THE COUNTRY GIRL.

A Comedy,

The Country Girl.

Peggy. La! what a delightful place this is!

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

Costume.

MOODY.—Brown coat—waistcoat—breeches—brass buttons—top boots.
HARCOURT.—Fashionable blue suit—opera hat.
SPARKISH.—Light green coat—white waistcoat—light pantaloons—
silk stockings—shoes.
BELLVILLE.—Brown-coloured coat—white waistcoat—trowsers—
silk stockings—shoes.
ROBIN.—Kid-fashioned breeches.
SERVANTS.—Modern clothes.
PEGGY.—First dress: White muslin musk, &c. Second dress:
A suit of boy's clothes.
ALTHEA.—Modern coloured muslin dress.
LUCY.—Flowered muslin gown—upon—cap, and ribbons.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Harcourt's Lodgings.

HARCOURT and BELVILLE discovered sitting at the tablet.

HAR. Ha, ha, ha! and so you are in love, nephew—
not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but slyly and mischievously: not content to be
ankle-deep, you are over head and ears—ha! Dick?

BEL. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle,

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

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

HAR. Prithee, don't talk of pity; how can I help you?

BEL. My heart assures me that she is not married.

HAR. O, to be sure your heart is much to be relied
upon! but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling
of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you
in misfortunes as in relationship, you must know—
Bel. What, uncle?
Har. That I am in love, too.
Bel. Indeed?
Har. Miserably in love.
Bel. That's charming!
Har. And my— is just going to be married to
another.
Bel. Better and better!
Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you;
but now prepare for the wonderful wonder of wonders!
Bel. Well?
Har. My missis is in the same house with yours.
Bel. What, are you in love with Peggy, too?
[Assent from his chair.

heart at rest: your Peggy is too young and too simple
for me?
Bel. You don't mean Alithsea, who is to be married to
Mr. Sparkish?
Har. Can't I be in love with a lady that is going to
be married to another, as well as you, sir?
Bel. But Sparkish is your friend.
Har. Prity, don't call him my friend; he can be
nobody's friend, not even his own.
Bel. conceited puppy! And what success with
the lady?
Har. (t.) No great hopes; and yet, if I could defer
the marriage a few days, I should not despair. I have
sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours
to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not mar-
tied...
Tell me all you know of this ward of his, this
Peggy—Peggy what's her name?
Bel. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.
Har. thrice, Sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hamp-
shire, and left, very young, under the guardianship of
Jack Moony. And she forfeits half
her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent—
there's the devil, uncle.

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much
in love, that you would take her with half her value
ha, nephew?
Bel. I'll take her with anything—with nothing.
Har. What, such an unaccomplished, awkward, silly
creature!

Bel. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity. Had you but
heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall
in the country, by moonlight—
Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest; ha, ha, ha! "Arius,
fair sun! and kill the envious"—ha, ha, ha! How often
have you seen this fair Capulet?
Bel. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke
to her twice; I have leaped an orchard-wall, like Romeo,
to come at her; played the highway-scene, from an old
summer-house in the garden; and, if I lose her, I will
find out an apothecary, and play the tomb-scene, too.

[Crosses.

Har. Well said, Dick! this spirit must
but has the old dragon ever caught you sighting
at her?
Bel. Never, in the country: he saw me, yesterday,
kissing my hand to her, from the new-box window,
that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately
drove her from it, and fastened up the window-shutters.

Sp. (Without, t.) Very well, uncle, I'll go up to 'em.
Har. I hear Sparkish coming up—take care of what
I told you—ou're a word of Peggy; hear his intelligence,
and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

[Crosses.

Bel. Mean, mean, uncle. —Not a word, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH, t.

Sp. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing!
I have such news for thee—ha, ha, ha!
my rank jealous brother-in-law
saw that modest young gentleman casting a wistful eye
at his forbidden fruit.

Bel. (n.) You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish: I
don't know what young lady you mean.
Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish; you must mistake
Dick has never seen the girl.
Sp. (c.) I don't say he has; I only tell you what
Moody says. Besides, he went book-kern himself, and
inquired of the waiter, who dined in the back-room—
No. 4, and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your
nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to
know of it.

[Crosses.
Har. He kissed his hand, indeed
then, and is more in love with her.
Sp. ady, All:
ar, and
very near as much as I am; so look
—such a
youth may be dangerous.
X. Samuel Pompy Wine.
Sp. The more danger, the more honour: I defy you both—win her and sce her if you can—Delays an virtus in love, as well as in war—though you must be expeditious, fainthea, for I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after. Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt? a fellow-colleague, to recommend me, to do the business?

Her. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. [Aside.] Why, faith! I have, Sparkish; my brother—a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands.

[Exit.]

Spar. Ned shall be the man. Poor Alitha grows impatient; I can't put off the evil day any longer. I fancy that, niece, her brother, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Ret. How, country idiot, sir?

Her. I thought he had been married already.

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

Ret. No, no, he's not married.

Her. Hold your tongue! (Elbowing Belville.)

Sp. Not he; persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking & sixpence, or some nonsense or another, that they are to all intents married in heaven, but that the Law requires the signing of articles, and the church service, to complete their union; so he has made her call him husband, and horns, which she continually does, and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do!

Her. —And so, then, you are both to be tucked together the same day?

Sp. No, no, he can't be married this week; he demands the lawyers for keeping him in town; besides, he's come, and he is constantly hearing at me and abusing me for not being jealous. Just come let us be married, (whisper,)

[Exit.]

Alitha.

[Enter R. V. I.] I am sure I heard singing, but there seems to be no one here. What the deuce has happened at mid, so to be obliged to have that girl, Peggy, with me when ever I

[Exit.]

Peggy. [Aside.] I shall see you presently. He has asked me to come and dine with him, and then we shall see what a refreshment he is in.

[Exit.]

[The scene is changed to Alitha's room.]

Alitha.

[Exeunt R. V. I., Peggy.]
Aloha! Aloha! Where are you?

But ever any one hear of the like of that? Peggy calling at the top of her voice in a public place like this!

Aloha! Aloha! I want you! (Enters C.) Aloha there you are.

