my wife, tyrannize when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire and veil thy provokers to sin?

MRS. LOVELY.

Deliver me, good Heaven! Or I shall go distracted.
(Walks about.)

MRS. PRIM.

So! Now thy pinnars are tossed and thy breasts pulled up; verily they were seen enough before; fie upon the filthy tailor who made them stays.

MRS. LOVELY.

I wish I were in my grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Kill thee! Ha, ha; thou think'st thou art acting some lewd play sure; kill thee! Art thou prepared for death, Anne Lovely? No, no, thou wouldst rather have a husband, Anne. Thou wantest a gilt coach with six lazy fellows behind to flaunt it in the ring of vanity among the princes and rulers of the land, who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care that none shall squander away thy father's estate; thou shalt marry none such, Anne.

MRS. LOVELY.

Would you marry me to one of your own canting sect?^b

OBADIAH PRIM.

Yea, verily, none else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Anne.

MRS. LOVELY.

And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn papist and die in a convent.

MRS. PRIM.

Oh wickedness!

MRS. LOVELY.

Oh stupidity!

OBADIAH PRIM.

Oh blindness of heart!

MRS. LOVELY. [*Aside to Prim.*]

Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me, lest I betray your sanctity and leave your wife to judge of your purity. What were the emotions of your spirit when you squeezed Mary by the hand last night in the pantry, when she told you, you buss'd so filthily? Ah! You had no aversion to naked bosoms when you begged her to show you a little, little, little bit of her delicious bubby. Don't you remember those words, Mr. Prim?

MRS. PRIM.

What does she say, Obadiah?

OBADIAH PRIM.

She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah. (*Aside.*) Which way did she hear this? This should not have reached the ears of the wicked ones; verily, it troubleth me.

Enter servant.

SERVANT.

Philip Modelove, whom they call Sir Philip,⁴¹ is below, and such another with him; shall I send them up?

OBADIAH PRIM.

Yea. (*Exit [servant].*)

Enter Sir Philip and Colonel.

SIR PHILIP.

How dost thou do, Friend Prim. Odsol My she-Friend here too! What, you are documenting⁴² Miss Nancy, reading her a lecture upon the pinched coif, I warrant ye.

MRS. PRIM.

I am sure thou never redest her any lecture that was good.—My flesh riseth so at these wicked ones that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight. (*Exit.*)

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

Oh! That I could find means to speak to her! How charming she appears! I wish I could get this letter into her hand.

SIR PHILIP.

Well, Miss Cocky,⁴³ I hope thou hast got the better of them.

MRS. LOVELY.

The difficulties of my life are not to be surmounted, Sir Philip. (*Aside.*) I hate the impertinence of him as much as the stupidity of the other.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

⁴¹ Philip . . . Sir Philip] the refusal to use honorific titles was another Quaker public testimony.

⁴² documenting] admonishing in an authoritative or imperious manner.

⁴³ Miss Cocky] a term of endearment

SIR PHILIP.

I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may
 none of us spoil her, prithee, Prim, let us consent
 to marry her. I have sent for our brother guardians
 to meet me here about that very thing.—Madam,
 will you give me leave to recommend a husband
 to you? Here's a gentleman which, in my mind,
 you can have no objection to: (*Presents the Colonel
 to her; she looks another way.*)

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside.*)

Heaven deliver me from the formal and the
 fantastic fool.

COLONEL.

A fine woman, a fine horse, and fine equipage are
 the finest things in the universe. And if I am so
 happy to possess you, madam, I shall become the
 envy of mankind, as much as you outshine your
 whole sex. (*As he takes her hand to kiss it; he endeavors
 to put a letter into it; she lets it drop; Prim takes it up.*)

MRS. LOVELY. (*Turning from him.*)

I have no ambition to appear conspicuously
 ridiculous, sir.

COLONEL.

So fall the hopes of Fainwell.

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside.*)

Hah! Fainwell! 'Tis he! What have I done? Prim
 has the letter and all will be discovered.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee
 by it, but thou seest thy letter is unwelcome to the
 maiden; she will not read it.

MRS. LOVELY.

Nor shall you. (*Snatches the letter.*) I'll tear it in a
 thousand pieces and scatter it, as I will the hopes
 of all those that any of you shall recommend to
 me. (*Tears the letter.*)

SIR PHILIP.

Hah! Right woman, faith!

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

Excellent woman.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Friend, thy garb favoereth too much of the vanity
 of the age for my approbation; nothing that
 resembleth Philip Modelove shall I love, mark that;
 therefore, Friend Philip, bring no more of thy own
 apes under my roof.

SIR PHILIP.

I am so entirely a stranger to the monsters of thy
 breed that I shall bring none of them, I am sure.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

I am likely to have a pretty task by that time I have
 gone through them all; but she's a city worth taking
 and egad I'll carry on the siege. If I can but blow up
 the outworks, I fancy I am pretty secure of the town.

*Enter servant.*SERVANT. (*To Sir Philip.*)

Toby Periwinkle and Thomas Tradelove
 demandeth to see thee.

SIR PHILIP.

Bid them come up.

MRS. LOVELY.

Deliver me from such an inundation of noise and
 nonsense. [*Aside.*] Oh Fainwell! Whatever thy
 contrivance is, prosper it Heaven; but oh, I fear
 thou never canst redeem me. (*Exit.*)

SIR PHILIP.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

Enter Mr. Periwinkle and Tradelove.

(*Aside to the Colonel.*) These are my brother
 guardians, Mr. Fainwell; prithee observe the
 creatures.

TRADELOVE.

Well, Sir Philip, I obey your summons.

PERIWINKLE.

Pray, what have you to offer for the good of Mrs.
 Lovely, Sir Philip?

SIR PHILIP.

First, I desire to know what you intend to do with
 that lady. Must she be sent to the Indies for a
 venture,⁴⁴ or live to be an old maid and then
 entered amongst your curiosities and shown for a
 monster,⁴⁵ Mr. Periwinkle?

⁴⁴ sent ... venture] sent to the colonies in one of Tradelove's enterprises, here perhaps securing a marriage to a wealthy planter

⁴⁵ live ... monster] old maids were considered unnatural in the sense that their reproductive capacities were not turned to account; as a virtuoso, Periwinkle collects such oddities ("curiosities").

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

Humph, curiosities! That must be the virtuoso. 195

PERIWINKLE. Why, what would you do with her?

SIR PHILIP. I would recommend this gentleman to her for a

husband, sir—a person whom I have picked out

from the whole race of mankind.

OBADIAH PRIM. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the

rest of mankind, for I like him not. 200

COLONEL. Pray, sir, without offence to your formality, what

may be your objections?

OBADIAH PRIM. Thy person; thy manners; thy dress; thy

acquaintance; thy everything, Friend. 205

SIR PHILIP. You are most particulary obliging, Friend, ha, ha.

TRADELOVE. What business do you follow, pray, sir?

COLONEL. (*Aside.*) Humph, by that question he must be the broker.—

Business, sir! The business of a gentleman.

TRADELOVE. That is as much to say, you dress fine, feed high,

lie with every woman you like, and pay your

surgeon's bills⁴⁶ better than your tailor's or your

butcher's.

COLONEL. The Court is much obliged to you, sir, for your

character* of a gentleman. 215

TRADELOVE. The Court, sir! What would the Court do without

us citizens?

SIR PHILIP. Without your wives and daughters, you mean, Mr.

Tradelove?

PERIWINKLE. Have you ever traveled, sir? 220

COLONEL. [*Aside.*] That question must not be answered now.—In

books I have, sir.

PERIWINKLE.

In books? That's fine traveling indeed!—Sir Philip,

when you present a person I like, he shall have my

consent to marry Mrs. Lovely—till when, your

servant. (*Exit.*) 225

COLONEL. (*Aside.*) I'll make you like me before I have done with you,

for I am mistaken.

TRADELOVE. And when you can convince me that a beau is

more useful to my country than a merchant, you

shall have mine—till then, you must excuse me.

(*Exit.*) 230

COLONEL. (*Aside.*) So much for trade. I'll fit* you too.

SIR PHILIP. In my opinion, this is very inhumane treatment

as to the lady, Mr. Prim.

OBADIAH PRIM. Thy opinion and mine happens to differ as much as

our occupations, Friend; business requireth my

presence and folly thine, and so I must bid thee

farewell. (*Exit.*) 235

SIR PHILIP. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Fainwell! Gad take

me, I'd give half my estate to see these rascals bit.*

COLONEL. (*Aside.*) I hope to bite you all, if my plots hit.

Act III, scene i. The tavern.

*Sackbut and the Colonel in an Egyptian dress.*⁴⁷

SACKBUT. A lucky beginning, Colonel—you have got the old

beau's consent.

COLONEL. Aye, he's a reasonable creature, but the other three

will require some pains. Shall I pass upon him,

think you? Egad, in my mind, I look as antique

as if I had been preserved in the ark. 5

SACKBUT. Pass upon him! Aye, aye, as roundly as white wine

⁴⁷ *an Egyptian dress*] probably the conventional theatrical

costume for Middle-Eastern characters: a long robe,

baggy breeches, and a turban

⁴⁶ pay ... bills] payment for cures for venereal disease.

dashed with sack does for mountain⁴⁸ and sherry;
if you have but assurance enough.

COLONEL. I have no apprehension from that quarter;
I have no apprehension from that quarter; 10
assurance is the cockade of a soldier.

SACKBUT. Aye, but the assurance of a soldier differs much from
that of a traveler. Can you lie with a good grace?

COLONEL. As heartily, when my mistress is the prize, as I would
meet the foe when my country called and king 15
commanded; so don't you fear that part; if he don't
know me again, I'm safe. I hope he'll come.

SACKBUT. I wish all my debts would come as sure. I told him
you had been a great traveler, had many valuable
curiosities, and was a person of a most singular 20
taste; he seemed transported and begged me to
keep you till he came.

COLONEL. Aye, aye, he need not fear my running away. Let's
have a bottle of sack, landlord, our ancestors drank
sack.

SACKBUT. You shall have it.

COLONEL. And whereabouts is the trap door you mentioned?

SACKBUT. There's the conveyance, sir. (*Exit.*)

COLONEL. Now if I should cheat all these roguish guardians
and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be 30
what the French call a *grand coup d'éclat*.⁴⁹ Ods!
Here comes Periwinkle. Ah! Deuce take this beard;
pray Jupiter it does not give me the slip and spoil all.

Enter Sackbut with wine and Periwinkle following.

SACKBUT. Sir, this gentleman, hearing you have been a great
traveler and a person of fine speculation,⁵⁰ begs 35
leave to take a glass with you; he is a man of
curious taste himself.

COLONEL. The gentleman has it in his face and garb; sir, you
are welcome.

PERIWINKLE.

Sir, I honor a traveler and men of your inquiring
disposition. The oddness of your habit pleases me 40
extremely; 'tis very antique; and for that I like it.