How many times must I tell you, that you must not go calling in the hall like that. Ring, & direct the servants when you want any thing.

Well I won't do it again. Damn that brass.

Peggy!

 Hanna?

Don't answer me in that way & don't use that word again?

What word?

Damn!

Peg

Why?

Because no lady would use such a word.

Why?
Because it not lady-like.

**Peg.** Why? Ain’t I a lady?

**Ali.** You ought to be, I tried to make one of you.

**Peg.** Say, where are the best fields and woods to walk in? Are there in New York village?

**Ali.** Repply question! There are no fields or woods in New York, if you want to walk, Union Square and Central Park are the most frequented.

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**Peg.** Pray, sister, tell me why my Bud looks so gruny here in town, and keeps me up close, and will not let me go a walking, nor let me wear my best gown yes-ter-day.

**Ali.** O, he’s jealous, sister.

**Peg.** Jealous! what’s that?

**Ali.** He’s afraid you should love another man.

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

**Ali.** Did he not take you to a play yesterday?

**Peg.** Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people; he would not let me come near the nice people who sat under the tree.

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**Ali.** But how did you like the play?

**Peg.** Ah, I didn’t care much about the play, but I thought the actors were the cleverest men I ever saw, and you remember Romes, such eyes, such a brow, such a mouth! and the sweetest dearest, damndest little mustache in the world. Do you know I heard some one say it was not only passed on, do you believe it?

**Ali.** How could I tell?

**Peg.** And once I caught his gaze, and oh! I just seemed as if they looked right through me, how I should like to know him.
Ali. O, but you must not like the actors.

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

Ali. A walking, ha, ha, ha! But here comes my brother, I'll ask him though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Peg. What's the matter? What makes you look so glum? Who has offended the dandy?

Moo. (Aside, c.) You're a fool.

Ali. Faith, and so she is, for crying for no reason this poor tender creature! Moo. What, you would have her as impudent as yourself, asarrant a girlfart, a gadder, a magpie,

Peg. (l.) Indeed, do not angry with her, Bud,—she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moo. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find?

Peg. Not I, indeed, dear; I hate London; our own house in the country is worth a thousand of it; would I were there again!

Moo. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not asking of plays and players when I came in? You are not encourager in such discourses.

Peg. No, indeed, dear; she told me just now for asking the player-men.

Moo. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there is no hurt in't. [Aside—Cracker, l.] Some, my poor rogue, but thou liest none better than me, though?

Peg. Yes, indeed but I do, though the player-men be finer folks than you.

Moo. But you love no better than me!

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

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

Moo. How? If you love me, you must hate London.

Peg. But, Bud, do the town-women love the player-men, too?

Moo. Ay, I warrant you.

Peg. Ay, I warrant you.

Moo. Why, you do not, I hope?

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

Moo. Ha! Mrs. Miss, ask me no more to go to a play at the theatre.

Peg. Say, why, love? I did not care for going: but, when you forbid me, you make me, want to go all the more.

All. So 'twill be in other things, I warrant. [Aside.]

Peg. Pray let me go to master dear. [Aside.]

Moo. Hold your peace—I won't.

Peg. Why, love?

Moo. Why, I'll tell you. First, you like the actors.

Peg. Ay, that I do indeed, and I do. [Aside.]

Moo. And them actresses may like you.

Peg. What, a homely country girl? No, Bud, nobody will like me.

Moo. I tell you—yes, they may.

Peg. No, no, you jest— I don't believe you. I will go.

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

Peg. Indeed! who, who—poor, who wasn't?

Moo. (Aside. I've gone too far, how overprayed she is!)

Peg. Yellow, was he handsome? Was it any one I know? I promise you, I am very much obliged to you.
Peg. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he care how I am dressed? I would do him no harm.

Moo. He is very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. [Mooch speaks without, l.]

But here comes company: get you back, get you in, Peg. But pooh, pooh! What is he a pretty gentleman that loves me? Is he in love with me?

Moo. Eh, bagage, is.

Peg.

Oh, please let me see who is coming. One little deep breath, no!

May I keep through the key hole.

Moody.

'Bye, say, Ern!

Moody.

May I keep through the key hole.

Moody.

'Bye, thanks, her in & think the door.

Enter Sparkish, Harcourt, and Belville, l.

Spr. (n. c.) Here, Belville, do you approve my choice? Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, Emanuel.

Moo. (n. c.) Ah, they shall know her as well as you yourself will. I warrant you.

Spr. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow—and one you must make welcome, for he's modest. [Revelle salutes Ahtlieen.]

Harcourt makes himself welcome,

Hoe. You are too obliging. [Harcourt salutes Ahtlieen, and crosses to Moody.]

Moo. And so he is, indeed.

Hoe. But, Mr. Moody, is my nephew mentioned?

Spr. Indeed, I would bring him with me, for a sight of him would be sufficient.

To show you he is nothing but a baby is too meanful to be in hand with any one.

Moody.

Roller an over grown baby.

[Harcourt, Ahtlieen, and Sparkish, retire up.

Bel. [Crosses to Moody.] I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness; it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moo. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal to her—my wife, sir, must not be smacked and nodded at.

Bel. I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magnific to come near my cherries.

Moo. Was it your wife, sir?

Spr. (c.) Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt [as]

Moo. What's that to you, sir?—Suppose it was my grandmother?

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

[Exeunt Moody and Belville, l. 

Spr. (c.) Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt [as]
Her. (L.) So infinitely well; that I could wish I had a mistress, too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.
All. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me, that his acquaintance were all wits and raliers, and now I find it.
Spa. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him; Lady—more—more, he is the honestest, worthiest, true-hearted gentleman; a man of

Her. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that—
Spa. Very—very sure you do admire her extremely. I see it in your eyes—he does admire you, madam, he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times—have you not, Harcourt? Do you admire her, by the world you do—don't you?

Her. I could gaze upon her, till I became as blind as you are.
Spa. How, as I am? how?
Her. Because you are a lover, and true lovers are blind.
Spa. True; true; but by the world she has wit, too, as well as beauty; go, go—

Har. (Aside to Althea.)—talk to her anything, she's bashful before me.
Harcourt courts Althea aside.