COLONEL. It is very antique, sir. This habit once belonged to
the famous Claudius Ptolemy,⁵¹ who lived in the
year a hundred and thirty five. 45

SACKBUT. (*Aside.*) If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lie with the
devil for a bean-stack and win it every straw.⁵²

PERIWINKLE. A hundred and thirty-five! Why, that's prodigious
now. Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the
world to be a traveler. 50

COLONEL. For my part, I value none of the modern fashions
of⁵³ a fig-leaf.

PERIWINKLE. No more do I, sir; I had rather be the jest of a fool,
than his favorite. I am laughed at here for my
singularity. This coat, you must know, sir, was 55
formerly worn by that ingenious and very learned
person, John Tradescant.⁵⁴

COLONEL. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, sir. John
Tradescant was my uncle, by mother-side; and I
thank you for the honor you do his memory; he 60
was a very curious man indeed.

PERIWINKLE. Your uncle, sir! Nay then, 'tis no wonder that your
taste is so refined; why, you have it in your blood.

⁴⁸ mountain] a variety of Malaga white wine made from
grapes grown in the mountains

⁴⁹ grand ... d'éclat] great, dazzling feat (Fr.)

⁵⁰ speculation] profound; conjectural reasoning

⁵¹ Claudius Ptolemy] famous Greek astronomer, math-
ematician, and geographer of Alexandria, also known as
Ptolemy

⁵² lie ... straw] In a lying contest with the devil for a stack
of recently harvested beans, the Colonel would win it
down to the last straw.

⁵³ of] at

⁵⁴ John Tradescant] (1608-1662) traveler, naturalist, and
gardener; his collection of natural curiosities was famous
and became the basis of the Ashmolean Museum.

My humble service to you, sir, to the immortal
memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-
forgotten uncle. (*Drinks.*) 65

COLONEL.

Give me a glass, landlord.

PERIWINKLE.

I find you are primitive even in your wine; canary
was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic
and saves the charge of apothecaries' cordials: Oh!
that I had lived in your uncle's days! Or rather, that
he were now alive. Oh! How proud he'd be of such
a nephew! 70

SACKBUT. (*Aside.*)

Oh pox! That would have spoiled the jest.

PERIWINKLE.

A person of your curiosity must have collected 75
many rarities.

COLONEL.

I have some, sir, which are not yet come ashore,
as an Egyptian's idol.

PERIWINKLE.

Pray, what might that be?

COLONEL.

It is, sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly 80
worshipped in that country; I took it from the
breast of a female mummy.

PERIWINKLE.

Ha, ha! Our women retain part of their idolatry
to this day, for many an ape lies on a lady's breast,
ha, ha— 85

SACKBUT. (*Aside.*)

A smart old thief.

COLONEL.

Two tusks of an hippopotamus, two pair of
Chinese nutcrackers, and one Egyptian mummy.

PERIWINKLE.

Pray, sir, have you never a crocodile?

COLONEL.

Humph! The boatswain brought one with design to 90
show it, but touching at Rotterdam and hearing it
was no rarity in England, he sold it to a Dutch poet.

SACKBUT.

The devil's in that nation, it rivals us in everything.

PERIWINKLE.

I should have been very glad to have seen a living
crocodile. 95

COLONEL.

My genius led me to things more worthy of my
regard. Sir, I have seen the utmost limits of this
globular world; I have seen the sun rise and set;
know in what degree of heat he is at noon to the
breadth of a hair and what quantity of
combustibles he burns in a day, how much of it
turns to ashes and how much to cinders. 100

PERIWINKLE.

To cinders? You amaze me, sir; I never heard that
the sun consumed anything. Descartes⁵⁵ tells us—

COLONEL.

Descartes, with the rest of his brethren both
ancient and modern, knew nothing of the matter.
I tell you, sir, that nature admits an annual decay,
though imperceptible to vulgar eyes. Sometimes
his rays destroy below, sometimes above. You have
heard of blazing comets, I suppose? 110

PERIWINKLE.

Yes, yes, I remember to have seen one and our
astrologers tell us of another which shall happen
very quickly.⁵⁶

COLONEL.

Those comets are little islands bordering on the sun,
which at certain times are set on fire by that
luminous body's moving over them perpendicular,
which will one day occasion a general conflagration. 115

SACKBUT. (*Aside.*)

One need not scruple the colonel's capacity, faith.

PERIWINKLE.

This is marvellous strange! These cinders are what
I never read of in any of our learned dissertations. 120

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

I don't know how the devil you should.

SACKBUT. (*Aside.*)

He has it at his fingers' ends; one would swear he
had learned to lie at school, he does it so cleverly.

PERIWINKLE.

Well, you travelers see strange things! Pray, sir, have
you any of those cinders? 125

⁵⁵ Descartes] René Descartes (1596-1650) wrote about sun spots in his unfinished scientific work, *The World*.

⁵⁶ astrologers ... quickly] "astrologers" for "astronomers"; in 1705 Edmund Halley predicted the return of the comet he had observed in 1682.

COLONEL.
I have, among my other curiosities.

PERIWINKLE.
Oh, what have I lost for want of traveling! Pray, what have you else?

COLONEL.
Several things worth your attention. I have a muff made of the feathers of those geese* that saved the Roman Capitol.

PERIWINKLE.
Is't possible?

SACKBUT. (*Aside*).
Yes; if you are such a goose to believe him.

COLONEL.
I have an Indian leaf, which open will cover an acre of land, yet folds up into so little a compass,* you may put it into your snuffbox.

SACKBUT. (*Aside*).
Humph! That's a thunderer.

PERIWINKLE.
Amazing!

COLONEL.
Ah! Mine is but a little one; I have seen some of them that would cover one of the Caribbean islands.

PERIWINKLE.
Well, if I don't travel before I die, I shan't rest in my grave. Pray, what do the Indians with them?

COLONEL.
Sir, they use them in their wars for tents, the old women for riding hoods, the young for fans and umbrellas.

SACKBUT. (*Aside*).
He has a fruitful invention!

PERIWINKLE.
I admire our East India Company⁵⁷ imports none of them; they would certainly find their account in them.

COLONEL. (*Aside*).
Right, if they could find the leaves.—Look ye; sir, do you see this little vial?

PERIWINKLE.
Pray you, what is it?

⁵⁷ East India Company] joint-stock trading company with the monopoly on trade with India and Asia.

COLONEL.
This is called *poluflosboio*.⁵⁸

PERIWINKLE.
Poluflosboio! It has a rumbling sound.

COLONEL.
Right, sir, it proceeds from a rumbling nature. This water was part of those waves which bore Cleopatra's vessel when she sailed to meet Anthony.

PERIWINKLE.
Well, of all that ever traveled, none had a taste like you.

COLONEL.
But here's the wonder of the world. This, sir, is called, *zona*⁵⁹ or *moros musphonon*,⁶⁰ the virtues of this is inestimable.

PERIWINKLE.
Moros musphonon! What in the name of wisdom can that be? To me it seems a plain belt.

COLONEL.
This girdle has carried me all the world over.

PERIWINKLE.
You have carried it, you mean.

COLONEL.
I mean as I say, sir. Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible; and by turning this little screw can be in the court of the Great Mogul, the Grand Seignior,⁶¹ and King George in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

PERIWINKLE.
You must pardon me, sir, I can't believe it.

COLONEL.
If my landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

SACKBUT.
I thank you kindly, sir, but I have no inclination to ride post to the devil.

⁵⁸ *poluflosboio*] [*poluphloisboio*] loud-roaring (as of the sea—Greek)

⁵⁹ *zona*] Latin form of the Greek word *zone*, a sash wrapped about the waist, usually having magical properties, often called in earlier periods a girdle

⁶⁰ *moros musphonon*] fanciful Greek: "mousetrap for a fool" (Stathas)

⁶¹ Grand Seignior] the Sultan of Turkey

COLONEL.

No, no, you shan't stir a foot; I'll only make you invisible.

SACKBUT.

But if you could not make me visible again?

PERIWINKLE.

Come try it upon me, sir, I am not afraid of the devil nor all his tricks. 'Zbud,* I'll stand 'em all.

COLONEL.

There, sir, put it on. Come, landlord, you and I must face the east. (*They turn about.*) Is it on, sir?

PERIWINKLE.

'Tis on. (*They turn about again.*)

SACKBUT.

Heaven protect me! Where is he?

PERIWINKLE.

Why here, just where I was.

SACKBUT.

Where, where, in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle! Egad, look to't, you had best, sir, and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a wizard.

COLONEL.

Have patience, good landlord.

PERIWINKLE.

But really, don't you see me now?

SACKBUT.

No more than I see my grandmother that died forty years ago.

PERIWINKLE.

Are you sure you don't lie? Methinks I stand just where I did and see you as plain as I did before.

SACKBUT.

Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

COLONEL.

Take off the girdle, sir. (*He takes it off.*)

SACKBUT.

Ah, sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. (*Embraces him.*)

PERIWINKLE.

This is very odd; certainly, there must be some trick in't.—Pray, sir, will you do me the favor to put it on yourself?

COLONEL.

With all my heart.

PERIWINKLE.

But first I'll secure the door.

COLONEL.

You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sackbut.

SACKBUT.

Yes, yes.—Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full east.

They turn; the Colonel sinks down a trapdoor.

COLONEL.

'Tis done; now turn.

They turn.

PERIWINKLE.

Hah! Mercy upon me! My flesh creeps upon my bones.—This must be a conjurer, Mr. Sackbut.

SACKBUT.

He is the devil, I think.

PERIWINKLE.

Oh! Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the devil when perhaps he may be at your elbow.

SACKBUT.

At my elbow! Marry, Heaven forbid!

COLONEL.

(*Below.*) Are you satisfied, sir?

PERIWINKLE.

Yes, sir, yes.—How hollow his voice sounds!

SACKBUT.

Yours seemed just the same. Faith, I wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Hark ye, Mr. Periwinkle (*takes him aside till the Colonel rises again*), if he would sell this girdle, you might travel

COLONEL.

with great expedition.

PERIWINKLE.

I am sorry for't, sir, because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

COLONEL.

But it is not to be parted with for money. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find a rarity in the keeping of four men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind, and the first of the four that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle. Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

PERIWINKLE.

What can that rarity be? Did he not name it to you?

COLONEL.

Yes, sir; he called it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

PERIWINKLE.

Pish! Women are no rarities. I never had any great taste that way. I married, indeed, to please a father and I got a girl to please my wife; but she and the child (thank Heaven) died together. Women are the very gewgaws of the creation; playthings for boys, which, when they write man, they ought to throw aside.

SACKBUT. (*Aside.*)

A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies!

PERIWINKLE.

What woman is there, dressed in all the pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a foretop⁶² as the cockatoo?

COLONEL.

(*Aside.*) I must humor him.—Such a skin as the lizard?

PERIWINKLE.

Such a shining breast as the hummingbird?

COLONEL.

Such a shape as the antelope?

PERIWINKLE.

Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies?

COLONEL.

No, that must be allowed. For my part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I'd have nothing to do with them, for they are as indifferent to me as a sparrow or a flesh fly.

PERIWINKLE.

Pray, sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady?

COLONEL.

Why, sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall restore the art of embalming and the old Roman manner of burying their dead, and, for the benefit of posterity, he is to discover the longitude,⁶³ so long sought for in vain.

PERIWINKLE.

Od! These are very valuable things, Mr. Sackbut.

SACKBUT. (*Aside.*)

He hits it off admirably and t'other swallows it like sack* and sugar.—Certainly this lady must be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of four persons.

PERIWINKLE.

By the description it should. (*Aside.*) Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun and make the tour of the whole world in four-and-twenty hours.—And are you to give that girdle to the first of the four guardians that shall give his consent to marry that lady, say you, sir?

COLONEL.

I am so ordered, when I can find him.

PERIWINKLE.

I fancy I know the very woman—her name is Anne Lovely.

COLONEL.

Excellent! He said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was *L*.

PERIWINKLE.

Did he really? Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know anything of my ward.

COLONEL.

Your ward?

PERIWINKLE.

To be plain with you, sir, I am one of those four guardians.

COLONEL.

Are you indeed, sir? I am transported to find the man who is to possess^d this *moros musphonon* is a person of so curious a taste. Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian, which, if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is yours.

PERIWINKLE.

If I live till this boy is born, I'll be embalmed and sent to the Royal Society⁶⁴ when I die.

COLONEL.

That you shall most certainly.

⁶² foretop] a nautical term, applied to hair arranged on the forehead; by analogy, the cockatoo's crest

⁶³ discover the longitude] In 1714 Parliament had passed a bill offering a prize of £20,000 for the first person to develop an accurate way of finding the longitude at sea.

⁶⁴ Royal Society] scientific society founded by Royal Charter in 1662; by 1718 it was the butt of many a joke.

Enter drawer.

DRAWER.

Here's Mr. Staytape the tailor, inquires for you, Colonel.

SACKBUT.

Who do you speak to, you son of a whore?

PERIWINKLE. (*Aside.*)

Hah! Colonel!

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

Confound the blundering dog!

DRAWER.

Why, to Colonel—

SACKBUT.

Get you out, you rascal. (*Kicks him out and exits after him.*)

DRAWER. [*As he exits.*]

What the devil is the matter?

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

This dog has ruined all my scheme, I see by Periwinkle's looks.

PERIWINKLE.

How finely I should have been choused.—Colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before; it was pure ignorance, faith it was. Pray—hem, hem—pray, Colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment?

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

A pox of your sneer.—I don't understand you, sir.

PERIWINKLE.

No? That's strange! I understand you, Colonel. An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! Ha, ha, ha. I am sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service. We old fellows can see as far into a millstone* as him that picks it. I am not to be tricked out of my trust, mark that.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

The devil! I must carry it off; I wish I were fairly out.—Look ye, sir, you may make what jest you please, but the stars will be obeyed, sir, and depend upon it, I shall have the lady and you none of the girdle. (*Aside.*) Now for Freeman's part of the plot. (*Exit.*)

PERIWINKLE.

The stars! Ha, ha. No star has favored you, it seems. The girdle! Ha, ha, ha, none of your legerdemain tricks can pass upon me. Why, what

a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up? His pagod,⁶⁵ poluflosboios, his zonas, moros musphonons,

and the devil knows what. But I'll take care—Hah! Gone? Aye, 'twas time to sneak off.—Soho!

the house! (*Enter Sackbut.*) Where is this trickster? Send for a constable; I'll have this rascal before the

Lord Mayor; I'll Grand Cairo him, with a pox to him. I believe you had a hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

SACKBUT.

Who, I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it; I perceived he was a cheat and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him; and endeavored to

stop him when he went out, but the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door, called a coach,

leapt into it, and drove away like the devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar and desires to

speak with you; he is this minute come to town.

PERIWINKLE.

Send him in. (*Exit Sackbut.*) What a scheme this rogue had laid! How I should have been laughed at,

had it succeeded! (*Enter Freeman booted and spurred.*) Mr. Freeman, your dress commands your

welcome to town. What will you drink? I had like to have been imposed upon here by the veriest rascal—

FREEMAN.

I am sorry to hear it. The dog flew for't—he had not 'scaped me if I had been aware of him; Sackbut

struck at him, but missed his blow, or he had done his business for him.

PERIWINKLE.

I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

FREEMAN.

Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle, but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself. I happened

to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit and to my great surprise found him dying.

PERIWINKLE.

Dying!
FREEMAN.

Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping; the

⁶⁵ pagod] an Eastern idol.

room in darkness; the apothecary, shaking his head, told me the doctors had given him over, and then there is small hopes, you know. 365

PERIWINKLE.

I hope he has made his will. He always told me he would make me his heir.

FREEMAN.

I have heard you say as much and therefore resolved to give you notice. I should think it would not be amiss if you went down tomorrow morning. 370

PERIWINKLE.

It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

FREEMAN.

But he has a great estate, and the land very good. Think upon that.

PERIWINKLE.

Why, that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it. In the meantime, I give you many thanks for your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me. 375

FREEMAN.

I am obliged to be at Jonathan's Coffee-house⁶⁶ at two, and it is now half-an-hour after one; if I dispatch my business, I'll wait on you; I know your hour. 380

PERIWINKLE.

You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman; and so, your humble servant. (*Exit.*)

Re-enter Colonel and Sackbut.

FREEMAN.

Ha, ha, ha! I have done your business, Colonel; he has swallowed the bait. 385

COLONEL.

I overheard all, though I am a little in the dark. I am to personate a highwayman, I suppose. That's a project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his consent, he may fright me out of my life⁶⁷ when he discovers me; as he certainly must in the end. 390

FREEMAN.

No, no, I have a plot for you without danger, but first we must manage Tradelove. Has the tailor brought your clothes? 395

SACKBUT.

Yes, pox take the thief.

COLONEL.

Pox take your drawer for a jolt-headed rogue.

FREEMAN.

Well, well, no matter, I warrant we have him yet. But now you must put on the Dutch merchant.

COLONEL.

The deuce of this trading-plot. I wish he had been an old soldier, that I might have attacked him in my own way, heard him fight over all the battles of the Civil War—but for trade, by Jupiter, I shall never do it. 400

SACKBUT.

Never fear, Colonel, Mr. Freeman will instruct you. 405

FREEMAN.

You'll see what others do, the coffee-house will instruct you.

COLONEL.

I must venture, however. But I have a farther plot in my head upon Tradelove, which you must assist me in, Freeman; you are in credit with him, I heard you say. 410

FREEMAN.

I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, Colonel.

COLONEL.

Come along then. Now for the Dutchman. Honest Ptolemy, by your leave, Now must bob wig⁶⁸ and business come in play, And a fair thirty-thousand-pounder leads the way. 415

Act IV, scene i. Jonathan's Coffee-house
in Exchange Alley.

Crowd of people with rolls of paper and parchment⁶⁹ in their hands; a bar, and coffee-boys waiting. Enter Tradelove and stockjobbers with rolls of paper and parchment.

⁶⁶ Jonathan's Coffee-house] in Exchange Alley near the Royal Exchange; center for speculators; the forerunner of the Stock Exchange

⁶⁷ fright ... life] because highway robbery was punishable by death

⁶⁸ bob wig] a simple, undress wig

⁶⁹ rolls ... parchment] for recording stock transactions

FIRST STOCKJOBBER.

South Sea at seven-eighths!⁷⁰ Who buys?

SECOND STOCKJOBBER.

South Sea bonds due at Michaelmas,⁷¹ 1718. Class lottery tickets.⁷²

THIRD STOCKJOBBER.

East India bonds?

FOURTH STOCKJOBBER.

What, all sellers and no buyers? Gentlemen, I'll buy a thousand pound for Tuesday next at three-fourths.

COFFEE-BOY.

Fresh coffee, gentlemen, fresh coffee?

TRADELOVE.

Hark ye, Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for 'other day.

GABRIEL.

Aye, Mr. Tradelove, here's a note for the money upon the Sword Blade Company.⁷³ (*Gives him a note.*)

COFFEE-BOY.

Bohea tea, gentlemen?

Enter a Man.

MAN.

Is Mr. Smuggle here?

FIRST COFFEE-BOY.

Mr. Smuggle's not here, sir, you'll find him at the books.

SECOND STOCKJOBBER.

Ho! Here come^c two sparks from the other end of the town. What news bring they?

⁷⁰ South Sea at seven-eighths] stock in the South Sea Company, a chartered joint-stock trading company, with the monopoly on English trade with South America and the Pacific; founded in 1711, mainly to fund the national debt. Stock prices were conventionally quoted in eighths; only the final fraction is quoted.

⁷¹ Michaelmas] Feast of St. Michael, 29 September; one of the four quarter days of the business year, on which financial transactions were completed.

⁷² Class lottery tickets] one of the lotteries run by the government to fund the national debt; tickets were divided into classes with different prizes for each.

⁷³ Sword Blade Company] the major stock brokerage firm of the time and banker for the South Sea Company

Enter Two Gentlemen.

TRADELOVE.

I would fain bite that spark in the brown coat: he comes very often into the Alley, but never employs a broker.

Enter Colonel and Freeman.

SECOND STOCKJOBBER.

Who does anything in the Civil List lottery?⁷⁴ Or cacao? Zounds, where are all the Jews⁷⁵ this afternoon? Are you a bull or a bear today, Abraham?

THIRD STOCKJOBBER.

A bull, faith, but I have a good put for next week.

TRADELOVE.

Mr. Freeman, your servant! Who is that gentleman?

FREEMAN.

A Dutch merchant, just come to England. But hark ye, Mr. Tradelove, I have a piece of news will get you as much as the French king's death did, if you are expeditious.

TRADELOVE.

Say you so, sir! Pray, what is it?

FREEMAN. (*Showing him a letter.*)

Read there, I received it just now from one that belongs to the Emperor's⁷⁶ minister.

TRADELOVE. (*Reads.*)

"Sir, As I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to show my gratitude; this moment my lord has received a private express that the Spaniards have raised their siege from before Cagliari;⁷⁷ if this prove any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, sir, your most obliged humble servant, Henricus

⁷⁴ Civil... lottery] a government lottery (1713) to discharge the debts of the royal household.

⁷⁵ Jews] many jobbers and brokers were Jews, but prejudice reinforced the association between Jews and the market.

⁷⁶ Emperor's] Charles VI, Emperor of Austria.

⁷⁷ siege ... Cagliari] Cagliari is the capital of Sardinia, at this time part of the Austrian empire; Spain had invaded Sardinia in August 1717; provoking a crisis in the Mediterranean.