Enter Moody, L.
Moo. How, sir! if you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister.

Spa. Ha, ha, ha! a wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool: ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em;

by the world. What have you done with Belville?
[Struggles with Moody, to keep him from Harcourt and Althea.

Moo. Shown him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.
Spa. Nay, but, pithecus, let me reason with thee.

[Talks apart with Moody, L.

Al. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made; it's too late, sir, and past all recovation.
Her. Then so is my death.
Al. I would not be unjust to him.

Her. Then why to me so?
Al. I have no obligations upon.
Her. My love.
Al. I had this before.
Her. You never had it; he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.
Al. Love proceeds from esteem;

besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.
Her. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than it is a

sign of his generosity. But, if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.
Al. No, now you have put a scruple in my head: but, in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him!

pray come hither: your friend here is very troublesome, and very loving.

[Aside to Althea.
Moo. D'ye hear that senseless puppy?
Spa. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous like a country bumpkin?
Moo. No, rather he dishonoured, like a credulous nincompoop.
Her. Madam, you should not have been so little generous as to have told him.
Spa. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.
Her. Wrong him!—no man can do it, he's beneath an injury; a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot, a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that—
Al. Hold, do not speak at him; for, since he is to be my husband, I am resolved to like him; nay, I think I am obliged to tell him you are not his friend—Mr. Sparkish, Mr. Sparkish!
Spa. What, what—

All. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to see anyone?
Spa. How! no; but, if he does, he's but in

I warrant, you know.

All. He spoke so scrupulously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moo. And he was in the right.

Al. Besides, he has been making love to me.
Moo. And I told the fool so.
Ali. He said you were a wretch, below an injury.

Spy. Pasha!


Spy. Pasha!


Spy. Pasha, pasha!


Moo. True, true, true; all true.

Spy. Hear! I can't put up with that, sir, by the world! brother, help me to kill him. [Offers to draw.

Ali. Hold! hold!

Moo. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and run away with my sister, I should be rid of three plagues at once. [Exit ALI. Hold, hold! Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spy. Three say I am a fool, that is no--mit, out of friendship to me.

Ali.

Go to see if I was true to you, do be satisfied

for your sake.

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

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

Spy. Come, I'll be went to the new play—come, madam. [Exeunt ALI and MURRAY.

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

Spy. Pasha! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good; if I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic, I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author. [Come away. Harcourt, lead her down.

Enter Miss Peggy and Lucy, z.

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

Peg. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress, Ali! then, go every day standing about allowed to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a penitent prisoner bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear Miss Peggy, I imagined that you had been bred so young to the stage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies.

Peg. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what smart lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing meetings, cures, and dressed every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you--every day in the week, as they do.

Lucy. To be sure, miss, you will lead a better life.

Peg. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing—but I must make the best of a bad buy, for I can't marry anybody else.

Lucy. How so, miss?

Peg. Why, we have a contract with each other—so we are as good as married, you know.

Lucy. Heaven forbid, miss.

Peg. Heigho!

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

Peg. What do you mean by how you talk?

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

Peg. Mr. Belville! Where is he? when did you see him? Your lord's uncle, Lucy. Where was he? did he say anything?

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

Peg. The d ource he was! But where was it, and when was it?
Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your
guardian turned you into your chamber, for fear of your
being seen.

Peg. I knew something was amiss, I was in such
a flutter. But what did he say to my Bud?

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

Peg. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good
humour; if he'd let me marry any body else without
complaint, I'd call him husband as long as he lived. But
what said Mr. Belville to him?

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

Peg. Meaning me, Lucy?

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure. "Tell the dear object of
my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not
married; and when those hopes leave me—she knows
the rest," then he cast up his eyes, then—ground his

Peg. struck his forehead—would have spoke again,
but could not—fetched a deep sigh, and vanished.

Peg. That is really very fine.

Lucy. I don't say he is a great deal of money; but
the conversation brings tears into my eyes.

Oh, he's a charming sweet.—[Moody heard without, 1.]

But hush, hush! I hear my husband!

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

Peg. Mum, mum, the word.

Enter Moony, 1.—Cross to c.

Moo. Come, what's here to do? You are putting the
town-pleasures in her head,

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

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday?

Peg. No, but she never asked me; I was myself in the
play-going. I look for my mistress.

Lucy. Then, if she ask you again, you are the cause
of her asking, my mistress.

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

Peg. Pah! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Moo. How's this? what, what at the country? Sister

Peg. Let me alone—I am not well.

Moo. Oh! if that be—what all my dearest—

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

Moo. Ha! but enough, let's go to a play to-night.

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

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

Moo. Is that all, dear Bud?

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

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

Peg. Therefore, I would see first some sights, to tell
my neighbours about.

Moo. What, have you put this into her head?

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

Moo. Your tongue runs too glorly, madam; and you
have lived too long with a lady, to be a proper
companion for innocence.—I'm not over fond of your
mistress, sir—.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moo. You admitted those gentlemanly looks of mine
when I said I would not be at home; and there was the
young fellow, too, who was looking at my window
out the window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your hand-
some wife also.

Peg. Why, oh Lord! did the gentleman come himself
to see me.

Moo. No, no

Peg. Come,pray, Bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late;
for I will go, that's fit and plain—only into the park.

Moo. Not the stealing, already of the towncourts;

Peg. What have I done? I have not been seen in the park.

How shall we do, that she may not be seen or

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

Moo. No, no; I am obliged to you for your kindness,
but she shan't stir without me.
The tailor brought home, last night, the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Moody

No no.

Lucy

Yes yes! Back I say, back or I'll knock ever hair out of the top of your head.

Moody

Get out of my house I say, Lucy.

Shoo it's not your home & I'll not go till the seen Miss Peggy go out too.

Good

I say she shant.

Lucy

I say she shall

Reg,

And so for all. (Brr.)

Lucy.
SCENE I.—The Park.

Enter Belville and Harcourt, L.

Bel. And the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments, through Lacy, to Miss Peggy: and here I am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. (to Bel.) And so, to blind Moody, and take him off the scent:—and, at the same time, to give me an opportunity—

Bel. (to Scorpio) What could I do, uncle?—It was my last stake, and I played for a great deal.

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

Bel. E’en so, I can’t say—I am rather doubtful; he said very little—grumbled much—shook his head—and showed me the door. But what success have you had with Alitha?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, with having light enough to see an inch before my nose.

Time plays well-undoes something: Alitha is a woman of great honour: and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish’s absurdity stands in my way, and does every thing that the fates ought to do for me.

(Sparkish sings without.)

Bel. Vonder comes—Sparkish, donc! Alitha shol' be here. Some this way, miss fellow. Will spirit all. Let us avoid him! You can’t cheat him before his face.

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

Bel.

Har. But you cannot be with Alitha unless he is with her too.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessory.

Enter Sparkish R.

Har. What! to be cheated? Faith I haven’t met a scramble since Christmas.

Har. he did not hear all, I hope.

[Aside to Belville.

Spy. Oh, Harcourt! Alitha tells me you have made love, several times, to her—ha, ha, ha! But I—

Har. I make love to her?

Spy. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her—but I am sure I know myself.

Bel. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world.

Spy. [Aside.] Oh, your servant, sir—You can’t oblige me more; I’m—

Har. Harcourt! did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play, last night?

Har. Yes; and was very much disturbed at it. You put the actors and audience into confusion, and all your friends out of countenance, among other things.

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

Bel. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the good things, and not at your own.
SPE.: No, I thank you. 'Gad! I go to a play as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to the other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either: and the reason whereof you may imagine.

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

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

HER.: But the goose damned your songs, did they, you?

SPE.: Oh, yes! damn the poets! they turned them into burlesque, as they call it; that burlesque is a hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hocus docties, topoy turvy, they make a clever witty thing absolute nonsense! Do you know, however, these dastardly ridiculous my last song, twang, twang, the best I ever wrote.

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

BEL.: Favour me with it, sir—I never heard it.

SPE.: What, and have all the park about us?

HER.: Which you'll not dislike; and so, please me, begin.

SPE.: I never am asked twice, and so here goes.

SONG.

Tell me of the roses and lilies,
Which tinged the fair cheek of your Phillis,
Tell me of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Cupid dies:
Let all whining lovers go hang—
My heart would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,
And it comes to my heart with a twang.

(Harcourt and Belville steal off. 1.

I am rank to the handsome and pretty,
Can only be touched by the witty,
And beauty will urge in vain:
The way to my heart's through my brain.
Let all whining lovers go hang—
We wite, you must know,
Here two strings to our bow,
To return them their darts with a twang,
And return them their darts with a twang.

(During the song, Harcourt and Belville steal away from Sparkish, and leave him singing—he stinks his voice by degrees, at the surprise of their being gone.

Re-enter Harcourt and Belville, 1.

SPE.: What the devuce did you go away for?

HER.: Your mistress is coming.

SPE.: The devil she is! Oh, hide, hide me from her!

(Alters behind Harcourt.

HER.: She sees you.

SPE.: But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and at this instant.

(Looking at his watch.

HER.: Pray, first take me, and reconcile me to her.

SPE.: Another time.

Enter Moody, Peggy, in boy's clothes, and Alithes, 1.

HER.: Your servant, Mr. Moody.

MOO.: Come along.

SPE.: To Peggy.

Peg.: Lu! what a sweet delightful place this is!

MOO.: Come along, I say. Don't stare about you so, you'll betray yourself.

(Exit Moody, pulling Peggy, Alithes following, 2.

HER.: He does not know us.

BEL.: Or he won't know us.

SPE.: So much the better. [Exit Belville, after them, 3.

HER.: Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

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

Re-enter Belville, 2.

HER.: By all my hopes, uncle, Peggy is boy's clothes! I am all over agitation. [Aside to Harcourt.

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

Re-enter Moody, Peggy, and Alithes, 2.—Alithes joins Sparkish and Harcourt.

MOO.: Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you.

(To Alithes.) She look her gallant, and she will muster up all the young samaritans of this place. What a sworn of cuckold and cuckold-masters are here! I begin to be wearis. [Aside.] Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

PEG.: Don't you believe that, I ha'nt half sights yet.
Moo. What an incorrigible fellow! — Come, come, I must be gone.

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

Moo. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; ’tis a most exquisite story; I have not had such a laugh for this half-year — thou art a most ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha! — [Exit Mulgrew.]

Spa. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?
Bel. O yes, how is it possible to hear such a foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at’t em; ha, ha, ha!

Lucy in the closet laughs.

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

Bel. Indeed, but you must not.

Spa. Twas a woman’s voice.
Bel. So much the better for me.

Lucy peeping out at B. F.

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! O dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst — what an adventure! — [Laughs.] Bel. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter and by the dragon himself — there’s a spirit for you.

Lucy. There’s simplicity for you! Show me a town-bred girl with half the genius — send you a love-letter, and by a jealous guardian, too! ha, ha, ha! ‘Tis too much — too much — ha, ha, ha! — Well, Mr. Belville — [Crease, &c.] the worst part of it should do — my mistress will continue her boot for a while. Miss Peggy her bosom is pretty young fellow: I shall dance at two weddings — be well rewarded by both parties — get a husband myself, and be as happy as the best of you — and so your humble servant.

Bel. Success attend you, Lucy.

Scene 3. — Moony’s House.

Peg. Well, ’tis’en so: I have got the disease they call love; I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville; therefore, I’ll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like anything. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter Moony, at door in fits, who, seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and, looking over her shoulder, snatches the paper from her.

Moo. What, writing more letters?

Peg. (c.) O Lord! O dear! Monty. (She attempts to run out, he seizes her, and runs.)

Moo. (r.) How’s this? Nay, you shall not stir, madam. Dear, dear Mr. Belville — I very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose — but let’s hek! — [Reeds.] First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I’d have you to know I would not have done, had you not first sent me so extremely; which, if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man’s, who, I blush, nauseate, and detest; (nor you can write these filthy words.) But what follows—
Therefore, I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice, but I'm afraid it's already too late. However, if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do: you must help me no sooner before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our—what is to follow our—speak, what?
—Our journey into the country, I suppose?—[Creeser, et al.]
Oh, woman, damned woman! and love, their old temper; for this is one of his miracles: in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before. But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you tham, and all my plagues together.