Dusseldorp. Postscript, In two or three-hours the news will be public." (*Aside to Freeman.*) May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman?

FREEMAN.

You may. I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

TRADELOVE.

Sir, I am much obliged to you. Egad, 'tis rare news.—Who sells South Sea⁷⁸ for next week?

STOCKJOBBER. (*All together.*)

I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

FIRST STOCKJOBBER.

I'll sell five thousand pounds for next week at five-eighths.

SECOND STOCKJOBBER.

I'll sell ten thousand at five-eighths for the same time.

TRADELOVE.

Nay, nay, hold, hold, not all together, gentlemen, I'll be no bull, I'll buy no more than I can take. Will you sell ten thousand pound at a half for any day next week, except Saturday?

FIRST STOCKJOBBER.

I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove.

Freeman whispers to one of the gentlemen.

GENTLEMAN. (*Aloud.*)

The Spaniards raised the siege of Cagliari! I don't believe one word of it.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

Raised the siege! As much as you have raised the Monument.⁷⁹

FREEMAN.

'Tis raised, I assure you, sir.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

What will you lay on't?

FREEMAN.

What you please.

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Why, I have a brother upon the spot in the

⁷⁸ South Sea] The South Sea Company traded with the Spanish empire, whose military fortunes would affect stock prices.

⁷⁹ Monument] a column designed by Christopher Wren commemorating the Great Fire of 1666

Emperor's service; I am certain if there were any such thing, I should have had a letter.

A STOCKJOBBER.

How's this? The siege of Cagliari raised; I wish it may be true, 'twill make business stir and stocks rise.

FIRST STOCKJOBBER.

Tradelove's a cunning fat bear; if this news proves true, I shall repent I sold him the five thousand pounds.⁸⁰—Pray, sir, what assurance have you that the siege is raised?

FREEMAN.

There is come an express to the Emperor's minister.

SECOND STOCKJOBBER.

I'll know that presently. (*Exit.*)

FIRST GENTLEMAN.

Let it come where it will, I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

FREEMAN.

'Tis done.

SECOND GENTLEMAN.

I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

FREEMAN.

I'll take you.

FOURTH STOCKJOBBER.

Egad, I'll hold twenty pieces 'tis not raised, sir.

FREEMAN.

Done with you too.

TRADELOVE.

I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is raised.

FREEMAN. (*Aside to Tradelove.*)

The Dutch merchant is your man to take in.

TRADELOVE.

Does not he know the news?

FREEMAN. (*To Tradelove.*)

Not a syllable; if he did, he would bet a hundred thousand pound as soon as one penny; he's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers.

TRADELOVE.

Say you so.—Egad, I'll bite him if possible.—Are you from Holland, sir?

COLONEL.

Ya, mynheer.

⁸⁰ five thousand pounds] ten thousand according to the first stockjobber's revised offer to Tradelove

TRADELOVE. Had you the news before you came away?

COLONEL.

What believe you, mynheer?

TRADELOVE. What do I believe? Why, I believe that the Spaniards have actually raised the siege of Cagliari.

COLONEL.

Wat duyvels nieuws is dat? 'Tis niet waer, mynheer,—'tis no true, sir.

TRADELOVE.

'Tis so true, mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds upon it.—You are sure the letter may be depended upon, Mr. Freeman?

FREEMAN. (*Aside to Tradelove.*)

Do you think I would venture my money if I were not sure of the truth of it?

COLONEL.

Two duysend pond, mynheer, 'tis gedaen—dis gentleman sal hold de gelt. (*Gives Freeman money.*)

TRADELOVE.

With all my heart—this binds the wager. You have certainly lost, mynheer, the siege is raised indeed.

COLONEL.

Ik gelove't niet, Mynheer Freeman, ik sal ye dubbeld houden, if you please.

FREEMAN.

I am let into the secret, therefore won't win your money.

TRADELOVE.

Ha, ha, ha! I have snapped the Dutchman, faith, ha, ha! This is no ill day's work.—Pray, may I crave your name, mynheer?

COLONEL.

Myn naem, mynheer! Myn naem is Jan Van Timtamirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell.

TRADELOVE.

Zounds, 'tis a damned long name, I shall never remember it: Mynheer Van Tim, Tim, Tim—What the devil is it?

FREEMAN.

Oh! Never heed, I know the gentleman and will pass my word for twice the sum.

TRADELOVE.

That's enough.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*) You'll hear of me sooner than you'll wish, old gentleman, I fancy.—You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman? (*Exit.*)

FREEMAN. (*Aside to the Colonel.*) Immediately.

FIRST MAN.

Humphrey Hump here?

SECOND COFFEE-BOY. Mr. Humphrey Hump is not here; you'll find him upon the Dutch walk.⁸¹

TRADELOVE.

Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness.

FREEMAN. (*Aside.*)

I fear you'll repent when you know all.

TRADELOVE.

Will you dine with me?

FREEMAN. I am engaged at Sackbut's; adieu. (*Exit.*)

TRADELOVE. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon Change with my news. (*Exit.*)

Scene ii. The tavern.

Enter Freeman and Colonel.

FREEMAN. Ha, ha, ha! The old fellow swallowed the bait as greedily as a gudgeon.

COLONEL. I have him, faith, ha, ha, ha. His two thousand pound's secure—if he would keep his money, he must part with the lady, ha, ha. What came of your two friends? They performed their part very well; you should have brought 'em to take a glass with us.

FREEMAN.

No matter, we'll drink a bottle together another time. I did not care to bring them hither; there's no necessity to trust them with the main secret, you know, Colonel.

COLONEL.

Nay, that's right, Freeman.

⁸¹ Dutch walk] meeting place for Dutch merchants in the courtyard of the Royal Exchange.

Enter Sackbut.

SACKBUT.

Joy, joy, Colonel, the luckiest accident in the world!

COLONEL.

What say'st thou?

SACKBUT.

This letter does your business. 15

COLONEL. (*Reads.*)

"To Obadiah Prim, hosier, near the building called
the Monument, in London."

FREEMAN.

A letter to Prim; how came you by it?

SACKBUT.

Looking over the letters our post-woman brought,
as I always do, to see what letters are directed to 20
my house (for she can't read; you must know), I
spied this to Prim, so paid for't⁸² among the rest;
I have given the old jade a pint of wine on purpose
to delay time; till you see if the letter will be of
any service; then I'll seal it up again and tell her: I 25
took it by mistake; I have read it and fancy you'll
like the project—read, read, Colonel.

COLONEL. (*Reads.*)

"Friend Prim; There is arrived from Pennsylvania
one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful, who hath
sojourned with us eleven days and hath been of 30
great comfort to the brethren. He intendeth for the
quarterly meeting in London; I have recom-
mended him to thy house; I pray thee intreat him
kindly and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of
weakly constitution. He will depart from us the 35
third day;⁸³ which is all from thy Friend in the
faith, Aminidab Holdfast." Ha, ha! Excellent! I
understand you, landlord, I am to personate this
Simon Pure, am I not?

SACKBUT.

Don't you like the hint? 40

COLONEL.

Admirably well!

FREEMAN.

'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right
Simon gets not there before you.

COLONEL.

No, no, the Quakers never ride post; he can't be
here before tomorrow at soonest. Do you send and 45
buy me a Quaker's dress, Mr. Sackbut; and
suppose, Freeman, you should wait at the Bristol
coach, that if you see any such person, you might
contrive to give me notice.

FREEMAN.

I will.—The country dress and boots, are they 50
ready?

SACKBUT.

Yes, yes, everything, sir.

FREEMAN.

Bring 'em in then. (*Exit Sackbut.*) Thou must dis-
patch Periwinkle first. Remember his uncle, Sir Toby
Periwinkle, is an old bachelor of seventy-five; that he 55
has seven hundred a year, most in abbey land;⁸⁴ that
he was once in love with your mother, and shrewdly
suspected by some to be your father; that you have
been thirty years his steward, and ten years his
gentleman—remember to improve these hints. 60

COLONEL.

Never fear, let me alone for that—but what's the
steward's name?

FREEMAN.

His name is Pillage.

COLONEL.

Enough. (*Enter Sackbut with clothes.*) Now for the
country put.⁸⁵ (*Dresses.*) 65

FREEMAN.

Egad, landlord, thou deservest to have the first
night's lodging with the lady for thy fidelity. What
say you, Colonel, shall we settle a club here, you'll
make one? 70

COLONEL.

Make one? I'll bring a set of honest officers that
will spend their money as freely to their King's
health as they would their blood in his service.

⁸² paid for't] Postage at the time was paid by the recipient.

⁸³ third day] Tuesday; Quakers designated the days of the week in this way to avoid the conventional designations derived from the names of the pagan gods.

⁸⁴ abbey land] part of the estate of an abbey before the dissolution of the monasteries at the Reformation

⁸⁵ country put] bumpkin

SACKBUT.

I thank you, Colonel. (*Bell rings.*) Here, here. (*Exit Sackbut.*)

COLONEL.

So now for my boots. (*Puts on boots.*) Shall I find you here, Freeman, when I come back?

FREEMAN.

Yes, or I'll leave word with Sackbut where he may send for me. Have you the writings? the will, and everything?

COLONEL.

All, all!

Enter Sackbut.

SACKBUT.

Zounds! Mr. Freeman! Yonder is Tradelove in the damnedest passion in the world. He swears you are in the house—he says you told him you was to dine here.

FREEMAN.

I did so. Ha, ha, ha! He has found himself bit already.

COLONEL.

The devil! He must not see me in this dress.

SACKBUT.

I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet.

FREEMAN.

Very well.—Make you haste out, Colonel, and let me alone to deal with him. Where is he?

SACKBUT.

In the King's Head.

COLONEL.

You remember what I told you?

FREEMAN.

Aye, aye, very well.—Landlord, let him know I am come in.—And now, Mr. Pillage, success attend you.

Exit Sackbut.

COLONEL.

Mr. Proteus, rather.

From changing shape and imitating Jove,

I draw the happy omens of my love.

I'm not the first young brother of the blade.

Who made his fortune in a masquerade. (*Exit Colonel.*)

Enter Tradelove.

FREEMAN.

Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit it seems.

TRADELOVE.

Bit do you call it, Mr. Freeman; I am ruined. Pox on your news.

FREEMAN.

Pox on the rascal that sent it me.

TRADELOVE.

Sent it you! Why Gabriel Skinflint has been at the minister's and spoke with him, and he has assured him 'tis every syllable false; he received no such express.

FREEMAN.

I know it. I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter. Some roguish stockjobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money; that's certain. I wish I knew who he was; I'd make him repent it—I have lost three hundred pounds by it.

TRADELOVE.

What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with the cursed long name, besides the stock I bought. The devil! I could tear my flesh. I must never show my face upon Change more, for, by my soul, I can't pay it.

FREEMAN.

I am heartily sorry for't! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the Dutch merchant and try to get you time for the payment?