[Draws his sword.]

Peg. O lord! O lord! you are such a passionate man, Bud!

Mat. Come, take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in it, I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this, as you deserve. [Lays his hand on his sword.] Write what's to follow—let me see,—[Mends the paper]—for I must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer—what is to follow our—

[Ends the paper.]

Peg. Must indeed, then, Bud?—Look you there, then.

Mat. Let's see.—[Reads.] For I can defer no longer our wedding—Your obliged Athene. What's the meaning of this? my sister's name too? Speak, unseal it.

Peg. Yes, indeed, [Reads.] Mat. But why her name too?—Speak—speak, I say, Peg. Ay, but you'll tell her again if you would not.

Mat. I will not; I am stunned; my head turns round:

Peg. Won't you tell her, indeed and indeed?

Mat. No; speak, I say.

Peg. She'll be angry with me; but I would rather she should be angry with me than you, Bud. And to tell the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and me what I didn't write.

Mat. Ha!—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. [Aside.] How could she come to you, —since I had locked you up alone?

Peg. Oh, through the key-hole, Bud.

Mat. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him? [Aside] can she write herself?

Peg. Why, she said because—

Mat. Because what—because—

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

Mat. Belville again!—Am I to be deceived again with that young hypocrisie?

Peg. You have deceived yourself, Bud, you have indeed—I have kept the secret for your sister's sake, as long as I could—but you must know it—and shall know it, too.

[Aside.] Dry your eyes—on.

Peg. You always thought he was hankering after me.

Good law! he's dying for Athene, and Athene for him—why should I speak of it?—and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the window, when you thought it was no—I would have—had you a mind, but she made me swear to deceive you, and so I have finely—have not I, now?

Mat. Why did you write that foolish letter to him, then, and make me come foolishly carry it?

Peg. To carry on the joke, Bud—to oblige them.

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

Peg. Why do you marry me, then?—Tis the same thing, Bud.

Mat. No, no, 'tis quite different—how innocent she is!

She could not invent this lie; but if she could, why should she?—bark you, madam, your sister went out in the morning, and I have not seen her since.

Peg. She has been crying all day. in [Reads.]—

Mat. Where is she? Let me speak with her.

Peg. O Lord! then she'll discover all. [Aside.] Power holds. Bud—will she not speak to her?—She'll know I have told you, then. "Yes, Dame," let me talk with her first.

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

Peg. No, no, don't, till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; and if she'll kill me, she.

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

Peg. Yes, yes, Bud.

Mat. Let me see—

Peg. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next, for I am even at my wit's end.

Aside and exits.]

Mat. Well, I resolve it—Belville shall have her:

An alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife,
Therefore, I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate watch, which has never, Answer me, of my choice, but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our—what is to follow our—speak, what?—

Our journey into the country, I suppose—[Cries, &c.] Oh, woman, damned woman! and love, their old temptation; for this is one of his miracles: in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before,—but make the end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together.

[Drunken sound.]

Peg. O lord! O lord! you are such a passionate man, Bud!

Mos. Come, take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false—it is, sister, I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with what you deserve. [Lays his hand on his sword.] Write what's to follow. —Let's see. [Reads.] You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, and you can do no longer a—what does this mean?—

[Peggy takes the pen, and writes.]

Peg. Must about, then, Bud?—Look you there, then.

Mos. Let's see—[Reads.] For I can defer no longer our wedding.—Your slighted Alithia. What's the meaning of this? my sister's name too? Speak, unrighteous.

Peg. Yes, indeed, [cries.] Mos. But why her name too?—Speak, speak, I say.

Peg. Ay, but you'll tell her secrets if you would not.

Mos. I will not; I am stunned; my head turns round!—

Speak.

Peg. Won't you tell her, indeed and indeed? [Revel Cright?]

Mos. No; speak, I say.

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

Mos. Ha!—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. [Aside.] How could she come to you, since I had locked you up alone?

Peg. Oh, through the key-hole, Bud.

Mos. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, Bud? she can write herself!

Peg. Why, she said because—because—

Mos. Because what—because—

Peg. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so young, should be constant and refuse her, or be vain afterwards, and show the letter, she might destroy it, the hand not being his.

Mos. Belville again!—Am I to be deceived again with that young hypocrite?—

Peg. You have deceived yourself, Bud, you have indeed—I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could—but you must know— and shall know it, too.

[Aside.

Mos. [Dry your eyes. Lord Cright?]

Peg. You always thought he was hankering after me. Good law! he's hankering for Alithia, and Alithen for him; they had looked for no answer, and he was making love to her before to-morrow, from the same window, when you thought it was me—I would have told him all, but she made me swear to deceive you, and so I have; finely—have not I?

Mos. Why did you write that foolish letter to him, then, and make me more furious than carry it?—Peg. To carry on the joke, Bud—to oblige them. Mos. And will nothing serve her but that great baby! He's too young for her to marry.

Peg. Why do you marry me, then?—Tis the same thing, Bud.

Mos. No, no, 'tis quite different—how innocent she is! She could not invent this lie; but if she could, why should she?—hark you, madam, your sister went out in the morning, and I have not seen her since.

Peg. She has been crying all day. [Aside.

Mos. Where is she?—Let me speak with her.

Peg. O Lord! then she'll discover all. [Aside.] Brother, hold, Bud! what's going to be done now? She'll know I have told you, then. [Aside. Bud! let me talk with her first.

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

Peg. But, Bud, don't, till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all after she'll kill me.

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

Peg. Yes, yes, Bud.

Mos. Let me see—

Peg. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next, for I am even at my wit's end. [Aside and exits.

Mos. Well, I resolve it.—Belville shall have her: an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife,
Moo. Then walk this way.

Pag. Lord, what a power of fine folks are here! An

Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married. [Aside.

Moo. Come along—what are you muttering at?

Pag. There's the young gentleman there, you were so

angry about, that's in love with me.

Moo. Come along, I say.

[He pulls her away.—Exeunt Peggy and Moody. Bel-

ville following, l.--Sparkish, Harcourt, and Athlet,

come forward.