TRADELOVE.

Time! Adsheart! I shall never be able to look up again.

FREEMAN.

I am very much concerned that I was the occasion and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortune; for my own, I value it not.—Adso! A thought comes into my head, that well improved, may be of service.

TRADELOVE.

Ah! There's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money or running away.

FREEMAN.

How do you know? What do you think of my proposing Mrs. Lovely to him? He is a single man,

and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman. Nay, more than that, he said somebody told him, you had a pretty ward. He wished you had bet her instead of your money.

135

TRADELOVE.

Aye, but he'd be hanged before he'd take her instead of the money: the Dutch are too covetous for that. Besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

140

FREEMAN.

So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll but forgive you the wager. It is not your business to tell him that your consent will signify nothing.

145

TRADELOVE.

That's right, as you say, but will he do it, think you?

FREEMAN.

I can't tell that, but I'll try what I can do with him. He has promised me to meet me here an hour hence; I'll feel his pulse and let you know. If I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what measures you please.

150

TRADELOVE.

You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her and that she can't marry without my consent and that I am a covetous rogue and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

155

FREEMAN.

Aye, aye, let me alone for a lie at a pinch.

TRADELOVE.

Egad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Freeman, I'll make you whole again; I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost, with all my soul.

160

FREEMAN.

Well, I'll use my best endeavors. Where will you be?

TRADELOVE.

At home. Pray Heaven you prosper. If I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it. Who the devil would be a guardian, If when cash runs low, our coffers t'enlarge, We can't, like other stocks, transfer our charge?

165

(Exit.)

FREEMAN.

Ha, ha, ha! He has it. (Exit.)

Scene iii. Periwinkle's house.

Enter Periwinkle on one side and footman on the other.

FOOTMAN.

A gentleman from Coventry inquires for you, sir. PERIWINKLE.

From my uncle, I warrant you, bring him up. [Exit footman.] This will save me the trouble, as well as the expenses of a journey.

Enter Colonel.

COLONEL.

Is your name Periwinkle, sir?

5

PERIWINKLE.

It is, sir.

COLONEL.

I am sorry for the message I bring. My old master, whom I served these forty years, claims the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master. (Weeps.)

10

PERIWINKLE.

By this I understand, sir, my uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

COLONEL.

He is, sir, and he has left you heir to seven hundred a year in as good abbey land as ever paid Peter's pence to Rome. I wish you long to enjoy it, but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor. (Weeps.) Ah! He was a good man—he has not left many of his fellows—the poor laments him sorely.

15

PERIWINKLE.

I pray, sir, what office bore you?

20

COLONEL.

I was his steward, sir.

PERIWINKLE.

I have heard him mention you with much respect; your name is—

COLONEL.

Pillage, sir.

PERIWINKLE.

Aye, Pillage! I do remember he called you Pillage. Pray, Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die?

25

COLONEL.

Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he signed this will and gave it into my hands and strictly charged me to leave Coventry the moment

he expired and deliver it to you with what speed I
could. I have obeyed him, sir, and there is the will.
(*Gives it to Periwinkle.*)

PERIWINKLE.

'Tis very well, I'll lodge it in the Commons.*

COLONEL.

There are two things which he forgot to insert, but
charged me to tell you, that he desired you'd
perform them as readily as if you had found them
written in the will, which is to remove his corpse
and bury him by his father in St. Paul's, Covent
Garden,* and to give all his servants mourning.

PERIWINKLE. (*Aside.*)

That will be a considerable charge; a pox of all
modern fashions.—Well! It shall be done, Mr.
Pillage; I will agree with one of death's fashion-
mongers, called an undertaker, to go down and
bring up the body.

COLONEL.

I hope, sir, I shall have the honor to serve you in
the same station I did your worthy uncle; I have not
many years to stay behind him and would gladly
spend them in the family where I was brought up.
(*Weeps.*) He was a kind and tender master to me.

PERIWINKLE.

Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage; you shall hold your
place and everything else which you held under my
uncle. You make me weep to see you so concerned.
(*Weeps.*) He lived to a good old age—and we are
all mortal.

COLONEL.

We are so, sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign
this lease. You'll find Sir Toby has ta'en particular
notice of it in his will. I could not get it time
enough from the lawyer, or he had signed it before
he died. (*Gives him a paper.*)

PERIWINKLE.

A lease for what?

COLONEL.

I rented a hundred a year of Sir Toby upon lease,
which lease expires at Lady Day next, and I desire
to renew it for twenty years—that's all, sir.

PERIWINKLE.

Let me see. (*Looks over the lease.*)

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

Matters go swimmingly, if nothing intervene.

PERIWINKLE.

Very well. Let's see what he says in his will about
it. (*Lays the lease upon the table and looks on the
will.*)

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

He's very wary, yet I fancy I shall be too cunning
for him.

PERIWINKLE.

Ho, here it is.—"The farm lying—now in
possession of Samuel Pillage—suffer him to renew
his lease—at the same rent."—Very well, Mr.
Pillage. I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll
perform his will. Give me the lease. (*Colonel gives
it him; he looks upon it and lays it upon the table.*)

Pray you step to the door and call for a pen and
ink, Mr. Pillage.

COLONEL.

I have pen and ink in my pocket, sir. (*Pulls out an
inkhorn.*) I never go without that.

PERIWINKLE.

I think it belongs to your profession. (*He looks upon
the pen while the Colonel changes the lease and lays
down the contract.*) I doubt this is but a sorry pen,
though it may serve to write my name. (*Writes.*)

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

Little does he think what he signs.

PERIWINKLE.

There is your lease, Mr. Pillage. (*Gives him the
paper.*) Now I must desire you to make what haste
you can down to Coventry and take care of
everything, and I'll send down the undertaker for
the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charge
you are at, I will repay you.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

You have paid me already, I thank you, sir.

PERIWINKLE.

Will you dine with me?

COLONEL.

I would rather not; there are some of my neighbors
which I met as I came along, who leaves the town
this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad
of their company down.

PERIWINKLE.

Well, well, I won't detain you.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

I don't care how soon I am out.

PERIWINKLE.

I will give orders about mourning. 100

COLONEL. [*Aside.*]

You will have cause to mourn, when you know
your estate imaginarily only.

You'll find your hopes and cares alike are vain,

In spite of all the caution you have ta'en,

Fortune rewards the faithful lover's pain. (*Exit.*) 105

PERIWINKLE.

Seven hundred a year! I wish he had died seventeen
years ago. What a valuable collection of rarities

might I have had by this time? I might have traveled
over all the known parts of the globe and made my

own closet rival the Vatican at Rome. Odso, I have 110

a good mind to begin my travels now—let me see—

I am but sixty! My father, grandfather, and great-
grandfather reached ninety-odd; I have almost forty

years good. Let me consider! What will seven

hundred a year amount to—in—aye! in thirty years, 115

I'll say but thirty—thirty times seven, is seven times

thirty—that is—just twenty-one thousand

pound—'tis a great deal of money—I may very well

reserve sixteen hundred of it for a collection of such
rarities as will make my name famous to posterity. I 120

would not die like other mortals, forgotten in a year

or two, as my uncle will be. No.

With nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,

That men, till doomsday, may repeat my name.

(*Exit.*)

Scene iv. A tavern.

Freeman and Tradelove over a bottle.

TRADELOVE.

Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan Van Tim,
Tam, Tam—I shall never think of that Dutchman's

name.

FREEMAN.

Mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelireletta Heer Van
Fainwell. 5

TRADELOVE.

Aye, Heer Van Fainwell, I never heard such a
confounded name in life—here's his health, I say.

(*Drinks.*)

FREEMAN.

With all my heart.

TRADELOVE.

Faith, I never expected to have found so generous 10
a thing in a Dutchman.

FREEMAN.

Oh, he has nothing of the Hollander in his
temper—except an antipathy to monarchy.⁸⁶ As

soon as I told him your circumstances, he replied he 15
would not be the ruin of any man for the world and

immediately made this proposal himself. Let him

take what time he will for the payment, said he, or
if he'll give me his ward, I'll forgive him the debt.

TRADELOVE.

Well, Mr. Freeman, I can but thank you. Egad, you
have made a man of me again, and if ever I lay a 20

wager more, may I rot in a gaol.

FREEMAN.

I assure you, Mr. Tradelove, I was very much
concerned because I was the occasion—though

very innocently, I protest.

TRADELOVE.

I dare swear you was, Mr. Freeman. 25

Enter a fiddler.

FIDDLER.

Please to have a lesson of music or a song,
gentlemen?

FREEMAN.

A song, aye, with all our hearts. Have you ever a
merry one?

FIDDLER.

Yes, sir, my wife and I can give you a merry 30
dialogue.

Here is the song.

TRADELOVE.

'Tis very pretty, faith.

FREEMAN.

There's something for you to drink, friend; go, lose
no time.

FIDDLER.

I thank you, sir. (*Exit.*) 35

*Enter drawer and Colonel, dressed for the Dutch
merchant.*

⁸⁶ antipathy to monarchy] Holland was a republic.

COLONEL.

Hah, Mynheer Tradelove, Ik ben sorry voor your troubles, maer Ik sal you easie maerken, Ik wil de gelt niet hebben.

TRADELOVE.

I shall forever acknowledge the obligation, sir.

FREEMAN.

But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove: Mrs. Lovely.

COLONEL.

Ya, de juffrow sal al te regt setten, mynheer.

TRADELOVE.

With all my heart, mynheer, you shall have my consent to marry her freely.

FREEMAN.

Well then, as I am a party concerned between you, Mynheer Jan Van Timtamirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand, and you shall give him your consent to marry Mrs. Lovely under yours; that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

COLONEL.

Ya, waeragtig.

TRADELOVE.

Aye, aye, so it is, Mr. Freeman, I'll give it under mine this minute. *(Sits down to write.)*

COLONEL.

And so sal Ik. *(Sits down to write.)*

FREEMAN.

So, ho, the house. *(Enter drawer.)* Bid your master come up. *[Exit drawer.] (Aside.)* I'll see there be witnesses enough to the bargain.

Enter Sackbut.

SACKBUT.

Do you call, gentlemen?

FREEMAN.

Aye, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here.

TRADELOVE.

There, mynheer, there's my consent as amply as you can desire, but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it; I have left a blank for it. *(Gives the Colonel a paper.)*

COLONEL.

Ya, Ik sal dat well doen.

FREEMAN.

Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. *(They write.)*

COLONEL.

Daer, Mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge. *(Gives him a paper.)*

TRADELOVE.

Be pleased to witness this receipt too, gentlemen.

Freeman and Sackbut put their hands.

FREEMAN.

Aye, aye, that we will.

COLONEL.

Well, mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most mynvoorspraak to de juffrow syn.

FREEMAN.

He means you must recommend him to the lady.

TRADELOVE.

That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

COLONEL.