Sp. Come, dear madam, for my sake you shall be

reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake, I hate him.

Her. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me,

for his sake.

Sp. Ay, indeed, madam, too cruel to me, to hate

my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him, because he is your enemy; and you

ought to hate him, too, for making love to me, if you

love me.

Sp. That's a good one! I hate a man for loving you!

If he did love you, he can't help; and 'tis

your fault, not his, if he adores you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to

make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?

Her. But why, dearest madam, will you be more con-

cerned for his honour than he is himself? Let his honour

alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Sp. How's that?

Her. But what--t'st ... can guard himself?

Sp. Oh, oh! that's right again.

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

Sp. And you make me giddy, madam, with your

jealousy and fear.

Her.Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to

make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest

creature in the world to me.

Sp. Poor fellow!

Her. But his kindness, only, is not enough for me,

without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam:

[Cresses, c.] 'tis that must perfect my happiness. [Cresses,

he believes all I say: 'tis how you would do

so. Jealous of me?—I would not wrong him nor you

for the world.

Her. I love you, madam, so--

Sp. How's that! Say—now you begin to go too far,

indeed.

Her. So much, I confess, I say I love you, that I

would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away

upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what

you see here.

[Clapping his hand on his breast, points to Sparkish.

Sp. No, faith! I believe thou wouldst not; now his

meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not

wrong me.

Her. No, so, heavens forbid the glory of his sex

should fall so low, as into the embraces of such a con-

temptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend, 

here.

Sp. No, no, dear friend, I know it: madam, you

see he will rather wrong himself than me

Ali. Do not you understand him yet?

Sp. Come, come, be friends with him.

Enter Moody and Peggy, Belville at a distance, t.

Moo. What, invite your wife to kiss me? Mon-

strous! Are you not ashamed?

[Parts them.

Sp. Are you not ashamed that I should have more

conscience in the possession of your family than you have?

Cresses.

You must not teach me: I am a man of honour, sir,

though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir.

[Cresses, t.

Moo. Very frank, sir,

You seem to be angry, and yet won't go.

[To Athlet.

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Cresses, t.

Moo. Because you like it. But you ought to blush at

exposing your wife as you do.

Sp. What then,—I may he have a pleasure in it, as

I have to show fine clothes at a play house; the first
day, and count money before poor rogues.

I love to be courted, and would not marry a

wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull

as eating alone; and so good night;

2. [Cresses, t.] Madam, I hope you are now recon-

ciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night,

Remember not to be married tomorrow.

Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your

brothers. [Exit Sparkish, t.

Her. You may depend upon me. Madam, I hope

you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be

earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. Sparkish

[In another room.

Moo. This gentle woman is yet under my care; there-

fore, you must yet forbear your freedom with her.
Har. Must, sir!
Moo. Yes, sir; she is my sister.
Har. 'Tis well she is, sir—for I must be her servant, sir.—Madam.
Moo. Come away, sister: we have been gone if it had not been for you.
Har. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure,—therefore, you and I must go different ways.
Har. Well, you may go on; but this pretty young gentleman. [Takes hold of Peggy.] shall stay with us; for I suppose his business is the same with ours—pleasure.
Moo. he knows her. Come, come.
Har. Had you not rather stay with us? [To Peggy]
Prithee, who is this pretty young fellow?
Moo. One to whom I am guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of his hands. [Aside.] Who is he? I never saw anything so pretty in all my life.
Moo. Psha! do not look upon him so much,—he's a poor bashful youth, you'll make him blush. [Offers to take her away.]
Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance.—You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another.—Salute him, Dick, à la Françoise. [Belmont kisses her.]
Har. What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.
Moo. But you are ten times handsomer.
Har. Kiss him again, Dick.
Moo. No, no, no; come away, come away.
[To Peggy]
Har. Why, what haste you are in? Why won't you let me talk with him?
Moo. Because you've offended him; he's yet young and innocent. How she gazes upon him! The devil! [Aside] Come, psey let him go,—I cannot stay fooling any longer; I tell you, my wife stays supper for us.
Har. Does she? Come, then, we'll go sup with her.
Moo. No, no—now I think out, having stayed so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed—I wish she and I were well out of your hands. [Aside.] Well, then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.
Peg. Thank you heartily, sir.
Moo. [Aside] she will discover herself yet, in spite of me.
Bel. And mine, too, sir.

Peg. That I will, indeed. [Bow.]
Har. Pray give her this kiss for me. [Kisses Peggy.]
Peg. Thank ye, sir.
Moo. Oh, heavens! what do I suffer! [Kisses Peggy.]
Bel. And this for me. [Curtsies.]
Moo. Oh, the ideal—now 'tis out.—Ten thousand canker worms gaw away their lips. Come, come,
[Exit Moody, Peggy, and Althaea.]
Har. [Ha, ha, ha.]
Bel. [Exit, t.]

Re-enter Moody, Peg, and Althea. n.
Moo. So, they are gone! at last. Sister, stay with Peggy—'ll find my servant—'ll let her sit an inch—I'll be back directly. [Exit Moody, n. & t.

Re-enter Harwood and Belville. t.
Har. What, not gone yet? Nephew, show the young gentleman Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady. [Exit Belville and Peggy.]

Re-enter Moody, n. & c.
Moo. Where! how—what's become of—gone—whither?
Har. In the next walk, only, brother.
Moo. Only—only—where—where! [Exit, t.]
Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned? But, dearest madam—

Re-enter Moody, t.
Moo. Gone, gone, not to be found! quite gone! Ten thousand plagues go with 'em! Which way went they?
Har. But in another walk, brother.
Moo. Another walk—other devil. Where are they, I say?
Har. You are too abusive, brother, and too violent about trifles.
Mrs. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not disapprove enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to it, too, determination of...

Ali. Good brother!

Mrs. False—false sister!

*Exeunt, t.*

**Enter Belville and Miss Peggy, r.**

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

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

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

Peg. Ay; but, Mr. Belville, I am as good as married already—wants nothing but church ceremony to make us one—I call him husband, and he calls me wife already: he made me do so; and we had been married in church long ago, if the writing could have been finished.

Bel. Trust him—trust his sweet creature—he pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else; you have a right to choose for yourself, and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you, before marriage, to a man you cannot love.

Peg. No more I believe it does; sister Allin's maid has told me as much—she's a very sensible girl.

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

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

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

Mrs. If you marry without his consent, he can but seize upon half your fortune; the other half, and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are our own. Take it, my dearest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever.

*Knocks, and pushes her hand.*

Peg. Your fine talk has bewitched me.

Bel. 'Tis you have bewitched me—then drop enchanting sweet simplicity—let us fly with the wings of love to my house, there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peg. And so we will, then—there, squeeze me again, now run away with me, and if my guard follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say. [Going.] Boo! here he is.

**Enter Moody hastily, and meets them.**

Bel. Cur'd fortune!

Mrs. Oh, there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing! Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again. Where have you been, you puppy?

Peg. Been, Bud!—We have been hunting all over the park to find you.

Bel. From one end to the other, sir. [*Confusedly.*

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

Bel. I'm always frightened when I see you, and, if I did not love you so well—I should run away from you, so I should.

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

*Puts Peggy over to t.*

Peg. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, Bud! [Belville makes signs of dislike.

Mrs. I am not in the humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What have you been doing with this young lady? gentleman, I would—blister your tongue on my tongue!

Bel. Fie, Bud, you have told all.

Bel. I have been as civil as I could to the young stranger; and, if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and show the young gentleman Rosmonde's Pond, for, he has not seen it yet. Come, pretty youth, will you go with me?

Peg. As my guardian pleasure.

Mrs. No, so, it does not please me—whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself. You may visit Rosmonde's Pond, and the bottom of it, if you will.—

*Exeunt Moody, with Peggy under his arm, l.—*

**Belville a contrary way, r.**
Enter Lucy and Alithia. [Exit Harry, with company, madam, Alithia below.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for ever from your sight! How could you be so hard-hearted.

Alithia. True, because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no, 'twas stark love and kindness,

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

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Alithia. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Alithia. I was engaged to another man, whom I supposed you would consider as better for me.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person without your heart?

Alithia. Nay, never fear, I am married.

Lucy. The woman that marries to love better, will be as much mistaken, as the one that marries to live better.

Alithia. What nonsense you talk!

Lucy. 'Tis a melancholy truth, madam,—marrying to increase love is like gaming to become rich.—Alas! you only lose what little stock you had before.—There are many woful examples of it in this rich-town!

Alithia. I find, by your rhetoric, you have been bribed to betray me. Come, pray talk no more of Harcourt, nor Mr. Harcourt. I wish the other would come to marries me, and bid him own to me. You will marry him, then?

Lucy. Certainly, 'tis Sparkish's confidence in my truth that obliges me to be faithful to him.

Alithia. What, faithful to a creature who is incapable of loving and esteeming you as he ought!—To throw away your beauty, wit, accomplishments, sweet temper—

Lucy. Hold your tongue.

Alithia. That, you know, I can't do, madam; and, upon this occasion, I will talk for ever. What, give yourself away to one that poor I, some person, should not accept of?

Alithia. Harry!—Madam?

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

Enter Harry. [Exit for a while.]

Harry. Mr. Sparkish with company, madam, Alithia below you.

Alithia. I will wait upon 'em. [Exit Harry, ], My heart begins to fall, but I must go through with it. Go with me, Lucy. [Exit,]

Lucy. Not I, indeed, madam—If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself. What excellent advice have I thrown away!—so I'll even take it where it will be more welcome.—Miss Peggy is here, and will keep against her guardians, and she can't have a better privy-counselor than myself—I must be busy one way or another.

Enter Moody and Peggy. [Exit.]

Peg. Madam, I was told it a hundred times over!

Moo. I would try it, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering in it the least circumstance; for, if he does not—be-father, she is an, too. [Aside.] Come, how wasn't, baggadage?

Peg. What pleasure you take to hear it, madam?

Moo. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but speak, how wasn't, No lies—I saw him kiss you—he kissed you before your face.

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

Moo. The devil! You were satisfied with it, then, and would do it again.

Peg. Not unless he should force me.

Moo. Force you, chicanery?

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

Moo. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knocked him down?
Peg. With what, Bud? I could not help myself.
Besides, he did it so modestly, and blushed so, that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon some namelessness, too, as well as me; and, if so, there was no harm done, you know.

Moo. This is worse and worse—so 'tis plain she loves him. But, as yet, she has not art enough to make her conscience treat me. Oh, love, love! This he gave women first their craft, their art of deceiving; out of Nature's hands they came plain, open, silly, and fit for slaves; as she and heaven intended, (you,) but heavens.

Love—well, I must struggle that little monster, whilst I can deal with him. (Aside.) Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peg. Yes, I will, Bud. What's the matter now?

[Aside.

Moo. Well, why don't you go?

Peg. I'm going.

Moo. Is that the way you go?

Peg. Well, I'm going.

Moo, Go, busy! go directly—do! [Exit Peggy, n.]

This young fellow loves her, and she loves him. But I'll crush this mischief in the shell. Why should women have more invention in love than men? It can only be, because they have more of the devil.

Enter Peggy, n., with pen, ink, and paper.

Peg. Ay, dear, dear Bud; but I can't do very well. Moo. I wish you could not at all.

Peg. But what should I write for?—do you want me to write?

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

Peg. Oh, Lord! to the young gentleman a letter?

Moo. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peg. Lord! you do but jest, you jest, and I am not so merry. Come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peg. (Aside.) What, do you think I am afraid too?

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

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

Moo. (Aside.) Why?

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

Moo. Very well, you would have brought him to you.

Is it come to this? I say, take the pen and ink, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peg. Lord! what 'd ye make a fool of me for? Didn't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country! Now, he's in town, and I am in town, too—therefore, I can't write to him, you know.

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

Peg. Oh, may I so? Then I am satisfied.

Moo. Come, begin—"Sir"—[Dictates.

Peg. Shan't I say, "Dear sir"? You know, one says always something more than bare "Sir," up in a corner?

Moo. Write as I bid you, or I will write something with this by your face.