Wat, voor den duyvel, heb you meer guardians?

TRADELOVE.

Only three, mynheer.

COLONEL.

Wat donder heb ye myn betrocken, mynheer? Had Ik that gewoeten, Ik soude eaven met you geweest syn.

SACKBUT.

But Mr. Tradelove is the principal, and he can do a great deal with the rest, sir.

FREEMAN.

And he shall use his interest I promise you, mynheer.

TRADELOVE.

I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, mynheer, and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

COLONEL.

Well, dat is waer. Maer ye must first spreken of myn to de juffrow and to de oudere gentlemen.

FREEMAN.

Aye, that's the best way, and then I and the Heer Van Fainwell will meet you there.

TRADELOVE.

I will go this moment, upon honor. Your most

obedient humble servant.—My speaking will do you little good, mynheer, ha, ha. We have bit you, faith, ha, ha. My debt's discharged, and for the man, 95
He's my consent—to get her if he can. (*Exit.*)

COLONEL.

Ha, ha, ha, this was a masterpiece of contrivance, Freeman.

FREEMAN.

He hugs himself with his supposed good fortune and little thinks the luck's of our side, but come, 100
pursue the fickle goddess while she's in the mood. Now for the Quaker.

COLONEL.

That's the hardest task.

Of all the counterfeits performed by man,
A soldier makes the simplest Puritan. (*Exit.*) 105

Act V, scene i. Prim's house.

Enter Mrs. Prim and Mrs. Lovely in Quaker's dress, meeting.

MRS. PRIM.

So, now I like thee, Anne. Art thou not better without thy monstrous hoop coat⁸⁷ and patches! If Heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, would it not fright thee, Anne?

MRS. LOVELY.

If it should turn your inside outward and show all 5
the spots of your hypocrisy, 'twould fright me worse.

MRS. PRIM.

My hypocrisy! I scorn thy words, Anne. I lay no baits.

MRS. LOVELY.

If you did, you'd catch no fish. 10

MRS. PRIM.

Well, well, make thy jests, but I'd have thee to know, Anne, that I could have caught as many fish (as thou call'st them) in my time, as ever thou didst with all thy fool-traps about thee. If admirers be thy aim, thou wilt have more of them in this dress than thy 15
other. The men, take my word for't, are most desirous to see what we are most careful to conceal.

MRS. LOVELY.

Is that the reason for your formality, Mrs. Prim? Truth will out. I ever thought, indeed, there was more design than godliness in the pinched cap. 20

MRS. PRIM.

Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays and filthy romances, good for nothing but to lead youth into the high road of fornication. Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked ones.

MRS. LOVELY.

Too familiar with the wicked ones! Pray, no more of those freedoms, madam. I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself. How dare you talk thus to me! You, you, you unworthy woman! you. (*Bursts into tears.*) 25

Enter Tradelove.

TRADELOVE.

What, in tears, Nancy? What have you done to her, 30
Mrs. Prim, to make her weep?

MRS. LOVELY.

Done to me! I admire I keep my senses among you. But I will rid myself of your tyranny, if there be either law or justice to be had; I'll force you to give me up my liberty. 35

MRS. PRIM.

Thou hast more need to weep for thy sins, Anne—yea, for thy manifold sins.

MRS. LOVELY.

Don't think that I'll be still the fool which you have made me. No, I'll wear what I please, go when and where I please, and keep what company I think 40
fit and not what you shall direct—I will.

TRADELOVE.

For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, Mrs. Lovely—'tis fit you should have your liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

Enter Mr. Periwinkle and Obadiah Prim, with a letter in his hand.

PERIWINKLE.

I have bought some black stockings of your husband, Mrs. Prim, but he tells me the glover's trade belongs to you; therefore, I pray you look me out five or six dozen of mourning gloves, such as are given at funerals, and send them to my house. 45

⁸⁷ hoop coat] hooped petticoat

OBADIAH PRIM. My friend Periwinkle has got a good windfall today—seven hundred a year.

MRS. PRIM. I wish thee joy of it, neighbor.

TRADELOVE. What, is Sir Toby dead then?

PERIWINKLE. He is!—You'll take care, Mrs. Prim?

MRS. PRIM. Yea, I will, neighbor.

OBADIAH PRIM. This letter recommendeth a speaker,⁸⁸ 'tis from Aminidab Holdfast of Bristol. Peradventure, he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception. (*Gives her the letter.*)

MRS. PRIM. I will obey thee. (*Exit.*)

OBADIAH PRIM. What art thou in the dumps for, Anne?

TRADELOVE. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.

OBADIAH PRIM. Why truly, if we could find a husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou wouldst, neighbor.

PERIWINKLE. Well said, there are but few worth having.

TRADELOVE. I can recommend you a man now, that I think you can none of you have an objection to!

Enter Sir Philip Modelove.

PERIWINKLE. You recommend! Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the husband.

SIR PHILIP. What, must it be a whale or a rhinoceros, Mr. Periwinkle? Ha, ha, ha!—Mr. Tradelove, I have a bill* upon you (*Gives him a paper.*) and have been seeking for you all over the town.

TRADELOVE. I'll accept it, Sir Philip; and pay it when due.

⁸⁸ speaker] minister.

PERIWINKLE.

He shall be none of the fops at your end of the town, with full perukes and empty skulls, nor yet none of your trading gentry, who puzzle the heralds to find arms for their coaches. No, he shall be a man famous for travels, solidity, and curiosity, one who has searched into the profundity of nature. When Heaven shall direct such a one, he shall have my consent, because it may turn to the benefit of mankind.

MRS. LOVELY. The benefit of mankind! What, would you anatomize me?

SIR PHILIP. Aye, aye, madam, he would dissect you.

TRADELOVE. Or pore over you through a microscope to see how your blood circulates from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot, ha, ha! But I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune, one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

MRS. LOVELY. And would send me for a venture perhaps.

TRADELOVE. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—a Dutch merchant, my girl!

SIR PHILIP. A Dutchman! Ha, ha, there's a husband for a fine lady—Ya, juffrow, will you met myn slapeñ? Ha, ha! He'll learn you to talk the language of the hogs, madam, ha, ha.

TRADELOVE. He'll learn you that one merchant is of more service to a nation than fifty coxcombs. The Dutch know the trading interest to be of more benefit to the state than the landed.

SIR PHILIP. But what is either interest to a lady?

TRADELOVE. 'Tis the merchant makes the belle. How would the ladies sparkle in the box without the merchant? The Indian diamonds! The French brocade! The Italian fan! The Flanders* lace! The fine Dutch holland! How would they vent their scandal over their tea tables? And where would you beaus have champagne to toast your mistresses, were it not for the merchant?

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Verily, neighbor Tradelove, thou dost waste thy
 breath about nothing. All that thou hast said
 tendeth only to debauch youth and fill their heads
 with the pride and luxury of this world. The
 merchant is a very great friend to Satan and
 sendeth as many to his dominions as the pope.

PERIWINKLE.
 Right, I say knowledge makes the man.

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Yea, but not thy kind of knowledge—it is the
 knowledge of Truth. Search thou for the light
 within and not for baubles, Friend.

MRS. LOVELY.
 Ah, study your country's good, Mr. Periwinkle, and
 not her insects. Rid you of your homebred
 monsters before you fetch any from abroad. I dare
 swear you have maggots enough in your own brain
 to stock all the virtuosos in Europe with butterflies.

SIR PHILIP.
 By my soul, Miss Nancy's a wit.

OBADIAH PRIM.
 That is more than she can say by thee, Friend. Look
 ye, it is in vain to talk; when I meet a man worthy of
 her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

MRS. LOVELY.
 Provided he be one of the faithful! *(Aside.)* Was
 there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the
 hopes of a woman!—Know this, that you contend
 in vain: I'll have no husband of your choosing, nor
 shall you lord it over me long. I'll try the power
 of an English senate: Orphans have been redressed
 and wills set aside, and none did ever deserve their
 pity more.—Oh Fainwell! Where are thy promises
 to free me from these vermin? Alas! The task was
 more difficult than he imagined! A harder task than
 what the poets tell.
 Of yore, the fair Andromeda befell;
 She but one monster feared, I've four to fear,
 And see no Perseus, no deliverer near. *(Exit.)*

Enter servant and whispers to Prim.

SERVANT.
 One Simon Pure inquireth for thee.

PERIWINKLE.
 The woman is mad. *(Exit.)*

SIR PHILIP.
 So are you all, in my opinion. *(Exit.)*

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.

TRADELOVE.
 Oh, I shan't trouble you.—Pox take him for an
 unmannerly dog.—However, I have kept my word
 with my Dutchman, and will introduce him too
 for all you. *(Exit.)*

Enter Colonel in a Quaker's habit.

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Friend Pure, thou art welcome. How is it with
 Friend Holdfast and all Friends in Bristol? Timothy
 Littlewit, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher
 Keepfaith?

COLONEL. *(Aside.)*
 A goodly company!—They are all in health, I
 thank thee for them.

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Friend Holdfast writes me word that thou camest
 lately from Pennsylvania. How do all Friends there?

COLONEL. *(Aside.)*
 What the devil shall I say? I know just as much of
 Pennsylvania as I do of Bristol.

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Do they thrive?

COLONEL.
 Yea, Friend, the blessing of their good works fall
 upon them.

Enter Mrs. Prim and Mrs. Lovely.

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Sarah, know our Friend Pure.

MRS. PRIM.
 Thou art welcome.

He salutes her.*

COLONEL. *(Aside.)*
 Here comes the sum of all my wishes. How
 charming she appears, even in that disguise.

OBADIAH PRIM.
 Why dost thou consider the maiden so
 intently,⁸⁹ Friend?

⁸⁹ intently] earnestly; intently

COLONEL.
I will tell thee: About four days ago I saw a vision—this very maiden, but in vain attire, standing on a precipice—and heard a voice, which called me by my name and bade me put forth my hand and save her from the pit: I did so, and methought the damsel grew to my side.

MRS. PRIM.
What can that portend?

OBADIAH PRIM.
The damsel's conversion, I am persuaded.

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside.*)
That's false, I'm sure.

OBADIAH PRIM.
Wilt thou use the means, Friend Pure?

COLONEL.
Means! What means? Is she not thy daughter and already one of the faithful?

MRS. PRIM.
No, alas! She's one of the ungodly.

OBADIAH PRIM.
Pray thee mind what this good man will say unto thee; he will teach thee the way that thou shouldst walk, Anne.

MRS. LOVELY.
I know my way without his instructions. I hoped to have been quiet, when once I had put on your odious formality here.

COLONEL.
Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, Friend?

MRS. LOVELY.
Thou art in the right of it, Friend.

MRS. PRIM.
Art not thou ashamed to mimic the good man?

Ah! Thou art a stubborn girl.

COLONEL.
Mind her not; she hurteth not me. If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her that may, perchance, soften her stubbornness and melt her into compliance.

OBADIAH PRIM.
Content, I pray thee put it home to her. Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.

MRS. LOVELY. (*Catching hold of Prim; he breaks loose and exits [with Mrs. Prim].*)

What do you mean—to leave me with this old enthusiastical⁹⁰ canter? Don't think, because I complied with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.

COLONEL.
I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.

MRS. LOVELY.
I pray thee, walk after thy leader; you will but lose your labor upon me.—These wretches will certainly make me mad.

COLONEL.
I am of another opinion; the spirit telleth me that I shall convert thee, Anne.

MRS. LOVELY.
'Tis a lying spirit; don't believe it.

COLONEL.
Say'st thou so? Why, then thou shalt convert me, my angel. (*Catching her in his arms.*)

MRS. LOVELY. (*Shrieks.*)
Ah! Monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.

COLONEL.
Hush! For Heaven's sake—dost thou know me? I am Fainwell.

MRS. LOVELY.
Fainwell! (*Enter old Prim. [Mrs. Lovely says] aside.*)
Oh I'm undone, Prim here. I wish with all my soul I had been dumb!

OBADIAH PRIM.
What is the matter? Why didst thou shriek out, Anne?

MRS. LOVELY.
Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry murder, thieves, or anything to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.

OBADIAH PRIM.
Was that all? Fie, fie, Anne.

COLONEL.
No matter, I'll bring down her stomach, I'll warrant thee—leave us, I pray thee.

OBADIAH PRIM.
Fare thee well. (*Exit.*)

COLONEL. (*Embraces her.*)
My charming, lovely woman:

⁹⁰ enthusiastical] having the quality of religious fanaticism

MRS. LOVELY.

What means thou by this disguise, Fainwell?

COLONEL.

To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.

MRS. LOVELY.

Make me mistress of my fortune and make thy
own conditions. 235

COLONEL.

This night shall answer all thy wishes. See here, I
have the consent of three of thy guardians already
and doubt not but Prim shall make the fourth.

Prim listening.

OBADIAH PRIM. (*Aside.*)

I would gladly hear what argument the good man
useth to bend her. 240

MRS. LOVELY.

Thy words give me new life, methinks.

OBADIAH PRIM.

What do I hear?

MRS. LOVELY.

Thou best of men, Heaven meant to bless me sure,
when first I saw thee. 245

OBADIAH PRIM.

He hath mollified her. Oh wonderful conversion!

COLONEL.

Hah! Prim listening.—No more, my love, we are
observed; seem to be edified and give 'em hopes
that thou wilt turn Quaker, and leave the rest to
me. (*Aloud.*) I am glad to find that thou art
touched with what I said unto thee, Anne; another
time I will explain the other article to thee; in the
meanwhile, be thou dutiful to our Friend Prim. 250

MRS. LOVELY.

I shall obey thee in everything.

Enter old Prim.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Oh what a prodigious change is here! Thou hast
wrought a miracle, Friend! Anne, how dost thou
like the doctrine he hath preached? 255

MRS. LOVELY.

So well, that I could talk to him forever, methinks.
I am ashamed of my former folly and ask your
pardon, Mr. Prim. 260

COLONEL.

Enough, enough that thou art sorry; he is no pope,
Anne.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, Friend! Will
it please thee to walk into the next room and refresh
thyself? Come, take the maiden by the hand. 265

COLONEL.

We will follow thee.

Enter servant.

SERVANT.

There is another Simon Pure inquireth for thee,
master.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

The devil there is.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Another Simon Pure? I do not know him! Is he
any relation of thine? 270

COLONEL.

No, Friend, I know him not. (*Aside.*) Pox take him,
I wish he were in Pennsylvania again, with all my
blood.

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside.*)

What shall I do? 275

OBADIAH PRIM.

Bring him up.

COLONEL. [*Aside.*]

Humph! Then one of us must go down, that's
certain. Now Impudence assist me.

Enter Simon Pure.

OBADIAH PRIM.

What is thy will with me, Friend?

SIMON PURE.

Didst thou not receive a letter from Aminidab
Holdfast of Bristol concerning one Simon Pure? 280

OBADIAH PRIM.

Yea, and Simon Pure is already here, Friend.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

And Simon Pure will stay here, Friend, if possible.

SIMON PURE.

That's an untruth, for I am he.

COLONEL.

Take thou heed, Friend; what thou dost say; I do
affirm that I am Simon Pure. 285

SIMON PURE.

Thy name may be Pure, Friend, but not that Pure.

COLONEL.

Yea, that Pure which my good Friend Aminidab Holdfast wrote to my Friend Prim about, the same Simon Pure that came from Pennsylvania and sojourned in Bristol eleven days. Thou wouldst not take my name from me, wouldst thou? (*Aside.*) Till I have done with it.

SIMON PURE.

Thy name! I am astonished.

COLONEL.

At what? at thy own assurance? (*Going up to him; Simon Pure starts back.*)

SIMON PURE.

Avaunt, Sathan, approach me not; I defy thee, and all thy works.⁹¹

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside.*)

Oh, he'll outcant him. Undone, undone forever.

COLONEL.

Hark thee, Friend, thy sham will not take. Don't exert thy voice; thou art too well acquainted with Sathan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate. What can thy design be here?

Enter servant and gives Prim a letter.

OBADIAH PRIM.

One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

COLONEL. (*Aside.*)

What can that letter be?

SIMON PURE.

Thou must be the devil, Friend, that's certain, for no human power can stock so great a falsehood.

OBADIAH PRIM.

This letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that prince of darkness than any here. Read that, I pray thee, Simon. (*Gives it the Colonel.*)

COLONEL. [*Aside.*]

'Tis Freeman's hand. (*Reads.*) "There is a design formed to rob your house this night and cut your throat, and for that purpose there is a man disguised like a Quaker, who is to pass for one

Simon Pure; the gang whereof I am one; though now resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol; one of them came up in the coach with the Quaker, whose name he hath taken, and from what he gathered from him, formed that design, and did not doubt but he should impose so far upon you as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure and keep him with you. Make the right use of this. Adieu." (*Aside.*) Excellent well!

OBADIAH PRIM. (*To Simon Pure.*)

Dost thou hear this?

SIMON PURE.

Yea, but it moveth me not; that, doubtless, is the impostor. (*Pointing at the Colonel.*)

COLONEL.

Ah! Thou wicked one—now I consider thy face I remember thou didst come up in the leathern convenience⁹² with me—thou hadst a black bob wig on, and a brown camblet⁹³ coat with brass buttons. Canst thou deny it, hah?

SIMON PURE.

Yea, I can, and with a safe conscience too, Friend.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Verily, Friend, thou art the most impudent villain I ever saw.

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside.*)

Nay then, I'll have a fling at him too.—I remember the face of this fellow at Bath. Aye, this is he that picked my Lady Raffle's pocket upon the Grove.⁹⁴ Don't you remember that the mob pumped⁹⁵ you, Friend? This is the most notorious rogue.

SIMON PURE.

What doth provoke thee to seek my life? Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

OBADIAH PRIM.

She will do thee no hurt, nor thou shalt do me none; therefore, get thee about thy business, Friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou may'st not come off so favorably everywhere.

⁹² leathern convenience] Quaker for coach

⁹³ camblet] a light cloth of mixed silk and wool

⁹⁴ the Grove] the Orange Grove, a public walk planted with trees named for a column honoring William of Orange

⁹⁵ pumped] put under a stream of water from a pump, for punishment

⁹¹ Sathan ... works] formulaic rejection of Satan, using an archaic spelling

COLONEL.
Go, Friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy fate
no more.

SIMON PURE.
Yea, I will go, but it shall be to thy confusion; for
I shall clear myself. I will return with some proofs
that shall convince thee, Obadiah, that thou art
highly imposed upon: *(Exit.)*

COLONEL. *(Aside.)*
Then here will be no staying for me, that's certain.
What the devil shall I do?

OBADIAH PRIM.
What monstrous works of iniquity are there in this
world, Simon!

COLONEL.
Yea, the age is full of vice. *(Aside.)* 'Zdeath, I am
so confounded, I know not what to say.

OBADIAH PRIM.
Thou art disordered, Friend—art thou not well?

COLONEL.
My spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth
me, that though I have wrought a good work in
converting this maiden, this tender maiden, yet my
labor will be in vain; for the evil spirit fighteth
against her, and I see, yea I see with the eyes of
my inward man, that Sathan will rebuffet her
again, whenever I withdraw myself from her, and
she will, yea this very damsel will return again to
that abomination from whence I have retrieved
her, as if it were, yea, as if it were out of the jaws
of the Fiend—hum—

OBADIAH PRIM.
Good lack! Thinkest thou so?

MRS. LOVELY. *(Aside.)*
I must second him.—What meaneth this
struggling within me? I feel the spirit resisting the
vanities of this world, but the flesh is rebellious,
yea the flesh—I greatly fear the flesh and the
weakness thereof—hum—

OBADIAH PRIM.
The maid is inspired.

COLONEL.
Behold, her light begins to shine forth. *(Aside.)*
Excellent woman!

MRS. LOVELY.
This good man hath spoken comfort unto me, yea

comfort, I say; because the words which he hath
breathed into my outward ears are gone through
and fixed in mine heart, yea verily in mine heart,
I say—and I feel the spirit doth love him
exceedingly, hum—

COLONEL. *(Aside.)*
She acts it to the life.

OBADIAH PRIM.
Prodigious! The damsel is filled with the spirit,
Sarah!

Enter Mrs. Prim.

MRS. PRIM.
I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change in our
beloved Anne. I came to tell thee that supper
stayeth for thee.

COLONEL.
I am not disposed for thy food—my spirit longeth
for more delicious meat; fain would I redeem this
maiden from the tribe of sinners and break those
cords asunder wherewith she is bound—hum—

MRS. LOVELY.
Something whispers in my ears, methinks, that I
must be subject to the will of this good man and
from him only must hope for consolation—
hum—it also telleth me that I am a chosen vessel
to raise up seed to the faithful and that thou must
consent that we two be one flesh according to the
Word—hum—

OBADIAH PRIM.
What a Revelation is here? This is certainly part
of thy vision, Friend; this is the maiden's growing
to thy side. Ah! With what willingness should I
give thee my consent, could I give thee her fortune
too, but thou wilt never get the consent of the
wicked ones.

COLONEL. *(Aside.)*
I wish I was as sure of yours.

OBADIAH PRIM.
My soul rejoiceth, yea, it rejoiceth, I say, to find
the spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth thee with
natural agitation—yea, with natural agitation, I say
again, and stirreth up the seeds of thy virgin
inclination towards this good man—yea, it stirreth,
as one may say—yea verily, I say it stirreth up thy
inclination—yea, as one would stir a pudding.