Moo. "Though I suffered last night your unceasing loved kisses and embraces."—Write!

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

Moo. Write!

Peg. Let me put out "loved."

Moo. Write, I say.

Peg. Well, then.

Moo. Let me see what you have writ. [Reads the paper.] "Though I suffered last night your unceasing loved kisses and embraces." Round, impatient creature, where is "unceasing" and "loved?"

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

Moo. Once more, write as I'd have you, and question it not, or I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief. [Holds up the pen-knife.

Peg. O Lord! I will.

Moo. So, so, let's see, now! "Though I suffered last night your unceasing loved kisses and embraces"—go on—"yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them"—now (She writes.

Peg. I have writ it.

Moo. Oh then: "I then condenced myself from your inquests, to avoid your insinuations. Oh, love, love, love!"—[She writes.

Peg. "To avoid"—

Moo. "Your insinuations.

Peg. "Your insinuations."

Moo. "You are just, but odious." [Writes.

Moo. "The same reason, now I am out of your hands."

Peg. So. [She writes.

Moo. "Makes me own to you my unfortunate, though innocent, frolic in being in man's clothes."—[She writes.

Peg. So. [She writes.

Moo. "That you may for evermore—"

Peg. "Evermore?"

Moo. "Evermore cease to pursue her who hates and detests you."

[She writes.

Peg. So. [Sighs.
Moo. What do you eigh for? "Delate you, as much as she loves her husband and her honoured."

Peg. I vow, husband, he'll never believe I should write such a letter.

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

Peg. What, can't I say, your most faithful humble servant till death?

Moo. No, tormenting send!

Come, wrap it up, now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle, and write on the outside "For Mr. Belville." [Exit Moody, a. Peg. "For Mr. Belville."—So, I am glad he is gone. Hark! I hear a noise.

Moo. [Within, a. Well, well—but you must call another time, I tell you.

Peg. [Goes to the door.] Bleck, there's folk with him—that's sure; now I may think a little. Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter? Can one have no shift? Ah! a London woman would have had a hundred presently. Stay; what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon it, too? Ay, but then my guardian would see it. I don't know what to do. But yet, ye'ad, I'll try, so I will; for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will not. [She writes, and repeats what she writes.] "Dear, sweet Mr. Belville—so—my guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't—so—" and would have me say, I hate you, but I won't—there—" for I'm sure, if you and I were in the country at cards together—so—" I could not help reading on your face under the table, so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can: so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend, till death, Margaret Thrift." So—now wrap it up just like other—so; now write. "For Mr. Belville." But, oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian.

[Plays her letter in her bosom.

Enter Moody, with a candle and sealing-wax, a.

Moo. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me, but I fear 'twas to my wife.

[Aside.] What, have you done?

Peg. Ay, ay, Bud, just now.

Moo. Let's see't, what'd ye tremble for?

Peg. [Opens and reads the first letter.] So I had been served if I had given him this. [Aside]

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

Peg. Lord, what shall I do now? Nay, then, I have it. [Aside.] Pray, let me see't. Lord! you think me a fool, I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will.

[Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.

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

Peg? I think I have.

Moo. 'Tis very well, but I warrant you would not have it go now.

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I would, Bud, now.

Moo. Well, you are a good girl, then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window, when I am gone; for I have a spy in the street. [Puts her into the chamber, a. At least, 'tis fit she thinks so, if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us. Now I have secured all within, I'll deal with the free without.

SCENE II.—Belville's Lodgings. [Exit, &c.

Enter Lucy and Belville, a.

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

Bel. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous: give me leave to present you with this trile [Gives a ring], not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

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

Bel. But has the dear creature resolved for Mrs. Lucy? Has she? Why, she will run away and marry you in spite of your teeth, the first moment she can break prison. So you stay at home till you hear from us.

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

Moo. [Without, a.] But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

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

Bel. This is our cursed luck again. What the devil can he want here? I have lost my senses. Get into this closet till he's gone. [Puts Lucy into the closet, b. &c.] This visit means something; I am quite confounded. Don't you stir, Lucy; I must put the best face upon the matter. Now for it. [Takes a book and reads.
Enter Moses, 1.

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

Bel. Yes, sir, the best company. [Shoves his book]

When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

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

Bel. You shall be always welcome to me. But you seem ruffled, sir: what brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour?

Moo. Your impertinency—

Bel. My impertinency!

Moo. Your impertinency! I beg pardon—your too dainty, I mean.

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

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

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

Moo. There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility.

[Give a letter.]

Bel. (r.) What is it?

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

Bel. How, is it from your wife! Ha, ha, ha! [Rends.]

Moo. (l.) Even from my wife, sir; am I not wonder-

ous kind and civil to you now, too? But you'll not think her so.

Bel. Ha! is this a trick of his or her's?

Moo. The gentleman's surprised, I find! What, you expected a kinder letter?

Bel. No, indeed! not I—how could I?

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

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

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

Bel. Pray! I can't help it.

Moo. Now, in my opinion, and the kindness and friendship, and have showed myself so friendly an obliging kind friend and husband. Am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her galant?

Bel. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world—ha, ha, ha! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her, I will obey her letter—

with what difficulty soever I do: and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moo. Well, then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine, kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome.

[Exit.]

Spc. What, are you wiser than you were this morning?

Spc. Faith! I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I can't eat half an omelette the less at dinner for it; there's a philosophy for you.

Moo. Insolubility, you mean—I hope you don't mean to lose my sister ill, sir!

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

Moo. If thou art exorcised with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this mistake. 

Bel. Ay, ay, my friend. Spacious, convinced to be indescribable.

Spc. What, you must know—whan settled to be married—it is the same thing to me, whether I am married, or no—I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister: opportunity, the same thing, term; but the thing was fixed, you know. You and my aunt brought it about—I had no hand in it—and, to show you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms, and the church would have finished me off to hands—but she was taken with her tantrums.

Spc. Don't make your tantrums—come to the point.

Spc. Your sister took an aversion to the person, Frank Harcourt's brother—abused him like a pickpocket, and swore Twas Harcourt himself.

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

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

Moo. What, Frank told you so?

Spc. Ay, and Ned too—they were both in a story.