MRS. LOVELY. I see, I see! The spirit guiding of thy hand; good
Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art signing thy
consent, and now I see myself within thy arms, my
Friend and Brother, yea, I am become bone of thy
bone and flesh of thy flesh. (*Embraces him.*) Hum—

COLONEL. (*Aside.*) Admirably performed.—And I will take thee in all
spiritual love for an helpmeet, yea, for the wife of my
bosom—and now, methinks—I feel a longing—
yea, a longing, I say, for the consummation of thy
love, hum—yea, I do long exceedingly.

MRS. LOVELY. And verily, verily my spirit feeleth the same
longing.

MRS. PRIM. The spirit hath greatly moved them both. Friend
Prim, thou must consent; there is no resisting of
the spirit.

OBADIAH PRIM. Yea, the light within showeth me that I shall fight
a good fight—and wrestle through those reprobate
fiends, thy other guardians—yea, I perceive the
spirit will hedge thee into the flock of the
righteous—Thou art a chosen Lamb—yea, a
chosen Lamb, and I will not push thee back—no,
I will not, I say—no, thou shalt leap-a, and frisk-
a, and skip-a, and bound, and bound, I say—yea,
bound within the fold of the righteous—yea, even
within thy fold, my Brother. Fetch me the pen and
ink, Sarah—and my hand shall confess its
obedience to the spirit. [*Exit Mrs. Prim.*]

COLONEL. (*Aside.*) I wish it were over.

Enter Mrs. Prim with pen and ink.

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside.*) I tremble lest this quaking rogue should return and
spoil all.

OBADIAH PRIM. Here, Friend, do thou write what the spirit
prompteth, and I will sign it.

Colonel sits down [and writes].

MRS. PRIM. Verily, Anne, it greatly rejoiceth me; to see thee

reformed from that original wickedness wherein I
found thee.

MRS. LOVELY. I do believe thou art, and I thank thee.

COLONEL. (*Reads.*) "This is to certify all whom it may concern; that I
do freely give up all my right and title in Anne
Lovely to Simon Pure, and my full consent that
she shall become his wife according to the form
of marriage. Witness my hand."

OBADIAH PRIM. That is enough—give me the pen. (*Signs it.*)

Enter Betty running to Mrs. Lovely.

BETTY. Oh! Madam, madam, here's the Quaking man
again; he has brought a coachman and two or three
more.

MRS. LOVELY. (*Aside to Colonel.*) Ruined past redemption.

COLONEL. [*Aside to her.*] No, no, one minute sooner had spoiled all, but
now—(*Going up to Prim hastily.*) Here is company
coming, Friend, give me the paper.

OBADIAH PRIM. Here it is, Simon, and I wish thee happy with the
maiden.

MRS. LOVELY. 'Tis done; and now, devil do thy worst.
Enter Simon Pure and coachman, etc.

SIMON PURE. Look thee, Friend, I have brought these people to
satisfy thee that I am not that impostor which thou
didst take me for; this is the man which did drive
the leathern conveniency that brought me from
Bristol, and this is—

COLONEL. Look ye, Friend, to save the Court the trouble of
examining witnesses, I plead guilty, ha, ha!

OBADIAH PRIM. How's this? Is not thy name Pure, then?

COLONEL. No really, sir, I only made bold with this
gentleman's name, but I here give it up safe and
sound; it has done the business which I had

occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own,
which shall be at his service upon the same
occasion at any time, ha, ha, ha!

SIMON PURE. 480

Oh! The wickedness of this age.

COACHMAN.

Then you have no farther need of us, sir. *(Exit.)*

COLONEL.

No, honest man, you may go about your business.

OBADIAH PRIM.

I am struck dumb with thy impudence, Anne;
thou hast deceived me and perchance undone
thyself. 485

MRS. PRIM.

Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will
overtake thee. *(Exit.)*

SIMON PURE.

I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled; I
will follow and console her. *(Exit.)* 490

Enter servant.

SERVANT.

Thy brother guardians inquireth for thee; there is
another man with them.

MRS. LOVELY. *(To the Colonel.)*

Who can that other man be?

COLONEL.

'Tis one Freeman, a friend of mine, whom I
ordered to bring the rest of thy guardians here. 495

Enter Sir Philip, Tradelove, Periwinkle, and Freeman.

FREEMAN. *(To the Colonel.)*

Is all safe? Did my letter do you service?

COLONEL. *(Aside [to Freeman].)*

All! All's safe; ample service.

SIR PHILIP.

Miss Nancy, how dost do, child?

MRS. LOVELY.

Don't call me miss, Friend Philip, my name is
Anne, thou knowest. 500

SIR PHILIP.

What, is the girl metamorphosed?

MRS. LOVELY.

I wish thou wert so metamorphosed. Ah! Philip,
throw off that gaudy attire and wear the clothes
becoming of thy age.

OBADIAH PRIM. *(Aside.)*

I am ashamed to see these men. 505

SIR PHILIP.

My age! The woman is possessed.

COLONEL.

No, thou art possessed rather, friend.

TRADELOVE.

Hark ye, Mrs. Lovely, one word with you. *(Takes
hold of her hand.)*

COLONEL.

This maiden is my wife, thanks to Friend Prim, and
thou hast no business with her. *(Takes her from him.)* 510

TRADELOVE.

His wife! Hark ye, Mr. Freeman—

PERIWINKLE.

Why, you have made a very fine piece of work of
it, Mr. Prim.

SIR PHILIP.

Married to a Quaker! Thou art a fine fellow to be
left guardian to an orphan, truly—there's a
husband for a young lady! 515

COLONEL.

When I have put on my beau clothes, Sir Philip,
you'll like me better.

SIR PHILIP.

Thou wilt make a very scurvy beau, Friend. 520

COLONEL.

I believe I can prove it under your hand that you
thought me a very fine gentleman in the park
today, about thirty-six minutes after eleven; will
you take a pinch, Sir Philip—out of the finest
snuffbox you ever saw. *(Offers him snuff.)* 525

SIR PHILIP.

Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoyed, faith I am, if thou be'st
that gentleman. I own I did give my consent to
the gentleman I brought here today, but if this is
he I can't be positive.

OBADIAH PRIM.

Canst thou not. Now I think thou art a fine fellow
to be left guardian to an orphan. Thou shallow-
brained shuttlecock, he may be a pickpocket for
aught thou dost know.

PERIWINKLE.

You would have been two rare fellows to have been
trusted with the sole management of her fortune,
would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Tradelove and
myself shall take care of her portion. 530

OBADIAH PRIM.

Canst thou not. Now I think thou art a fine fellow
to be left guardian to an orphan. Thou shallow-
brained shuttlecock, he may be a pickpocket for
aught thou dost know.

PERIWINKLE.

You would have been two rare fellows to have been
trusted with the sole management of her fortune,
would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Tradelove and
myself shall take care of her portion. 535

OBADIAH PRIM.

TRADELOVE.

Aye, aye, so we will. Did not you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman?

FREEMAN.

I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you have a little patience.

COLONEL.

What, is Mr. Tradelove impatient? Nay then, ik ben gereet veor you, heb ye Jan Van Timamtirelirelletta Heer Van Fainwell vergeeten?

TRADELOVE.

Oh! Pox of the name! What, have you tricked me too, Mr. Freeman?

COLONEL.

Tricked, Mr. Tradelove! Did I not give you two thousand pound for your consent fairly? And now do you tell a gentleman that he has tricked you?

PERIWINKLE.

So, so, you are a pretty guardian, faith, sell your charge. What, did you look upon her as part of your stock?

OBADIAH PRIM.

Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out however. I confess the maiden overreached me, and no sinister end at all.

PERIWINKLE.

Aye, aye, one thing or another overreached you all, but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you. Overreached, quoth'a? Why I might have been overreached too, if I had had no more wit. I don't know but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo today. Ha, ha, ha.

COLONEL.

The very same, sir.

PERIWINKLE.

Are you so, sir, but your trick would not pass upon me.

COLONEL.

No, as you say, at that time it did not, that was not my lucky hour, but hark ye, sir, I must let you into one secret—you may keep honest John Tradescant's coat on, for your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is not dead—so the charge of mourning will be saved, ha, ha! Don't you remember Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward, ha, ha, ha?

PERIWINKLE.

Not dead! I begin to fear I am tricked too.

COLONEL.

Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

PERIWINKLE.

Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead? Hah! I am sure it was a lease I signed.

COLONEL.

Aye, but it was a lease for life, sir, and of this beautiful tenement, I thank you. (*Taking hold of Mrs. Lovely.*)

OMNES.

Ha, ha, ha, neighbor's fare!⁹⁶

FREEMAN.

So then, I find you are all tricked, ha, ha!

PERIWINKLE.

I am certain I read as plain a lease as ever I read in my life.

COLONEL.

You read a lease I grant you, but you signed this contract. (*Showing a paper.*)

PERIWINKLE.

How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman, did not you tell me my uncle was dying?

FREEMAN.

And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend, ha, ha.

SIR PHILIP.

What, the learned, famous Mr. Periwinkle choused too? Ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughing, ha, ha, ha.

OBADIAH PRIM.

It had been well if her father had left her to wiser heads than thine and mine, Friend, ha, ha.

TRADELOVE.

Well, since you have outwitted us all, pray you, what and who are you, sir?

SIR PHILIP.

Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman! I am glad you have got a person, madam, who understands dress and good breeding. I was resolved she should have a husband of my choosing.

OBADIAH PRIM.

I am sorry the maiden is fallen into such hands.

⁹⁶ neighbor's fare] same fate or luck

TRADELOVE.

A beau! Nay then, she is finely helped up.

MRS. LOVELY.

Why, beaus are great encouragers of trade, sir, ha, ha!

COLONEL.

Look ye, gentlemen, I am the person who can give
the best account of myself, and I must beg Sir
Philip's pardon, when I tell him that I have as
much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding
as I have to the enemies of my religion. I have had
the honor to serve his Majesty and headed a
regiment of the bravest fellows that ever pushed
bayonet in the throat of a Frenchman, and
notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me,
whenever my country wants my aid, this sword
and arm are at her service. 605

And now, my fair, if you'll but deign to smile,
I meet a recompense for all my toil:

Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,
Force makes many a sinner, not one saint;
Still free as air the active mind does rove, 620
And searches proper objects for its love,
But that once fixed, 'tis past the power of art
To chase the dear ideas from the heart:
'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,
Makes the glad husband and the happy wife. 625

[*Exeunt.*]

FINIS.

Textual Notes

- ^a The copytext is the 1718 duodecimo, which exists in two states, with a copy in the British Library containing three press variants. This issue is designated D1a, the others D1b. When all three copies of the first edition agree, they are referred to as D1. There was another duodecimo edition (D2) in 1724, of doubtful authority. Also consulted are modern editions by Stathis (1968) and Rogers (1994).
- ^b sect] Sex D1, D2
- ^c fall] D2; falls D1
- ^d possess] D2; profess D1
- ^e come] D2; comes D1
- ^f gelt] D2; Celt D1